



Special Article - Bill for adoptees without American citizenship passed by House of Representatives

Special Feature - Overseas Koreans Forum holds policy forum to find solution for 'demographic cliff'

Newsworthy Topics - Beijing Winter Olympics, 'Huge global sports festival' marred by questionable judging and doping row





04	Special Article	Bill for adoptees without American citizenship passed by House of Representatives
06	Special Feature	Overseas Koreans Forum holds policy forum to find solution for 'demographic cliff'
08	Newsworthy Topics	Beijing Winter Olympics, 'Huge global sports festival' marred by questionable judging and doping row
10	The Korean Connection	60 years of diplomatic relations between Korea and Latin America
12	Global Koreans	2nd-generation Korean American Jason Park appointed deputy secretary in Virginia, United States Korean bodybuilder Seok Jin-ho overcomes car accident injuries and wins Mr New Zealand Classic Physique Korean American businesswoman Michele Kang becomes controlling owner of Washington Spirit professional American soccer team
14	Cultural Heritage	Byeongsanseowon Confucian Academy in Andong
16	Meritorious Compatriots	'Korean civilian diplomat in Hawaii,' Director Tony Lee passes away
17	Next Generational Focus	Douglas Kim, Korean American master sommelier
18	Compatriot News	Shops near Tsuruhashi Station form Osaka Koreatown, etc.
20	Compatriot Calendar	German Federation of Korean Associations (GFKA) gives 'Happy Boxes' to compatriots in vulnerable social groups, etc.
21	Global Correspondence	Korean Cultural Center in Thailand holds 'hanbok' fashion show
22	OKF News	Overseas Koreans Foundation and Ministry of Personnel Management implement plan to recruit overseas Korean talent, etc.
24	Institutional News	Invitational training through Korea International Cooperation Agency becomes known as 'cradle of talent' in Guatemala, etc.
25	Column	A Short Letter to Overseas Korean Youths Kim Ryung, assistant professor at Hongik University Overseas Koreans Foundation invitational scholarship student (2011)
26	Foundation Announcements	Recruiting Study Korean overseas reporters (7th recruitment, to last until March 14), etc.



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You can also read this publication online at webzine.korean.net

Bill for adoptees without American citizenship passed by House of Representatives

Adjustments by Senate remain; 19,000 Korean Americans stand to benefit



Leah, who was born in Korea and adopted in the U.S., and yet wasn't able to undergo steps to acquire American citizenship, speaks at an event calling for the passing of the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2021 in front of the Capitol in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 13, 2019.

A bill that would bring deliverance to 19,000 Korean Americans who were unable to attain citizenship even after being adopted in the United States has been passed by the U.S. House of Representatives.

According to the Korean American Grassroots Conference (KAGC) (President Kim Dong-seok), the America COMPETES Act that was passed by the House of Representatives on Feb. 4 included provisions to help adoptees gain citizenship.

Democrat Rep. Adam Smith, who is also chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, proposed the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2021 in March last year. The act was combined with the America COMPETES Act, which has now been approved by the House of Representatives.

The purpose of the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2021 is to help those who are experiencing many difficulties in their day-to-day lives because they are unable to attain citizenship even though they were adopted in the U.S.

Following World War II, U.S. citizens adopted children from many countries, including Korea, but approximately 49,000 of them were unable to receive citizenship. The KAGC said around 19,000 of the adoptees in this human rights blind spot are Koreans.

Most cases involved adoptive parents who weren't familiar with the citizenship acquisition process or difficulties that arose, such as the dissolution of adoption

or divorce between the adoptive parents, leading adoptees to give up on attempting the complicated and time-consuming application process.

With regard to the America COMPETES Act, a similar act was already passed by the Senate last June and discussions between the Senate and the House of Representatives need to follow. If they proceed without a hitch, the provisions regarding adoptee citizenship acquisition will also be signed by President Joe Biden and executed.

Such negotiations can take anywhere from one to three months.

"I am extremely proud to be able to say that the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2021 has been passed today by the House of Representatives as part of the America COMPETES Act," Smith said. "It is a very meaningful development for the many adoptees without American citizenship."

He emphasized, "The adoptees who have not been able to receive a citizenship through no fault of their own and live amid fears for the future will be able to realize their rights as American citizens."

Up until now, the KAGC has placed an emphasis on the creation of a law that would help adoptees acquire citizenship.

