

HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership Commencement

Thomas G. Walsh
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New York, United States – The HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership (HJI) held its 48th Commencement in New York City on May 25, 2024. Among the graduating class of 2024 were seven graduates in peace studies who received scholarships from UPF. They included Mr. Man Ho Woo, UPF International's executive director, who received an MA in peace studies, and was also presented with the prestigious Public Leadership Award.



Special remarks were offered by **Dr. Ki Hoon Kim**, chair of the World Christian Leadership Conference (WCLC), followed by **Rev. Demian Dunkley**, president of Family Federation USA.

In recognition of his international diplomacy and advocacy for peace, the Doctor of Humane Letters was awarded to **Amb. Joseph DeTrani**, former special envoy to the Six Party Talks with North Korea. Amb. DeTrani also delivered the Commencement Address.

In his speech, the ambassador told the students that working toward peace and stability in a world filled with challenges "requires a positive attitude that progress can be achieved; that you can make a difference; that you should never give up on hope – hope that many of these seemingly intractable issues can and will be resolved."

Amb. DeTrani concluded, "You will join the ranks of the ambassadors for peace. Much will depend on all of you to move us in this direction, for the common good, leaving a better world for future generations."

In his congratulatory remarks, **Dr. Thomas Walsh**, president, said: "You graduate today not only as holders of a prestigious graduate degree, but also as persons of spiritual insight and wisdom needed to discern and navigate successfully through the competing social-cultural-spiritual currents of today's world."



The class of 2024 was represented by 23 graduates. Student responses were delivered by **Ms. Bruna Allen**, representing students receiving their MA in religious studies, and **Mr. John Koester** on behalf of students receiving the MA in peace studies. Doctor of Ministry recipients were represented by **Ms. Silvana Colmenares**.

Following the conferring of degrees and the graduate responses, six students were inducted into Theta Alpha Kappa, the national honor society for the field of religious studies, by **Dr. Thomas Ward**, provost. Mr. John Koester was presented with the Distinguished Service Award, and Mr. Man Ho Woo with the Public Leadership Award.