

Meaningful World

ATOP MeaningfulWorld's Annual United Nations Mind-Body-Eco-Spirit Festival

Nurturing Racial and Environmental Justice

10 June 2021

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Pastor Daren Jaime, Eric Manigian, Sohayla Eldeeb, Farah Chandu, Isha Parupudi

ATOP Meaningfulworld's Annual United Nations Mind-Body-Eco-Spirit Festival was held virtually on 10 June 2021. The theme was Nurturing Racial and Environmental Justice.

The festival opened with Rachel Davidovich thanking everyone who was in attendance for their participation and welcoming this year's MeaningfulWorld Ambassador graduates. She then introduced Eric Manigian from the Buddhist Action Coalition for a meditation. Manigian related The Shambala Warrior Prophecy, which is twelve centuries old: "Now the time is coming when great courage is required of the Shambala warriors, moral courage, and physical courage. And that is because they are going to go right into the heart of the barbarian powers to dismantle their weapons." He added that the Shambala warriors must go into training to learn the use of both compassion and "insight into the radical interdependence of all phenomena." The world is full of pain, and it is important not to be afraid of that suffering, he reminded the audience, and the above tools will assist us, "I recognize that I am not separate from all that is," he reflected. "I will not lead a harmful life, not encourage others to do so. I will live in harmony with all life and the environment that sustains it."

Samer Sabbour, MeaningfulWorld United Nations Intern, introduced Dr. Ani Kalayjian, Chairperson of the Festival. Dr. Kalayjian shared her poem "I Cannot breathe, please stop, I am choking." The poem called for individual and collective responsibility, for people to take action towards justice, compassion, and lifting one another up.

*"Stop the cycle of violence as it's a vicious cycle,
begetting more violence! Remember what Dr. King said:
Only light could transform darkness."*

She then welcomed everyone and shared about MeaningfulWorld's emphasis on self-care and humanitarian service around the globe, trauma prevention and treatment with increased healing awareness and Emotional Quotient (EQ), all of which serve to combat generational and horizontal trauma and violence in Armenia and other vulnerable countries around the globe.

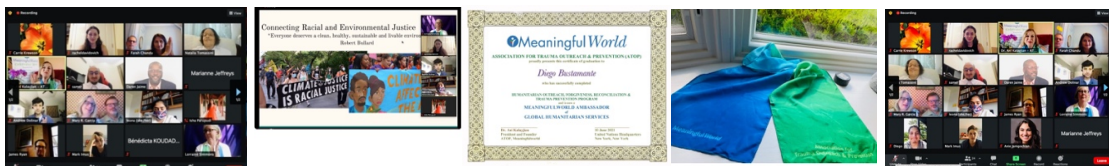
Pastor Daren Jaime, Anchor of BronxNet Television and Radio in Bronx, NY, spoke about the Black Lives Matter movement. He expressed how the pandemic caused all of us to step back from our usual routines

and to take notice of how the murder of George Floyd and others like Breanna Taylor are not isolated incidents but rather are symptoms of an underlying disease of disrespect and lack of equality and equity towards black lives. Pastor Daren Jaime reiterated the importance of taking the lessons of the pandemic, combined with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including making space for each other in our lives, and heeding the call to be peacemakers in our society. To do this, we must listen empathically not only to be heard next, but we must truly listen to hear what underlies the hurt and pain of others, so that we may help the healing process to begin. We must be empathic and hold the trauma of racism rather than deny it. He concluded with three important points:

1. Learn to hold the trauma of racism with empathy.
2. Be compassionate witnesses.
3. Be empathic listener.

Farah Chandu, of Willow Faith Chorus, followed with a musical interlude, playing guitar and singing two songs—Louis Armstrong’s “Wonderful World” and Bette Midler’s “From a Distance”—with her husband Rev. Paul Carbone. The next presentation was by Sohayla Eldeeb, Global Outreach Director for Zero Hour. The mission of Zero Hour is to center the voices of diverse youth in the conversation on climate and environmental justice. Zero Hour is a youth-led movement that creates entry points, training, and resources for young activists and others who wish to take action on climate change.

Meaningfulworld United Nations Intern, Leona Hariharan and Andrew Dolinar, Intern Coordinator, and recipient of 2021 Meaningfulworld Mindful Leader of the Year Award, presented a powerful message about connecting racial and environmental justice by connecting our words, thoughts, and deeds with each other with compassion and emotional intelligence. They briefly discussed the 7-Step Integrative Healing Model as a tool to help us create a meaningful and peaceful life with one another.



Isha Parupudi, MeaningfulWorld United Nations Intern, presented next, showcasing a traditional Indian dance interlude based on Maya Angelou’s poem “I Will Rise.”

Next, MeaningfulWorld Ambassadors Lorraine Simmons and Natalia Maria Tomassini introduced the 2021 Ambassador graduates, who each received diplomas and handmade blue-green scarves to mark their many achievements. 2021 Graduates were Diego Bustamante; Rachel Davidovich, BA & BBA; Andrew Dolinar, MA; Mary Ryan Garcia, MA, MSW; Mark Imus, BS; Samer Sabbour, BS; Mandi Kollmeier, BA; and Meira Yasin, DNP.

The afternoon closed with an **Ubuntu Peace Circle** and MeaningfulWorld’s **Heart to Heart Circle of Love and Gratitude**. Everyone imagined being in a circle, connecting with the other through the heart, and imagining and intending to send love to several countries of their choosing: Artsakh, Syria, Brazil, DR Congo, Israel, Palestine, Japan, Uganda, Armenia, Egypt, Haiti, Rwanda, Burundi, and the USA.

Our next event, Garden Healing & Gratitude Party, is on Saturday 31 July. For further information and to RSVP email info@meaningfulworld.com, also visit our website @ www.meaningfulworld.com