The KAGC met with representatives in various parts of the U.S., including New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Houston, to request their participation so that a bipartisan proposal might take place with the backing of representatives from both the Democrat Party and the Republican Party.

As a result, around 60 members of the House of Representatives, including Smith (Democrat Party) and John Curtis (Republican Party), participated in the proposal for the bill.

"We'd like to thank Reps. Smith and Curtis for their bipartisan effort, the representatives that participated in the proposal, and the supporters in various circles," Song Won-seok, executive director of the KAGC, said. "Without the years of effort on their part, the bill could not have reached this milestone of being passed by the House of Representatives for the very first time."

The United States Congress passed the Child Citizenship Act (CCA) in 2000, introducing a system in which adoptees born overseas are automatically issued American citizenship if at least one of their parents is an American citizen.

However, because the applicable targets were limited to those under 18 years of age as of the date of the enactment of the act (Feb. 27, 2001), many adoptees who were already adults continued to have difficulty attaining citizenship.

To rectify this, the recent law contained a provision to "automatically and retroactively issue citizenship" to adoptees born overseas who were already adults at the time of the enactment of the Child Citizenship Act. [?](#)

'A major accomplishment for Korean American adoptees who have effectively been abandoned twice'

Kim Dong-seok, president of the Korean American Grassroots Conference, spoke about the bill that was passed by the House of Representatives, which would benefit Korean adoptees without American citizenship, "It is a major accomplishment for Korean American adoptees, who have suffered greatly."

Interview with Kim

When did you begin to take an interest in the citizenship issue with adoptees in the U.S.?

Adoptee groups and civic groups have been active in the U.S. for a long time. It was in 2016 that we began to take a real interest. Korean adoptees came to see us and requested our help, saying, "We've been abandoned twice; once by our real parents and once by our adoptive parents." The terrible stories they had to tell shocked me greatly.

Adoptees living in the U.S. without citizenship must experience much pain and discomfort.

Prior to 9/11 in 2001, there probably weren't that many difficulties in terms of education or living in the U.S. Since the attacks, however, social identity has become very important. Driver's licenses (which act as identification in the U.S.) couldn't be renewed, and adoptees had to live in fear of being deported and couldn't speak up because of their ambiguous status. In particular, with the former (anti-immigration) Trump administration, issues of social identity and ethnicity became exacerbated, and some adoptees were even sent back to Korea. America is a very big place, and adoptees were suffering in it. We decided that we needed to act as a Korean society.

What did you focus most of your efforts on with regard to the bill for adoptees?

We focused on making this a bipartisan effort by signing on a nearly identical number of Democrat and Republican representatives. Many tend to think that the adoptee issue has to do with immigration. Because the Republican Party is opposed to immigration and conflicts with the Democrat Party on every issue, members of the former would not even consider supporting the adoptee issue. We met with the representatives to tell them that



the issue was a human rights one unrelated to immigration and succeeded in making them understand. The adoptee issue is really a human rights issue, but it was unfortunately represented as having to do with immigration. Sixty-three representatives participated in the bill that was passed by the House of Representatives, and the ratio of Democrat to Republican representatives was nearly 1:1.

Even so, it couldn't have been easy to persuade the Republican representatives.

We traveled to various places to meet with the Republican representatives and explain the issue to them. For Democrat Congressman Adam Smith, who led the proposal, we visited Seattle, Washington (a local constituency), several times. There were over 500 amendments suggested for inclusion in the America COMPETES Act that was passed by the House of Representatives, which included the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2021, but nearly half of the amendments were rejected. (The Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2021 was proposed separately in the House of Representatives but was included as an amendment in the America COMPETES Act, an act meant to keep China in check) on Feb. 4 and passed by the House of Representatives.)

What happens now?

Because a bill similar to the America COMPETES Act was already passed by the Senate last year, the Senate and the House of Representatives will now enter negotiations with the two bills. The Republican Party could request changes to the provisions regarding adoptee citizenship, and our goal is to make sure the negotiations end without any major changes and the bill gets signed by President Biden. As we've done with the House of Representatives so far, we'll meet with various members of the Senate carrying the voices of the adoptees and citizens and do the legwork so politicians can have a proper awareness of the problems that have occurred due to the current adoption system. I'd also like to say that the Korean government is also partly responsible, though the decisions were made in the past. As Korea's national power has greatly increased, I think more circumspection is now required regarding adoption. 🇰🇷



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Overseas Koreans Forum holds policy forum to find solution for ‘demographic cliff’ Establishment of Immigration Service/Overseas Korean Service Suggested

The Overseas Koreans Forum (Chairman Cho Rong-je) held a forum on the topic of “The Establishment of Immigration Services/Overseas Korean Services as a Solution for the Demographic Cliff Crisis” on Jan. 25 in the Eroom Hall of the Eroom Center in Yeongdeungpo, Seoul.

