

Seventh National Ocean Challenge Program 2015 concludes

Clint Woods
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In Kodiak, Alaska, the Seventh National Ocean Challenge Program (NOCP), which took place from July 12 to August 1, 2015, has come to a successful conclusion.



True Parents initiated the first Ocean Challenge programs in the Gloucester, Massachusetts, area as a core program component of Ocean Church USA. However, due to changes in the Bluefin tuna population and other factors, that tremendous program could not be sustained annually in the Gloucester area.



Therefore, in 2009 a team of early pioneers trained by True Father came together centering upon Kodiak, Alaska, and determined to restart and create a world-class program focused primarily on the development of Unification-born teenagers and young adults, and the National Ocean Challenge Program (NOCP) was born. With little money but a strong commitment to ownership, the team brought young Unificationists from all over America, and each year the program grew in quality and quantity. Gradually individual, family and company donors began to contribute to help out. Soon thereafter, True Parents' Ocean Peace company stepped up to help start a scholarship program for youth due to the costs to travel to Kodiak.



By 2015 Kodiak had become "THE destination" for young Unificationists not only to receive top-level ocean-based training but also to connect with True Parents' heart and vision for the Ocean Providence. Participants learn why True Parents love Alaska so much, and why Kodiak is key to the successful dispensation of the Pacific Rim Providence. In addition, they learn Divine Principle and get opportunities

to meet world- and national-level leaders who talk about their experiences with True Parents and impart oceanic wisdom as well.

During the 2015 National Ocean Challenge Program FFWPU-USA President Dr. Michael Balcomb and his wife, Fumiko, joined right in to catch fish and also to lead the Peace Road event with all of NOCP supporting. Dr. Michael Jenkins fished with great enthusiasm, even catching a rare yelloweye rockfish.



FFWPU Continental Director Dr. Ki Hoon Kim was on his way to Kodiak when True Mother reached out and snatched him right from between flights in San Francisco to come to Korea. “We all took that as a good sign, and many felt that the high-level unity among everyone may have triggered that,” said Clint Woods, an NOCP organizer. “We felt happy for Dr. Kim but sad that he could not come and catch the ‘big one’ this time.”



Ocean Church USA Director Kensaku Takahashi also spent a week with the group and spoke of the deep heart of True Parents toward Ocean Church. Mr. Michael Faris, president of Ocean Peace Inc., also attended to fish with the participants and to deliver an exciting and professional presentation on the great

works accomplished by Ocean Peace Inc. Naokimi Ushiroda, president of CARP USA, visited early on and was a huge hit with all participants, leaving some key and useful tips for all to follow. Mr. Joshua Yashiro, president of Ocean Providence LLC, and his wife, Jennifer, spent a week with them as well. According to Jennifer, the program was beyond her imagination; she felt no words could capture the awesome experience of NOCP 2015.

Many other leaders and spouses also came to renew their relationships and enjoy interacting with NOCP participants and the program. Every year participants graduate and leave Kodiak with real-world connections for future employment and other options for their future, unparalleled experiences with God in creation, and complimentary boxes of the finest king salmon, halibut and other fish filets to be found anywhere on the planet: a gift to share with family and friends back home.



At this year's program, in the spirit of the "age of women" and True Mother's leadership, 50 percent of the participants were young ladies ready to take on the Ocean Challenge with gusto and great heart. Many became captains in training (CITS) and team leaders. The entire program was handled primarily by Unificationist-born young people, including the program coordinator role, but with experienced elders on hand to lend advice and support whenever needed.



All boat mechanic and maintenance needs also were taken care of by a wonderful young Unificationist and several assistants. The participants included seven young people from outside the US, including Korea, Japan, South America, and Canada. Additionally, nearly all the top leaders of the North American

FFWPU arrived, fished, brought spouses whenever possible, and basked in the uniqueness that is the Emerald Island of Kodiak. That allowed very important strategic leadership meetings to also be conducted concurrently with the youth training.



The entire Kodiak community, including those outside our faith, were invited to participate in different aspects of this year's program, including the incredible Peace Road event that all NOCP staff and participants partnered with. The local mayor was astounded and, as she said, "very proud" to be a part of this special time and activity. The head pastor and many congregants from the Philippines Bible Church also came to the NOCP closing ceremony. There, young and old alike played sports, attended an "open mic" evening, and enjoyed a BBQ. It was topped off by everyone signing peace lanterns. When these were lit, they rose miles into the late-night sky under a full moon with lapping waves on a black sand beach. Everyone present was awestruck at that amazingly beautiful sight.

"NOCP Kodiak is blessed to be able to support the young people of the United States and other nations and honors the opportunity to do so," said Clint Woods. "NOCP strives to exhibit the heart of a true elder son, attending True Parents with great filial piety and serving and supporting brothers and sisters from all parts of the Americas and the world."

For those interested in learning more about NOCP Kodiak or wishing to contribute, please visit www.oceanchallenge.org or, on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/oceanchallenge>.

