

GPA gathers in Barrytown for a weeklong Part 1: Kick-Off Celebration

Roland Platt
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On Monday, September 10, all 75 Generation Peace Academy (GPA) students gathered at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) in Barrytown, New York for a week-long Part 1: Kick-Off celebration for the new GPA year with the theme "Let go and be open."

During the first two days, participants discovered their teams and were challenged with activities designed to bring them to their limits and find a deeper purpose to push themselves. After each activity was a discussion session where everyone talked about what they learned about themselves through each activity.

On day three, Roland Platt, Director of Generation Peace Academy, hosted an orientation where he spoke of the history of the program, its deep roots in God and True Parents, and the educational goals. These educational goals were to develop a personal and lasting relationship with God, our Heavenly Parent, and True Parents; discover the power of the Divine Principle through continuous study, practice, and sharing; and expanding the Hyojeong culture through learning to lead oneself and others.

On Saturday, September 15, GPA had to honor to welcome Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Regional Chairman of Family Federation North America, with high spirits. He greeted and addressed the GPA students who then performed the Mujugeon (Unconditionally) dance, followed by the Cheon Il Guk Missionaries singing "Ma-eum Ae Ja Yoo Chun-ji." In turn, Dr. Kim spontaneously offered to sing "Nan Jangmal Mole Lah Nay," a song about True Mother's love. After the performance, he focused his address on the importance of prioritizing God in our lives. He said, "God is guiding each one of you. And through prayer, we can understand God's desire for us," then emphasized three main practice points for a life of faith: mind and body unity, consistency, and taking ownership.

The final day of the workshop was dedicated to preparing for a week-long fundraising adventure where GPA students will put the things they have been learning to practice and also where their commitment will be put to the test.

Part 2: Kick-Off begins September 24 and will focus on Divine Principle education