“Immigration policies and administrative organizations capable of making adjustments to and unifying policies must be established,” said Kim Tae-hwan, a professor of law administration at Myongji University and the honorary president of the Korean Association for Immigration Policy and Administration, at the forum, the 121st of its kind.

In his presentation on the subject of “The Direction and Tasks Related to the Implementation Systems of Future

Governmental Immigration Policies,” Kim pointed out: “Due to COVID-19, the number of immigrants to Korea has fallen. In addition, the labor population is now extremely lacking while foreigners staying in Korea and applicants for citizenship have also grown fewer in number. The related policy budget, however, grew to over 500 billion won in 2020 from 313.2 billion won in 2010.

“The need for immigration policy and administration in our country continues to increase, and it is imperative that organizations capable of providing appropriate immigration administration be established and operated to meet this need,” he added.

Kim emphasized that in light of the continuing downward trend of the domestic population due to the low birthrate and other factors, the increasing number of foreigners residing in Korea reflects a need for a change in the function and role of administrative organizations.

In addition, he called attention to the fact that because Korea's immigration administration is divided into multiple administrative authorities (central departments, committees, local governments, etc.), the resulting dispersion and duplication of work creates blind spots that prevent the establishment and implementation of unified goals.

"We need to implement measures to connect the immigration administration and policies scattered throughout the various government bodies, and enhance the organization and function of immigration policy," he said. "To be more specific, in order to make the systematic execution of all immigration administration possible, a consolidated system to carry out this function -- an immigration service -- must be created."

Ra Hweui-moon, professor of public administration at Sungkyul University, said: "Policies regarding defector immigration from North Korea, labor immigration, marriage immigration, immigration of returning Koreans and so on are being implemented in various ways in the central departments and local governments. The similarities and overlap between the projects result in a waste of manpower and material resources, in addition to the creation of blind spots. A solution to fight this would be to create a sort of control tower that can oversee all immigration policy."

In relation to exclusive bodies, he suggested the establishment and operation of an "immigration service" with a single person as its head, as well as the creation of an "immigration policy committee," which would be a representative administrative authority.

The former refers to the execution of relevant functions through the use of an organization and financial resources, while the latter refers to the kind of structure seen in the Financial Services Commission and the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission.

"The creation of an immigration service will require the support of the public and will take much discussion and time with relation to the aspect of social unification," Lim Chae-wan, president of PeaceAsia, said. "Immigration policy must proceed based on the mutual understanding and economic cooperation between Koreans and immigrants toward a goal of tolerance and coexistence."

He also emphasized, "The most important goal is to perform the legal prep work for the creation of an overseas Korean service to take charge of affairs related to overseas Koreans."



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Ji Tae-yong, president of FIABCI Korea, claimed, "It is now necessary for cities to be built with the goal of providing a place to settle for the 7.5 million returning immigrants and the 2.43 million people who belong to multicultural families.

"Over the past 13 years, 265 trillion won has been spent to fight the low birthrate and support an aging society, but the effects have been minimal," he continued. "The construction of cities where people of various cultures and ethnicities can dwell will be a measure that can fight the population decline caused by the low birthrate." [창](#)

1 Participants of the policy discussion pose for a commemorative photo.

2 Cho Rong-je, Chairman of The Overseas Koreans Forum.

3 The Overseas Koreans Forum holds a policy forum (the 121st) to find a solution to the era of the "demographic cliff" at Eroom Center in Yeouido, Seoul.



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Beijing Winter Olympics 'Huge global sports festival' marred by questionable judging and doping row

The Beijing Winter Olympics (the 24th Winter Olympic Games) opened Feb. 4. It was the second Olympics to be held since the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic began.

The Tokyo Summer Olympics, which had originally been planned for 2020, were delayed a year and held in 2021; however, the Beijing Winter Olympics were held according to schedule. As the COVID-19 omicron variant hit the world right before the opening of the event, the Beijing Winter Olympics couldn't completely avoid being affected as well.

Marita Kramer (Austria), a strong contender for the gold medal in women's ski jumping, tested positive for COVID-19 and was forced to miss the event. There was even talk among athletes that "not being infected by COVID-19 was the final condition for participating in the Olympic Games."

