

WFWP USA Midwest at 63rd Commission on the Status of Women in New York

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This year WFWP Midwest Region had the honor of being counted among over 4,000 NGO women leaders and hundreds of civil society organizations from more than 100 nations worldwide. Serving as a representative from the Chicago area, I was humbled in the presence of sisters of all ages, ethnicities, cultures and economic status, destined to share "their story." Long distance travel, physical and financial sacrifice, and the determination to share the voice of those left back home made "their story" in New York that much more powerful. During my time there, I had the opportunity to attend two very interesting events described briefly below.

Wednesday March 13: WFWPI Parallel Event

This year's CSW63 priority theme was "Social Protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls" and in the

light of that WFWPI's parallel event focused on the topic of "The Family and Social Protection." Several key messages stood out to me: Here in the United States, we often have access to early childhood health assistance but only 45% of world's population has social health protection. Needless to say, in many countries women and children lack opportunities to receive basic prenatal and early childhood vaccinations. Lack of social protection also extends to older people, especially in rural areas where the only alternative is for the family unit to care for the elderly with limited measures that may lead to death.

Saturday March 16: Horizon Summit

The Horizon Summit was co-sponsored by WFWP International and WFWP USA with the theme: "Advancing the Culture of Peace". The keynote was given by Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former UN Under Secretary General among other positions. He reiterated the necessity for action with peace through education, peace through personal transformation and peace through the wider participation of women. Later that afternoon was an awards ceremony for those who advanced the Culture of Peace including two very impressive young women who received honorable mentions. The afternoon included discussions related to childhood development and research and evaluation. We also reflected on our own takeaways from each topic.



The wonderful dinner ended our event followed by great musical entertainment, dancing and closing remarks from President Angelika Selle. Congratulations to all who worked diligently to make this a great and rewarding event.

Our WFWP chapters in the Midwest Region – Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, and Nebraska – will continue to engage with our families, communities, churches and other outlets to pursue empowerment for our members. WFWP Regional Chairwoman Kathryn Davis is working to make our chapter's women knowledgeable, skilled and prepared to lead. I would like to thank WFWP Chicago, Chicago Family Church, New York, family and friends who helped to make this experience possible.

I feel that the parallel event, the Horizon Summit and overall WFWP's participation in CSW63 have placed a parachute on our backs. I walked away from that experience with wings.

Reflection on meeting with Prof. Yeon Ah (Choi) Moon during CSW 63

A small group of WFWPI members and staff gathered in New York on March 13th to discuss goals and strategies for the future. A benefit came with that opportunity to share conversations that included "see you later" and "not goodbye" with our outgoing WFWPI president, Dr. Yeon Ah Moon. As we shared a meal around the table, my attention was drawn to her pleasant demeanor, warm smile, and total unconditional LOVE for Mother Moon. Whenever in her presence, a lesson was always being taught on leadership, supporting women around the world and "actions" for PEACEMAKING. I wish her well in the new position of President of UPF Korea and so appreciate her contributions to me and WFWP USA.

