

## Bowie, Maryland Hosts Southeast Subregional YAYAM Retreat

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The Youth and Young Adult Ministry (YAYAM) is starting off strong this January with a series of action-packed leadership retreats coast to coast. From January 11 to 13, the Southeast Subregion dived into a weekend of reconnection, reflection, and resolutions for the New Year. A total of 50 youth and young adult leaders from nine of the southeast states gathered in Bowie, MD to rekindle their calling, share best practices and plan for the semester ahead.



Hyungjoo K., the YAYAM Subregional Coordinator for the Southeast, led the workshop with passion, enthusiasm and fun. The weekend provided a unique opportunity for young adults from different states to meet one another and form bonds to carry into the next year. "Being from a smaller community, it's sometimes hard to see the bigger picture, but the workshop has reminded me how big our Movement actually is and how much I'd like to be a part of it," said Jooyoung G., the youth ministry leader in

Florida.

Josh A., a young Unificationist and pastor in North Carolina, agreed. "I'm excited for many things to come and was very happy to meet my Subregion 2 brothers and sisters," he said.



Included among the young adults were community elders, pastors, and parent mentors. Over the course of just three short days, the generations united with one another in what turned out to be an organic and moving time of growth. One major highlight was a session focused on bridging the gap between pastors and their youth leaders. Judie Lejune and Tasnah Bercy partnered to facilitate opportunities for each age group to understand the heart of their counterpart. The session ended with elders and youth leaders from each community declaring their plans for improving relationships after the retreat ends.



In another important meeting, Hyungjoo led a brainstorming session for welcoming back old friends and members of the community who have been out of touch for a while. Elders and youth leaders shared deeply and honestly with one another and came up with solutions for how to take care of these brothers and sisters.

Leaders also had a chance to meet with national team members Tasnah Bercy, Kaeleigh Moffitt and Leena Vincenz Gavin. Each national team member shared her vision for 2019 and provided resources for the participants to use back home. The group was fortunate enough to receive a visit from Levy Daughtery and Tyler Hendricks, who spoke about True Mother and the current state of the providence.



On the last day, Maryland was hit with eight inches of snow. Although everyone scrambled to change travel plans last-minute, it was the first time many of the leaders from the southernmost states had seen snow. The group seized the opportunity to have some fun outdoors. They took a trip to the nation's capital, and visited The Washington Times, a historic newspaper started many years ago by True Father.

All in all, the weekend provided a wonderful opportunity for bonding and the sharing of best practices. "Thank you for organizing this!" said Yeonha K., the Atlanta Youth Leader. "I believe there will be a transition in our community for the better... This change would not have happened if it wasn't for this retreat."