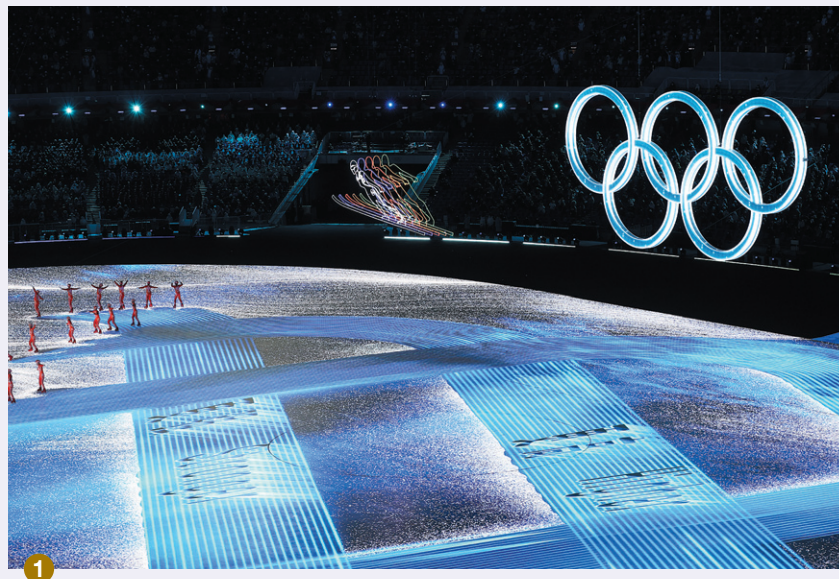
Prior to the opening ceremony, Western countries, including the United States and the United Kingdom, found faults with the human rights situation in China and declared a "diplomatic boycott," meaning they would only send their athletes and no ministers or officials to the games. Russia and Ukraine also came very close to a war, contributing to the unsettled international mood around the time of the "great global festival."

Olympic slogan: 'Together for a Shared Future'

The huge international sporting event that was the Beijing Winter Olympics saw the participation of around 2,900 athletes from 91 countries, fiercely competing for 109 gold medals in seven categories.

Countries in hotter regions, including Saudi Arabia and Haiti, sent athletes to a Winter Olympics for the first time, and the percentage of female athletes participating was 45.4 percentage (1,314 out of 2,892 total athletes), the greatest on record.

The Beijing Winter Olympics opening ceremony, held at the Beijing National Stadium, was far from what one would expect from China, evoking descriptions like "the human wave strategy" and "power in numbers"; however, it served to utilize the traditional beauty of China to spread a message of consolation and hope to the entire world as it



reeled from the impact of COVID-19. There were far fewer personnel involved than at the 2008 Summer Olympics, but a space of 11,600 square meters was filled with HD LED screens, showing snow and ice, and the children's performance at the end of the event utilized AI-powered live motion capture to show effects whenever the children moved. LED screens were used to create various effects and add drama; for example, screens vertically linking the roof and floor were used to depict a waterfall. When the Chinese flag was being raised, performers dressed in the attire of an ethnic minority, as well as "hanbok," sparked anger in Korea regarding China's "distortion of history."

Many stars rose and fell at the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Eileen Gu, born to an American father and a Chinese mother, took center stage as a sports hero in China. Gu has been a national athlete in China since 2019. She won two gold medals in freestyle women's skiing big air and halfpipe, in addition to a silver medal in slopestyle, becoming the first athlete to win three medals in the Winter Olympics snowboarding and freestyle skiing categories.

Johannes Bo (Norway), who participated in the men's biathlon, won four gold medals in this Winter Olympics, becoming the new "Biathlon Emperor." It has been 20 years since the last time an athlete won four gold medals at a single Olympics.

The "Ski Queen" Mikaela Shiffrin didn't win a single medal in individual skiing, losing face. Shiffrin was disqualified from the giant slalom, slalom and combined



while finishing ninth and 18th in the super giant slalom and downhill, respectively. Yun Sung-bin, who won a gold medal in men's skeleton at the PyeongChang Olympics and became the first Asian sledding medalist, finished in a disheartening 12th place.

In short track speed skating, which took place early on, Korean athletes were placed at a disadvantage and a controversy was sparked regarding possible bias favoring the Chinese athletes. A doping controversy involving Kamila Valieva (Russian Olympic Committee), a strong contender for the gold medal in figure skating women's singles, also shocked many.

