



US AREA - Y SERVICE CLUB ALLIANCE

Special Edition - November 25, 2019

A MESSAGE FROM US AREA PRESIDENT:

Passion is one of the important milestones of one's life. Attending the first International Y's Men's Regional Director-Elect Summit in Toledo was more than a typical Y's Men's training session. It was an 'experience of a lifetime' with 100 fellow members from around the world right here in the U.S.A.



As U.S. Area President, I had the honor and privilege to MC the Opening Ceremony and introduced the Mayor of Toledo, **Wade Wapszukiewicz**, YMCA of Greater Toledo, CEO and President, **Brad Toft**, Y's Men International President, **Jennifer Jones** and International General Secretary, **Jose Varghese**.

My 'experience' of the summit came when I was standing in the cold with tears of hope and pride at the grave site and before the headstone our founder, Paul William Alexander. I realized then my *passion* was the same as our founder, 'serve the YMCA' and through no other world-wide organization than Y's Men International can I serve the organization that developed me into the man I am today.

With a grateful heart filled with gratitude to IP Moon and everyone involved in the summit's 'experience of a lifetime', I say, "*Mahalo nui loa*" – *Thank you very much*.

Bobby Stivers-Apiki, AP

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CONCLUSION OF INAUGURAL INTERNATIONAL RDE SUMMIT

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND - The first International RDE Summit, held in Toledo, Ohio, USA, has concluded. The Summit was hosted at the Radisson Hotel at The University Of Toledo from 14-17 November 2019.

Together with numerous senior officers, staff, and observers, including Past International **President V.S. Bashir**, the Regional Directors Elect, Area Presidents Elect and International Executive Officers gathered to foster global fellowship in an atmosphere of mutual learning. As part of the ongoing preparations for the centennial anniversary of the organization, the meeting was held in the hometown of the organization's founder, **Judge Paul William Alexander**, to grant delegates the opportunity to witness the great legacy of the organization and be inspired to build for the future.



In tune with a key element of the Challenge 22 Operational Plan to inspire a sense of belonging

and being a vital component of a larger whole, the International RDE Summit provided space for empowerment, inspiration, fellowship and network building. Emergent leaders left the event with a new group of friends and resource people at their disposal, to boost their leadership potential and bring the movement into a new era.

Prior to the official commencement of the Summit, a minute's silence was observed for **Poul - Henrik Hove Jakobsen**, before recently-elected International President Elect (IPE), **Mr Jacob Kristensen**, was installed by Immediate Past International President (IPIP) Moon Sang-bong.

The event was opened during a ceremony on Thursday evening where the Mayor of Toledo, **Mr Wade Kapszukiewicz**, officially inaugurated the event. The evening's guest speaker was Greater Toledo YMCA President and CEO, **Mr Brad Toft**.

Ice-breaking exercises launched the formal activities and the week included a wide range of topics, including goal setting, finance and support, the Legacy Project, unified branding, new approaches to working with the YMCA, and international programs. Case stories of success and innovative thinking were also presented by selected delegates, along with numerous opportunities for Area and Regional meetings and informal socializing and networking activities.

A highlight of the event was a bus tour on Saturday afternoon, covering sites relevant to the life of Judge Alexander, from the time of his birth in 1888 until his death in 1967. A detailed script, prepared by association historian **Debbie Redmond**, accompanied the tour and gave the visitors highly-detailed descriptions of the points of interest covered during the tour. The first stop was the Historic Woodlawn Cemetery, where, as part of the Legacy Project, a new headstone now identifies the founder's previously unmarked grave. Delegates were invited to place single-stemmed roses on the grave and were joined in this commemoration by the grandson of Judge Alexander, **Alan Otwell and his wife, Sandy**.



(L-R) IP Jennifer Jones, PAP Debbie Redmond, Mr Alan & Mrs Sandy Otwell, IPIP Moon Sang-bong, Mr Brad Toft, ISG Jose Varghese, IPE Jacob Kristensen

During a short service at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, the church Judge Alexander attended, his grandson, Alan Otwell, shared a recollection of childhood memories of his grandfather.

After visiting numerous other relevant landmarks, including the house Judge Alexander was born in, the tour moved to the newly-named Judge Paul William Alexander Park (formerly 'Superior Park') for a dedication by **Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz**. The renaming of the park fulfils another goal of the Legacy Project, achieved with extensive support from Mayor Kapszukiewicz and the City of Toledo. The unwavering assistance of the YMCA of Greater Toledo and its CEO and President, Mr **Brad Toft**, to facilitate the Summit and associated activities is also warmly acknowledged.



HERE IS DEBBIE'S CEMETERY SPEECH ---

WOODLAWN CEMETERY HEADSTONE VISITATION

97 years ago TODAY, Paul William Alexander alongside 65 other people met in Atlantic City New Jersey for the very first International Convention. The dates of the Convention were the 15 to 17th of November. These individuals from 17 clubs worked together to decide on the Constitution as well as the framework for the organization and the election of the first International President. Upon returning home, the clubs finalized the Constitution and the organization became official on 22 November 1922.

In talking about that very first Convention, here is what Paul William Alexander had to say in his own words: "In the convention hall at Atlantic City where our International Association began.....were two huge banners. One bore the inscription "And Their Young Men Shall See Visions." The other read "Where There Is No Vision the People Perish:" And these legends have woven themselves deep into the warp and woof of our Y's Men's Movement. A fellow who has not the capacity to catch the vision, to sense the need, to feel the urge, to absorb the inspiration for the kind of idealism we stand for has not the capacity to be a Y's Man." End quote.

