

## FFWPU USA Youth and Students for Peace (YSP): Community is Family

Naokimi Ushiroda  
December 13, 2021



*YSP New Jersey*

"I was reminded that there are people who do not have immediate family to celebrate [holidays] with," said Karen Ishiguro. "God provides family through community and through 'tribes' of people willing to be God's representatives."

Ishiguro, a member of the Youth and Students for Peace ([YSP](#)) Bay Area chapter, joined young Unificationists around the country who spent the last few weeks serving their communities.

Ishiguro was part of a Thanksgiving [food giveaway](#) in Oakland Nov. 22 that involved several local ministries and nonprofits, including CARP. Members of YSP New Jersey also supported a local turkey giveaway - this time alongside leaders of the American Clergy Leadership Conference ([ACLIC](#)).

"I believe that the service of any civic, religious, or educational leader does not remain in just the four walls of their office, church or university, but needs to flow out in direct touch with the people of their local community," said YSP volunteer, Junta Naito. "Having the opportunity to give to others because we've been given is the true spirit of Thanksgiving."

In New Jersey, some 30 volunteers from different organizations, including Senator Cory Booker, helped distribute turkeys to people in need at West Side Park in Newark. The giveaway was organized by the United Community Corporation ([UCC](#)), a nonprofit that is one of the city's oldest community action agencies.

"There was lively music and the staff was very friendly and excellent," said a local YSP volunteer. "Lots of food and clothing was given away to many people."

YSP New Jersey members also partnered with the local CARP chapter on Nov. 26 to support the "RAKES" service project in Nutley, which helps senior citizens and those who are disabled in the community with raking leaves from their lawn. A team of 16 volunteers worked together to rake leaves and debris from the front and back yards of five senior citizens' homes. The group even had the chance to serenade one senior resident with Christmas songs.

YSP New Jersey Coordinator Naria Gaarder initiated a public area cleanup as well. Bundled up and ready to go with grabbers and buckets, she had a simple "pick and walk" clean up around a local train station and roadway where litter tends to collect or get tossed away. A storm drain blocked with leaves was also uncovered along the route. And two full bags of trash and two buckets of recyclables were collected and then sorted and sent to a local recycling center.

For these YSP members and others, serving and engaging the greater community as family is what the spirit of giving is all about.

"I felt so much love serving and seeing people be served," said Ishiguro. "I felt God's parental love through service... and I am grateful to spend my time volunteering. [It's] one of the most meaningful experiences I had this year."

You can learn more about Youth and Students for Peace, including upcoming service projects, [here](#).

[HOME](#)[ABOUT](#)[SINERGY](#)[PROJECTS](#)[EVENTS](#)[CONTACT](#)[JOIN](#)[SIGN IN](#)[DONATE](#)

*International Association of*

# YOUTH AND STUDENTS FOR PEACE

*Sharing the Culture of*

# HYOJEONG

[LEARN MORE](#)

IAYSP IS A GLOBAL FAMILY OF YOUNG PEOPLE BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE WITH TRUE LOVE.

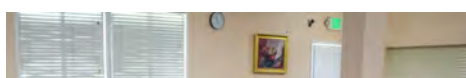
"While we may identify with a particular nationality, ethnicity, religion, or culture, we should affirm our common humanity, a value that transcends our individual backgrounds."

*Sun Jin Moon, IAYSP Thailand Inaugural Address*

## FEATURED EVENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS



## WHAT WE DO





**Character Education**



**Peace Designer Seminar**



**Intercultural Activities**

## TAKE ACTION

Do you know what the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are? In 2015 the member states of the United Nations created goals to address poverty, environmental issues, and how to ensure prosperity in all aspects for the people of the world. Each of these 17 areas have a specific goal to achieve by 2030 and it's up to each of us to learn and be aware of what they are in order to help with these global goals.

[Find Out More →](#)



International Association  
of Youth and Students  
for Peace supports the  
Sustainable Development  
Goals

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