In the overall medal rankings, Norway took 15 gold medals (the greatest number of gold medals awarded to a country at a single Winter Olympic Games in history) to rank first. China, the host country, took nine gold medals, placing third.

The athletes who participated in the Beijing Winter Olympics shared affectionate goodbyes in the closing ceremony directed by Zhang Yimou, a master movie director from China, promising each other they'd meet in Cortina d'Ampezzo and Milano, Italy, where the next Winter Olympics are to be held in 2026.

The Beijing Winter Olympics featured the slogan "Together for a Shared Future," while the Milano-Cortina d'Ampezzo Olympics to be held four years from now will use the slogan "Duality, Together." Both have the word "together" in common.

Reached the goal, but with the smallest number of gold medals ever -- Generation shift is ongoing issue

The Korean athletes succeeded in reaching their goal in the opening events despite the bad calls made by the judges early on.

The Korean Sport & Olympic Committee had set as its goal a 15th-place finish in the medal rankings and one or two gold medals. We won two gold medals, five silver medals and two bronze medals for a combined ranking of 14th place.

The short track ice skating athletes from Korea won two gold medals (Hwang Dae-heon and Choi Min-jeong won a gold medal each) and three silver, once again reaffirming their place at the very top.

Choi Min-jeong cried sadly after winning the silver medal in the short track women's 1,000 meters, with viewers sympathizing with the pain she must have endured during the "intentional collision" controversy in 2018, when she fell after colliding with Shim Suk-hee in the same category.

The same could be said of the sprint. In speed skating, Cha Min-kyu (men's 500

meters) and Chung Jae-won (mass start) won silver medals, while Lee Seung-hoon (mass start) and Kim Min-seok (1,500 meters) won bronze medals. Though Kim Bo-reum did not win a medal in the women's speed skating mass start, she made a spurt, showing she'd shrugged off the "bullying controversy" at the 2018 PyeongChang Olympics, and the fans applauded.

In figure skating, Cha Jun-hwan (men's singles) reached the highest ever ranking for a Korean male athlete (fifth place), while You Young and Kim Ye-lim in the women's singles category reached sixth and ninth, respectively. Athletes of both genders were proudly in the top 10.

Korean athletes lagged behind in sledding, curling and sports performed on snow. Sadly, Korea did not have any new individual medalists besides the few athletes who participated in the short track mixed relay. Over the past four years, Korea failed to discover any new heroes to outperform the heroes of PyeongChang.

Chloe Kim (U.S.), who is a Korean American, had two Olympic victories in a row in the women's ski/snowboard halfpipe.

Chloe Kim recorded 94.00 points in the women's ski/snowboard halfpipe finals (2022 Beijing Winter Olympics), which was held on Feb. 10 at Genting Snow Park in Zhangjiakou, Hebei, winning herself a gold medal. This was her second victory in a row, after winning a gold medal at the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics.

Hanne Eilertsen, who was born in Daegu, Korea, and adopted by Norwegian parents, participated in the snowboard slopestyle and big air events but failed to win any medals. She also has a Korean name, Park Yoon-hee.

"Though I didn't get the results I wanted, I did my best as these were my first Olympic Games," she said. [참]

1 The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics opening ceremony was held Feb. 4 at Beijing National Stadium.

2 The Korean athletes enter the closing ceremony and wave the South Korean flag.

3 The Korean medalists of the Beijing Winter Olympics.



60 years of diplomatic relations between Korea and Latin America



The future-oriented partners will hold various commemorative events in 2022



1 Mexico designates May 4 as “Korea Day.”
 2 “Greetingman,” erected on the avenida República de Corea in Mérida.

This year marks the 60th year of Korean diplomatic relations with 15 countries in Latin America (Mexico, Argentina, Columbia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Costa Rica, Paraguay, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Haiti). We'll be taking a look at the past, present and future of Korea-Latin America relations through Mexico, Argentina and Columbia.

With ties stretching 117 years, Mexico is partner of unlimited potential

Korea and Mexico established diplomatic relations in January 1962, but ties between the two countries began much earlier, in 1905. At the time, 1,033 Koreans traveled by ship from Incheon to work on farms in Mexico, and they settled in various parts of the country.

“They were the first Korean immigrants to Latin America, and their 30,000 or so descendants served as a makeshift bridge between the two countries,” Seo Jeong-in, the Korean ambassador to Mexico, said. “Thanks to them, Mexico is that much more meaningful to Korea.”