We are here today to honor our founder, our first International President, and the inspiration behind our organization. Although he did not want to be honored or worshiped, it is our DUTY to acknowledge his VISION, his passion and his work. And so, we must repeat the motto written by him.....To Acknowledge the Duty that Accompanies every Right.

We honor you, Judge Paul William Alexander and your Family for your VISION, love and dedication to the International Association of Y's Men by each individual present placing a flower on your grave.

Debbie Redmond
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COMMENTS FROM OTHER PARTICIPANTS -----

Debbie Redmond ----- REFLECTIONS ON RDE SUMMIT

If someone told me two years ago when visiting and exploring Toledo that we would have leaders from all over the World to come visit this location and attend several special events honoring our founder, I would not have believed them. If someone stated 11 months ago when traveling to Toledo to show it to our then IP Moon Sangbong and AP Kim Sang Chae that we would be coming back to share it with more people, the response would have been to say "no". However, it happened and it took a lot of hard work to get to this point. With the Paul William Alexander Legacy Co-Chair, AP **Kim Sang Chae**, we planned and worked throughout the year. For AP Kim Sang Chae, the importance was getting money to provide for the Legacy. As ISD Historian and Legacy Co-Chair, it required a lot of communication by email as well as in person in May alongside ISG **Jose Varghese** and PAP **Charley Redmond** in Toledo. In July, there was a presentation and request for approval to proceed and fund the items we had identified for the Legacy from the International Council Meeting.

Throughout this process, it was important to reach out and contact all three grandsons of our

founder and share the journey with them. For example, before sitting down to help design the headstone with ISG Jose Varghese, it was important to make sure the family gave permission (all three grandsons agreed). In order to get a park in the City of Toledo to be renamed, it took a work with the Mayor's Office, the Park and Recreations Director, and the CEO of Toledo YMCA.

The Research part of it involved tapping into the Y's Men Archives in Minnesota, contacting the Toledo Public Library Research Department, working with a Great Nephew of the founder, online research and asking a lot of questions. The actual planning for the event involved everything from location, meals, transportation, equipment, and numerous details.

The highlight of the event was the bus tour with a carefully written script and numerous stops by the two buses in and around Toledo. Bus one had Debbie Redmond and the other one had Charley Redmond. There was a tribute at the Cemetery with placement of flowers on the grave of Paul William Alexander to include one grandson, Alan Otwell, and his wife, Sandy. All in attendance were able to place their own flower. There was a service at the Church attended by the Alexander family with a tribute by the grandson. Then we went to the park for the Dedication in the name of Paul William Alexander (attended by the Mayor and the CEO of Toledo YMCA). This included TV news coverage. A visit to the childhood home, a visit to the childhood church of the Alexanders, a visit to the Family Court Building with a plaque showing the location of the Toledo YMCA when Y's Men was founded, a visit to the Lucas County Court House where Judge Alexander had an office and held court for many years, additional views of the Nicholas Building where then Lawyer, Alexander, had an office. Finally, a view of the Ohio Building where the editing of items for newsletters in the YMCA "Association Men" began in 1922 which was how the word was spread to other YMCAs. Was it worth all the work and time? Yes, indeed!!!!!! Wish all of you could have shared the excitement as we retraced the footsteps of our founder.

Dan Eberly ---- The first International RDE Summit in Toledo Ohio, left me reinvigorated, inspired and challenged to help grow our movement. We have a very competent YMI staff - I had several good conversations with **ISG Jose Varghese** and was impressed with the way **Tracy Movigliatti** and **James Olle** managed to keep everything going. Our YMI Leaders were knowledgeable and shared more information and ideas than I could absorb in the four day Summit, I am looking forward to IP **Jennifer Jones'** visit January for the PSW Region's IP Dinner. I was glad to meet with our US Area Leaders: **AP Bobby Stivers-Apiki**, our new APE **Shaju Sam** from North Atlantic Region, Area Treasurer **Abraham Thomas**, ISD & ASD PR **Varghese Korason** and the other US Area RDEs and RDs and of course IPAP **Tibor Foki**. PAPs **Debbie & Charley Redmond** were the perfect hosts and the PWA Legacy tour made a huge impact. I hope to explore ideas from both India (family clubs) & Korea (a group that knew how to have fun) that have vibrant, growing Y's Men's organizations. Looks like there is work to do in the PSW Region and US Area - I believe we can rise to the task.

Gay Roberts ---- I agree with you, Danny! I really enjoyed meeting with our team members and look forward to our next online meeting. I am the newbie in the crowd and look forward to learning from everyone on our team.

Joe Kanjamala ---- It was an amazing and exciting learning opportunity. I made lot of precious friends. I will be meeting with **Dr. Kim** of Korea when he visits New York in January. I will also visiting some clubs in India when I am on vacation In India end of December and early January. Nice to see and share good times with many of you in Toledo. Visiting Paul William Alexander's Tomb was a wonderful experience. Thanks Debbie and team.

Varghese Korason ----- Bobby - It was indeed a great time together at the sacred soil. Discussions were productive and we have more opportunities in US Area, than any obstacles.

Appreciate you and your team to make positive impact.

[More pictures from Charley Redmond](#)After opening Double Click on Photos - C Redmond

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