

FFWPU USA: Top 5 YAYAM Victories of 2022 - More Couples, Leadership, Youth, Talent and Heart

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December 7, 2022



Photos courtesy of YAYAM USA

To say 2022 was a busy and productive year for FFWPU USA's Youth and Young Adult Ministry ([YAYAM](#)) would be an understatement. YAYAM's regional coordinators found much success over the year, but some particular moments stood out. "We have been inheriting from what the national [FFWPU] leadership has been doing, and we want to showcase our victories," said Yasutaka Ozawa, YAYAM Northeast regional coordinator, who presented a report on Dec. 6 of regional highlights across the country.

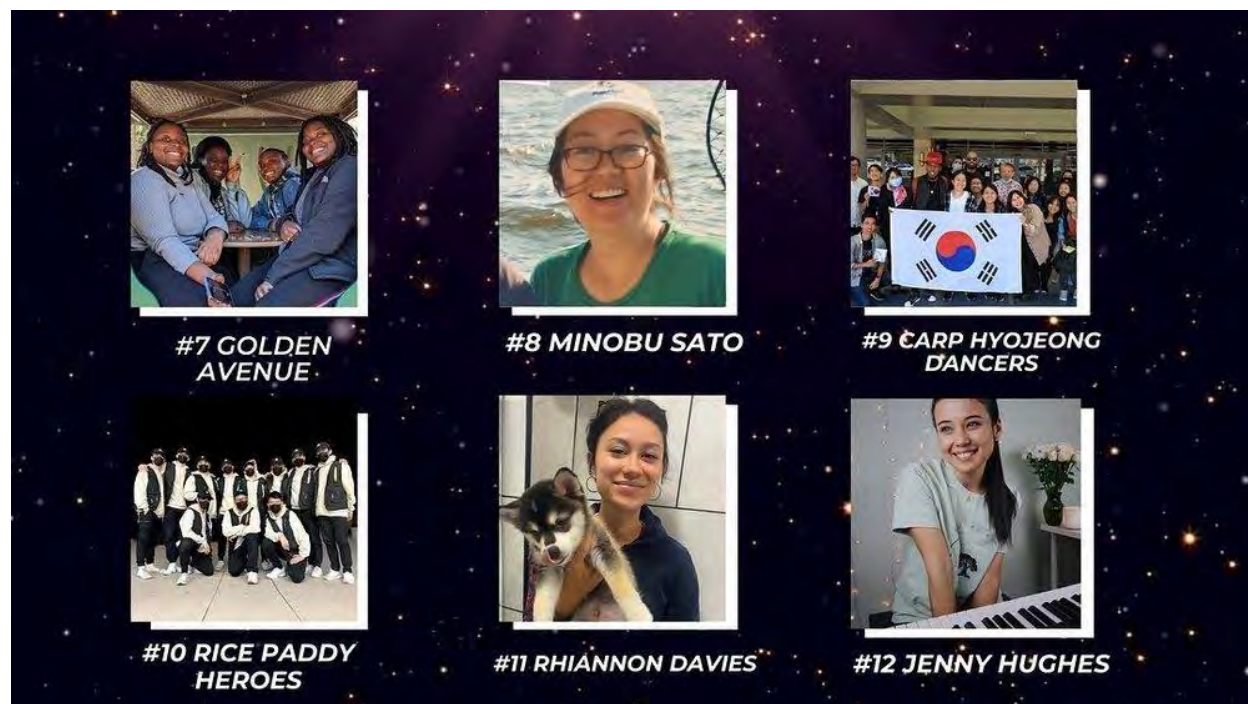


More Couples

On the West Coast, Ozawa shared that a key emphasis throughout the year has been preparing more young adults for the [Marriage Blessing](#). The YAYAM West team, led by regional coordinator Gabby Von Euw, hosted three programs this year: "Devoted," an online program to help young adults better understand the Marriage Blessing and strengthen their family relationships; "My Heritage, My Lineage,"

a Marriage Blessing workshop to help participants learn more about themselves and what they seek in the matching process; and "Owner of Your Sexuality," a High Noon workshop dedicated to helping young couples develop greater personal sexual integrity and education.

"With this kind of investment, there were 12 newly matched couples [from the West region] who went through the commitment ceremony," said Ozawa. "These couples are all preparing for the Blessing in 2023."



More Leadership

For YAYAM South, enhancing their leadership culture was a top area of focus. Regional leaders participated in different [conferences](#) and [family events](#) geared toward cultivating more interaction and unity within each community. "There are 19 young leaders throughout the region," said Ozawa, who credits Mitsu Fukuzaki and Brianna Schneider, new and former YAYAM South regional coordinator, respectively, with inspiring such a goal. "For these brothers and sisters to be able to rise up and come to the spotlight is practicing healthy leadership," said Ozawa.

Part of the region's "culture creation" plan included an increase in young leadership, as well as exercising self-care and compassion among all ministry members, and claiming all victories, regardless of the accomplishment size.

More Youth

YAYAM Midwest coordinator Riki Menning aimed to increase youth participation in various programs and events throughout the year, including camp workshops. In early August, the regional [Camp KOGAPE](#) held in Iowa had a whopping 130 participants and 22 staff. With dual themes of Pokemon and Four Realms of Heart, it was the first youth-family hybrid camp filled with games, faith education, and family time.

"The first half of the camp workshop was just for youth - high schoolers and middle schoolers," said Ozawa. "Parents came for the final few days, [and] the camp themes transitioned [accordingly]."

More Talent

Filial talent was a major highlight for YAYAM Southeast co-coordinators, Nan-Young Segovia and Isaac Jeong, who recently stepped down and was replaced by Ryusei Taguchi. The popular virtual "[HJ Stars](#)" talent show debuted nationwide in July with some 56 auditions, and 34 percent of applicants coming from the Southeast region. The fundraising program, which showcased a wide range of talent, raised nearly \$8,000 benefiting YAYAM USA.

"[HJ Stars] brought a lot of talent from across generations," said Ozawa. "[The Southeast] region alone contributed \$2,790 in donations, and received \$1,845 back for the region, so this was a great success."

More Heart

The "[Il Shim](#)" curriculum - which translates to "One Heart" - is an eight-week program for youth ministry

and was initiated as a regional event by former Northeast YAYAM coordinator, Diane Kelalu Hack. Ozawa said the June 2022 class had an impressive 80 Il Shim graduates. The annual program helps youth ages 12 to 20 develop their life of faith, understand True Parents' teachings, improve their relationship with their parents, and discover ways to contribute to their community.

"There was a two-day retreat which culminated with the graduation held at UTS," said Ozawa. "We had the graduates and 70 parents who came, as well as 21 staff, totaling 200 people who came out. We also had a special parents' portion of the ceremony because the parents are involved in the [Il Shim] education as well."

YAYAM leaders said they anticipate even greater accomplishments in 2023.

You can learn more about YAYAM USA [here](#).



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