These ties that began 117 years ago led to the official establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries 60 years back. In 2005, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of immigration, Korea and Mexico’s relationship developed further: They became “strategic partners.” The two countries are active in the middle power partnership MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and Australia). Economically speaking Korea is Mexico’s fourth-largest trading partner (as of 2020), while Mexico is Korea’s largest trading partner in Latin America.

The Congress of the Union of Mexico even designated May 4 as “Korea Day” last March, following the cities of Merida and Campeche, as well as the Mexican state of Yucatán -- all places where Korean immigrants first laid foot on Mexican soil -- with the congressmen stepping forward to commemorate the history of Korean immigration.

“Mexico is a large country with the 10th-largest population in the world, the 14th- largest surface area and the 16th-largest economy,” Ambassador Seo, who assumed her post in 2020, explained. “It is neighbors with the U.S., the largest market in the world, and stands to benefit the most from nearshoring amid the U.S.-Chinese competition and the global supply network disturbance.”

Various events to celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations will be held this year in both countries. The very first Aztec cultural exhibition will open in May in the National Museum of Korea, and Korea will participate as a guest country of honor in the Festival Internacional Cervantino in October. Mexico City is also discussing the designation of a “Seoul Street.” Veterans of the Korean War from Mexico, who participated as part of the U.S. forces, will be revisiting Korea for the first time since the war through the invitation of Korean corporations.

Mentioning the means to take the Korea-Mexico relations -- and furthermore, Korea-Latin America relations -- to the next level, Seo said, “We need efforts similar to the New Southern



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3 Argentines learn how to make kimchi at a Kimchi Day event.

4 A Latin American K-pop contest is held in Argentina.

Policy and New Northern Policy.

"In this regard, the establishment of a Korea-Latin America foundation that is being pursued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also important."

Argentina, a country close yet far, is the greatest win-win partner

Argentina, located in South America, is the country farthest from Korea, along with its neighbor, Uruguay. It is literally on the other side of the globe, and yet it is home to over 20,000 Koreans. There is much interest in Korean culture, food and other areas, and the cultural distance is not so vast.

Argentina established official diplomatic relations with Korea in February 1962. It is a country with broad, fertile land that is over 12 times as large as the Korean Peninsula, and possesses rich underground resources. In pursuit of such fertile soil, 78 Koreans left to work as farmers there in October 1965. Currently, there are between 23,000 and 25,000 Koreans living in the country.

"Young Koreans who can freely speak in the local language and hold professional posts as doctors, lawyers and other top jobs are acknowledged by society here," Jang Myung-Soo, Korean ambassador to Argentina, said. "They are helping to link the two countries, facilitating increased understanding and exchanges through volunteer work in the compatriot society and other activities."

Argentine fascination with Korean culture is also helping to bring the two countries even closer together. Interest in K-pop, Korean dramas, movies, and even Korean food and Korean traditional clothing ("hanbok") has grown, and Mexican senators even passed a bill designating Nov. 22 as "Kimchi Day." Local trademark rights were claimed over kimchi last year, leading the Korean government to intervene. Such an incident serves to show just how much interest there is in Korean food in Argentina.

"I've been able to feel the impact of the Korean Wave recently in Argentina," Jang said. "The number of Argentinians who wish to learn Korean has increased substantially. In celebration of 60 years of diplomatic relations this October, we seek to create a 'Korean culture

boom' by introducing K-pop and Korean traditional music, among other things, in a variety of ways."

Argentina's resource development potential has already caught the attention of corporations in Korea. POSCO purchased a salt lake in Argentina in 2018 and will begin construction this year of a lithium production plant capable of producing 25,000 tons of lithium yearly.


"The economic relations between the two countries have focused on trade so far," Jang said. "But now a new type of cooperation is necessary, branching into resource development and future energy development, as well as other areas, through joint investment."

Friendship with Columbia was built with blood; Large 'Korean premium' exists here

One thing that can't be left out when speaking about Columbia, a country located in South America, is that it was the only Latin American country that took part in the Korean War. A total of 5,314 Colombian soldiers fought on distant Korean soil for freedom's sake, and this still has a huge impact on the relationship between the two countries today, 70 years later.

The official diplomatic relations with Columbia, a "blood-bound ally," were established nine years after the cease-fire, in March of 1962. The two countries developed into "strategic partners" in 2011, and in 2016, a free trade agreement was issued.

