

FFWPU USA: Accelerate Leadership Certification Course for Unificationists

Naokimi Ushiroda
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Unificationist leaders have emerged feeling more inspired and capable after completing the Accelerate program, an intensive 16-week leadership training course online.

"I'm really grateful I did the Accelerate program," shared one youth camp director in Texas. "From the first session, I realized how much I needed it. Now I can confidently say that our mission and vision are clear and concise - it's amazing."

The program, organized by FFWPU USA leaders, provided practical and spiritual guidance to better equip leaders of all ages. Some 180 participants learned useful strategies and best practice tips from various leaders for developing and growing their respective teams, with over 120 receiving certifications so far. Thirteen sessions focused on key areas of leadership, including topics such as developing mission statements; spiritual self care; self improvement; effective communication; time management; team building; mentoring and coaching, and more.

"When I hear what people say [in meetings], I write it down," said Rev. Kevin Thompson, FFWPU USA West regional director, who led a session on time management and other on sermon-giving. "I collect every little thing; I may not use it for years, but I collect and categorize this information to use when I need it."

"Train your mentee to train someone else," advised FFWPU USA President, Rev. Naokimi Ushiroda, who spoke about mentoring and coaching as one of his three sessions. "It helps when mentees are in the process of having to train someone else, and the added benefit is that your influence and impact multiplies ... I also recommend getting coaching support because it provides clarity and makes a big difference in your speed of growth and development."

Rev. Andy Compton, who led a session on witnessing education, suggested starting with material that is personally inspiring. "You want to present to your guests the things that inspire and uplift you," he said. "That is really important to start engaging them."

A session on evangelizing highlighted how to deliver a great sermon, while another session detailed the essential resources needed for the matching and Marriage Blessing. Rev. Ernest Patton, FFWPU USA Southeast regional director, led a session on financial management where he outlined the spiritual laws of giving and receiving.

"Our lives are infinite, and our finances are also infinite," said Rev. Patton. "So we shouldn't have fear, but instead have the attitude of giving freely and tithing. Part of the financial education in our community is to build trust so that people know offerings will be wisely and responsibly used."

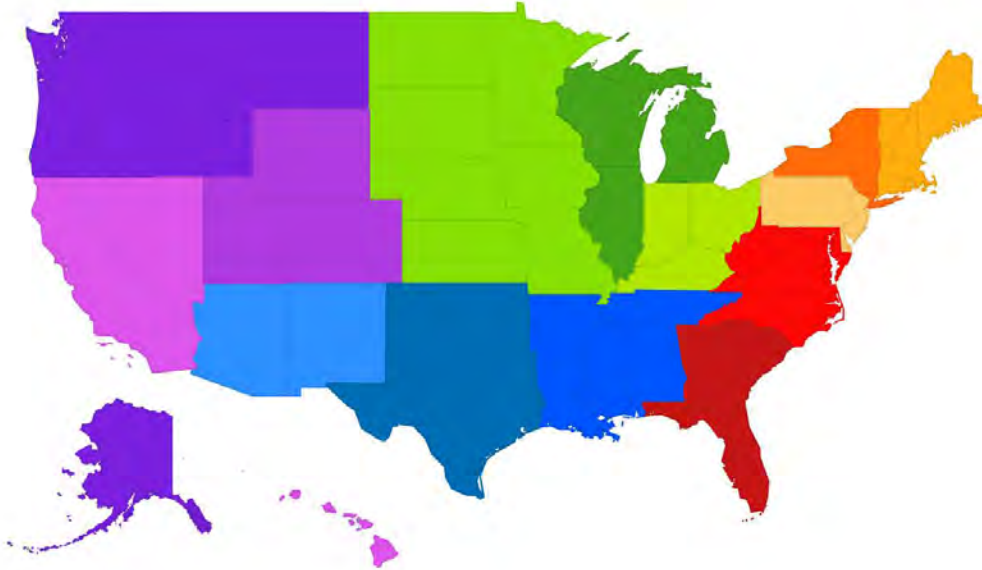
Participants also engaged in online games and breakout sessions to more closely connect with one another and share about their communities. "Something really miraculous happened," shared one youth leader in Canada. "I've felt ungrounded for the past two years, because when you're becoming a young leader in our movement, it's hard to know where to start and how to go about it ... But I learned a lot with this Accelerate program and made connections among all the leaders ... We all had a really good time."

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