

WFWP USA: The Chicago Bridge of Peace - A Celebration of Healing and Unity

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On October 5th, at 10 a.m., the Dining Room of the Wojcik Conference Center at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois, became a place of warmth, connection, and hope as the Chicago Bridge of Peace event welcomed approximately 50 attendees. This gathering, hosted by the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), symbolized the power of reconciliation and the importance of building bridges across cultures, generations, and personal divides.



The event opened gracefully with emcee Julie Wagner's warm welcome. This was followed by a reading of words from WFWP founder Mother Moon, presented by Patricia Fliginger of the WFWP Chicago

chapter. These opening remarks set the tone for the day, embodying Mother Moon's message of peace and unity. The audience was then treated to an uplifting interfaith prayer and a musical performance, bringing together diverse voices and setting a heartfelt atmosphere for the Bridge Ceremony.



Central to the event was the Bridge Ceremony itself, which featured five pairs of bridge crossers, each representing different forms of healing and reconciliation. Two pairs symbolized the historical bond and challenges between American and Japanese communities, while other pairs focused on Latin American-Japanese and French-Japanese relations. Another pairing symbolized generational healing where a father-son duo crossed the bridge together, demonstrating the impact of unity and understanding within family bonds. Following these moving exchanges, Julie Wagner invited attendees to reflect on the divides in their own lives, encouraging them to extend their hands to others as an embrace of love and a promise of peace. This gesture, simple yet profound, aimed to foster a spirit of healing among all present.

The event's diverse group of participants, from emcees to performers, represented varied backgrounds, races, and cultures, united by a shared desire for peace and reconciliation. A highlight was the special recognition of Mama Joy, a longtime friend of WFWP, who was awarded an Ambassador for Peace Award by the UPF Chicago chapter leader Rev. Jeff Schmidt. Her unwavering devotion to Heavenly Parent and peace in the community touched the hearts of all who know her.

The event concluded with a group photo, capturing the joy, hope, and unity among attendees. Yet, one

of the most memorable moments occurred shortly after: a letter from Illinois State Senator Tammy Duckworth arrived, congratulating WFWP on the success of the Bridge of Peace. Receiving her personal signature on the letter was especially moving, as it signified her genuine support and commitment to peace in the community.

The Chicago Bridge of Peace left an indelible mark on everyone in attendance. The opening of hearts and the embrace of acceptance was evident in each crossing of the bridge. This event was more than a ceremony - it was a powerful testament to the belief that healing and peace are achievable, one bridge at a time.