"Columbia's participation in the Korean War is a precious diplomatic asset that serves as a strong foundation for the relationship that exists between the two countries," Chu Jong-yeon, Korean ambassador to Columbia, said. "Thanks to the continued expressions of thanks and requital projects from the Korean government and the Korean people, Columbians are now grateful for the sincere words and actions of Koreans. They are proud of having taken part in the Korean War."

Various commemorative events are being prepared in both countries this year in celebration of 60 years of diplomatic relations. Korea and Columbia will be each other's respective guest countries of honor in the Bogotá International Book Fair in April and the Seoul International Book Fair in June. A special exhibition on Korean culture will also be created in the Museum of Gold in Bogotá in September. 

GLOBAL KOREANS



2nd-generation Korean American Jason Park appointed deputy secretary in Virginia, United States

'I'm honored to be working for the sake of soldiers, reservists and war veterans'

A disabled second-generation Korean American veteran often referred to as "Afghanistan's hero" has taken an extremely high post in the state of Virginia, the United States.

According to the Virginia state website and The Korea Times, newly appointed Gov. Glenn Youngkin of Virginia revealed his new key administration appointments on Jan. 14, among which was the second-generation Korean American Jason Park (Park Jae-seon, 32). He was named the deputy secretary of Veterans and Military Affairs.

Park is the second Korean American to be selected for such a key administrative position in Virginia after the second-generation Korean American Jennifer Lee, who was appointed to the same position in 2014.

Park was born in Virginia, and graduated from Fairfax High School and the United States Military Academy West Point.

He was dispatched to Afghanistan as part of the 2nd Infantry Division of the United States Army in 2012. During a patrol conducted on foot, an improvised explosive device (IED) placed by the Taliban went off, causing him to lose both legs and two fingers.

At the time he put the safety of his platoon members before his own and was awarded the Purple Heart -- a medal given to disabled veterans and those killed in battle -- by the U.S. government.

After leaving the Army, he worked at a Washington branch of Boeing, giving motivational lectures at corporations, universities and other institutions across the U.S. as the "hero of Afghanistan."

Youngkin came to rate Park's leadership very highly after listening to a lecture by Park. The governor said it was the sincerity Park applied to everything that moved him to appoint Park as the deputy secretary.

"I'm honored and happy to be working for the sake of soldiers, reservists and war veterans," Park said. "I will do my best to make sure the state government holds nothing back in human rights expansion for their sake."

Park is the oldest son of U.S. Army Reserve Col. Park Young-tae and the vocalist Park Young-ae, who live in Vienna, Virginia. His father, who also graduated from West Point, served as a military attach? at the U.S. Embassy in Malaysia in 2008; he also served for seven years in Korea as part of the 2nd Division of the United States Forces Korea and the ROK/US Combined Forces Command.

Korean bodybuilder Seok Jin-ho overcomes car accident injuries and wins Mr New Zealand Classic Physique

First Asian to win in the category

Though a car accident put his career at risk, the Korean bodybuilder Seok Jin-ho (Jonathan Seok, 39) succeeded in rehabilitation and became the first Asian to win the Mr New Zealand Classic Physique title. Seok is now busily training for the Mr. Olympia international bodybuilding contest, which will be held on Dec. 18 in Las Vegas, United States.

On Dec. 18 last year, Seok participated in Mr New Zealand 2021 - Classic Physique held at the Lower Hutt Events Centre in Wellington, New Zealand, and took the win. He was the first Korean -- and also the first Asian -- to ever win the title.

Having immigrated with his parents to Auckland, New Zealand, in 1994, when he was 11, Seok majored in hotel management. It was a chance opportunity in 2004 that introduced him to bodybuilding. A man who moved in next door turned out to be a world-class bodybuilder, who currently heads the committee of judges at the New Zealand Federation of BodyBuilding and



Fitness (NZIFBB).

He told Seok of his potential as a bodybuilder and suggested that he begin exercising. Seok began to fall in love with bodybuilding from that point on, learning through books and various other resources.

He worked as an airport security screener as he trained. Three years ago, however, a trial came his way when he was involved in a car crash that nearly forced him to give up on his dream of becoming a champion bodybuilder. A doctor informed him that his torn knee ligaments and biceps, as well as his fractured ankle, would not only prevent him from doing what he loved but also make everyday tasks difficult to handle. The result was severe depression and many tears. With slow rehabilitation, however, things began to look up for him again. Working as a bodybuilding judge also gave him great consolation.

