

UPF Elizabeth, New Jersey became the first US location to hold Peace Road 2018

Emiljun Rapada
May 20, 2018



Elizabeth, New Jersey—On May 20, Elizabeth became the first U.S. location to hold Peace Road 2018. In partnership with the organization Groundwork Elizabeth and the City of Elizabeth, it was held in conjunction with the city's annual Tour de Elizabeth bicycle event. It attracted more than 500 bicyclists from around Union County and even neighboring towns and counties.

The bike route was divided into two. The first route covered the western part of the town commencing from the City Hall, while the second route was directed towards the Elizabethport area and the Elizabeth River Trail on the eastern part of the town. They both arrived at the very same spot where everyone started.

Registration started around 7:30 AM, and the tour officially began at 9 AM. Bikers as young as seven and as old as seventy from different levels of experience came together to celebrate Bike Month and to promote peace and tourism in the city. Elizabeth City Mayor Chris Bollwage, the main organizer, greeted everyone with so much enthusiasm despite the gloomy weather as this year marks the 15th year of Tour de Elizabeth. Bicycles in various shapes and sizes flooded the streets of Elizabeth; even a young mono cyclist participated in the tour. Ten Peace Road bikers made it through the first phase (around 7 miles) in an hour because of several inclined roads. After a short break, the team trekked the second route (around 8 miles), completing the whole 15-mile bike tour.

Jonathan Phillips, the executive director of Groundworks Elizabeth along with bike marshals and local police, guided riders along the path and made sure that everyone was safe. Finishers, filled with pride and a sense of accomplishment, were greeted with big cheers and congratulations.

After the tour, there was a raffle drawing with a grand prize of a brand-new bicycle and helmet. More prizes were raffled off, courtesy of different sponsors and booth exhibitors. Each participant was also provided with a t-shirt, hat and goody bag full of gifts and informative material, including a Peace Road postcard.

Emiljun Rapada, the Peace Road USA 2018 national coordinator, thanked all the participants and encouraged them to join other scheduled locations in Jersey City, New Jersey, and Manhattan, New York, in June and July respectively. UPF's Peace Road project is an outgrowth of the vision of UPF Founder Sun Myung Moon for an international highway connecting all continents. It began in the United States in 2015 and has expanded to become a series of international annual events. For more information and latest updates, check the Peace Road website (www.peaceroadusa.org).