

2018 NJIT CARP Hyo Jeong Trip to Japan and Korea is finally here

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After months of hard work and dedication, the much-anticipated 2018 CARP Hyo Jeong Trip is finally here! This weekend, 40 college students and 15 high school students from New Jersey will embark on their 17-day journey to Japan and Korea, where they will meet up with their international CARP brothers and sisters to explore Unification Holy Sites and learn about Japanese and Korean culture. The trip is part of a yearly exchange where students from around the world can unite under the banner of True Parents' mission.

The Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) is an organization dedicated to helping young people explore their own faith, values, and spirituality in the context of Unificationism. Since last fall, the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) chapter of CARP has been hard at work to recruit students for the upcoming trip and raise the funds to make it possible. They have fundraised through rain and rejections for the flights that are now just days away.

At first, many of the NJIT CARP students did not think that the tour to Japan and Korea would really happen. In 2017, only four students from New Jersey made the journey. True Mother encouraged those students to bring back three times that amount in 2018. At the time, recruiting 12 students seemed daunting. But then Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Regional Chairman of Family Federation North America, challenged them even further: instead of bringing 12 people, bring 36, or 10% of True Mother's National Goal. "That goal was beyond our imagination at the time," said Atsushi Takino, the CARP Trip Coordinator and Witnessing and Education Coordinator for District Three. "But Dr. Kim ignited a fire within us and it was the starting point of an amazing experience for us."

As the weeks and months passed, the fire continued to grow in each of the students. Every week, they held meetings at their school and invited student after student to learn more about the Divine Principle. On Mother's Day weekend, they worked nonstop through the rain to raise over \$1,000. And in the weeks leading up to the trip, they continued to fundraise despite having many setbacks.

The students learned about themselves through the experience, as well as about God and True Parents. "One realization I found during fundraising is that God is always waiting for us and we really have to put in the effort for God in order to connect with our Heavenly Parent," said Yasuhiro Ozawa, an NJIT student and the Youth Pastor of New Jersey.

"In this fundraising condition, it felt like God has challenged me and wanted to see if I would be unchanging," said NJIT CARP President Takafumi Mashiko. "There was a point where I pushed with all my heart and body and all I received were rejections. I became scared to fundraise but still pushed myself to continue.... I realized that this is the course of Heavenly Parents, True Parents, and Jesus. They continued to fight but even after they gave their all for our sake, we still misunderstand and see only from our perspective.... When I realized the course that Heavenly Parent, True Parents, and Jesus went through I understood their lonely position. I realized that I really have to stand up and push myself, even more, to love others, pray for others, and to understand Heavenly Parent's and True Parents' heart deeper."

Keisetsu Nakamura, NJIT CARP's Vice President, had a similar breakthrough while fundraising. "These past couple weeks have been a challenge and a blessing at the same time. Through this experience, I was able to communicate with God and understand God's heart and True Parents' heart on a deeper level. Just being able to have a heart of gratitude while talking to people of all different backgrounds and situations made me want to give back.... I met so many wonderful people who really gave me inspiration to keep pushing myself beyond my limits. I know that even though I got rejected many times, I stayed strong to always lean toward God's side and away from Satan's side.... My relationship with God and my life of faith was tested and I can confidently say that I was victorious over Satan. I felt like I grew so much more and received blessings from God. All of our CARP members who went fundraising really worked so hard and made a foundation for the sake of this HyoJeong CARP Trip and for the sake of Heavenly Parent and True Parents' will."

What inspiring testimonies! Stay tuned for stories and pictures of the incredible journey that is about to begin.

