

UPF Las Vegas' dinner for attendees of the ILC in Washington DC

Leslie Rigney and Katherine Duncan
December 30, 2016



Las Vegas, NV – The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Las Vegas headed by its Executive Director, Mrs. Leslie Rigney, and Chairwoman, Mrs. Katherine Duncan, in cooperation with other affiliate organizations namely the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) – Las Vegas through its Senior Pastor, Rev. Ken Doo, the Women’s Federation for World Peace (WFWP) – Las Vegas through its chairwoman, Mrs. Mary Hida and the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) Las Vegas representative, Mrs. Kay Yamaguchi, hosted a lovely dinner on December 29th to those who attended the recently concluded International Leadership Conference (ILC) in Washington D.C. from November 28-December 1, 2016. Other important community leaders in Las Vegas have also been invited including one of the Parents of the Year 2016 recipients. It is very significant to note that this event was the very first interfaith dialogue between black American churches that are on both sides of the political aisle in Las Vegas. A victory!

The formal dinner meeting was held at the former residence of UPF Co-Founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon in Las Vegas. Each guest was greeted at the front door and was given a folder containing the same conference packets given to the ILC participants. A summary report of the conference was also provided in the folder. Rev. Richard de Sena, UPF USA President was also in attendance who presented the highlights of the ILC as well as the heart and vision of the Founders.

The program began with welcoming remarks from Mrs. Duncan and Mrs. Rigney. President de Sena showed a short video about UPF and a brief presentation on the Peace Principles. He also emphasized the vision and hope of Dr. Moon in establishing the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP).

The guests and hosts were asked to introduce themselves: Assemblyman Chris Edwards; Councilman Bob Coffin, and his wife Mary Hause, Rev. Bill and Debbie Owens, Coalition of African American Pastors (CAAP); Rev. Bill McDonnell, Superintendent, Churches of Southern Nevada and his wife Faith McDonnell; Katherine Duncan; Rev. Ken Doo; Mrs. Leslie Rigney; Mr. Jim Rigney; and Rev. Richard de Sena.

Following the introductions was a sharing of the participants’ experiences at the ILC. Assemblyman Chris Edwards commented how wonderful it was to be with sincerely good people and how important the spiritual and moral aspects of good governance. Mrs. Hause, although she did not attend the ILC, was very interested in the mention of the media, as she just recently retired as a journalist. Meanwhile, Councilman Bob Coffin spoke about his past experiences with ILC in Korea. He said the events always advocated for unity and peace. Mrs. McDonnell expressed her deep concern for the youth and how to help the families, to save America while Rev. McDonnell expressed how important it is to seek unity, and that if we are for peace and the dignity of the human family, we should be able to come together, no matter what political party we belong to. Both sides could see their similarities very easily and they vowed to continue to work together. Rev. Owens expressed his deep appreciation for the ILC, and how wonderful the event truly was.

Dinner was served into the next room which was set up with beautiful china and flatware, contributed by Mr. Jim Rigney and Mrs. Sera Hirano. Mrs. Yamaguchi prepared a sumptuous four- course meal with matching beautiful flower arrangements. Mrs. Hida and Mrs. Hirano served with much love and grace.



While Assemblyman Edwards had to leave for another commitment, Rev. Wasson arrived just as dinner started. At the dining table, each person shared their deepest concerns for Las Vegas, for the people they were caring for and for the country. Each person shared the same sentiments and realized how important for people to work together to resolve these issues especially among the youths. There was a lot of deep sharing and appreciation for one another. Mary and Sera also shared about WFWP, which was very interesting to the ladies. Katherine made a call to action and encouraged everyone to think of ways on how to reach out to present and former members of Congress to the World Summit in Korea on February and how to actively contribute to future local programs and events in Las Vegas.

As everyone bid goodnight to one another, we are looking forward to meeting again. Although Rev. Gibbons could not attend and Sen. Becky Harris could not change her schedule, yet the warmth and deep connection centering on the works of ILC and IAPP was very encouraging.

The following day, December 30th, Mrs. Rigney met with Senator Becky Harris in her law office. She was provided with reports and other information about the ILC and was briefed on the work of UPF Las Vegas. She was interested in assisting with a forum on Marriage and the Family, which is one of the major programs of UPF. *"Her willingness to engage, in spite of the level of pressing works in her life as a public servant is very impressive,"* confessed Mrs. Rigney.