"I resumed my career after two years of rehabilitation," Seok said. "It wasn't easy though. There was the long hiatus to consider, and indoor facilities were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Things were very difficult. I kept telling myself that I couldn't give up as I trained for Mr New Zealand."

Korean American businesswoman Michele Kang becomes controlling owner of Washington Spirit professional American soccer team **The CEO of Cognosante, a telehealth solution provider, spends around US\$35 million to become the controlling owner**

A Korean American businesswoman purchased a renowned American female soccer team.

According to The Korea Times, The Washington Post and the CBS Sports website, Michele Kang -- the founder and CEO of Cognosante LLC, a telehealth solution provider -- purchased the controlling shares of Washington Spirit, effectively making herself its owner. Washington Spirit is a renowned soccer team that plays in the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) in Washington, D.C.

Kang had been a co-owner of the team since 2020, along with Bill Lynch and Steve Baldwin. Though the price of the transaction was not made public, it is known that Kang made an offer of US\$35 million (41.8 billion won) in December last year for the controlling shares.

Having become the team's owner, Kang said: "I'm looking forward to working together with our talented and strong athletes and staff. I will be investing funds in order to support Washington Spirit, including investments for the operation of the team and as well as for its infrastructure. I'm hoping this will herald a new era for women's soccer in Washington, D.C."

Washington Spirit took third place during the regular season in 2021 and then defeated Chicago Red Stars in the championship. It was the first ever championship victory for the team. Following the achievement, the athletes supported Kang, announcing the team should be sold to Kang and that they trusted her.

Kang decided to study in the U.S. while attending Sogang University in 1981. After studying at Chicago University, she acquired her master's degree at the Yale School of Management. After working for a time as the vice president and general manager of Northrop Grumman Corp., a global aerospace and defense technology company, she founded Cognosante in Falls Church, Virginia, in 2008. Cognosante is a company that provides security and safety solutions to the U.S. government and most state governments.

Kang established the Cognosante Foundation in 2012 to help the socially neglected achieve financial independence. She also contributes to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) research for women.

In recognition of her business success and philanthropy, she was awarded the "2019 American Free Enterprise Medal" by Palm Beach Atlantic University, among many other awards. She was also selected as one of the 100 top woman leaders in STEM in 2012, and her company was included in a Fortune 500 list of companies. 🇺🇸



Byeongsanseowon Confucian Academy in Andong

Best example of Korean Confucian academy design, showcasing superb harmony with nature

Confucian academies were educational institutions that represented the Joseon period, together with Confucian schools known as “hyanggyo.” Byeongsanseowon Confucian Academy in Andong houses the mortuary tablet of Ryu Seong-ryong (pen name Seoae, 1542-1607), the renowned premier who overcame the Japanese Invasion of Korea in 1592, as well as that of his third son Ryu Jin (pen name Suam, 1582-1635). The academy was registered in July 2019 as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage, along with Sosuseowon Confucian Academy in Yeongju, Dosanseowon Confucian Academy in Andong, Oksanseowon Confucian Academy in Gyeongju, Dodongseowon Confucian Academy in Dalseong, Namgyeseowon Confucian Academy in Hamyang, Museongseowon Confucian Academy in Jeongeup, Piramseowon Confucian Academy in Jangseong and Donamseowon Confucian Academy in Nonsan.

Byeongsanseowon Confucian Academy stands with a volcano as its backdrop -- one that resembles a bud about to bloom. It is widely regarded as one of the best examples of Korean Confucian academy design. The buildings that have been erected neatly on the mountain slope harmonize excellently with the Nakdonggang River, which flows along sandy banks, creating a view fit for any landscape painting. It is cozy and peaceful here, the perfect place to study.

Bokryemun Gate, the main entrance of the academy, was named after the Confucian term Geukgibokrye, which means to overcome the self and observe proprieties. If one stands at the “soseulsammun” (a three-door gate in which the roof of the center door is raised one tier higher), one’s line of sight passes by Mandaeru Pavilion and connects with the lecture hall. One of the benefits of the use of axes in the design is that the continuity and flow of the spaces is easily noticed here.

Inside the main gate and to the left is Gwangyeongji Pond, formed by directing water between Mandaeru Pavilion and Bokryemun Gate. It is a small pond crafted based on the concept of “cheonwonjibang” (which means “heaven is round and earth is square”), featuring a round island symbolizing the sky inside a square pond symbolizing the Earth.

Breathtakingly beautiful Mandaeru Pavilion

In front of the main gate stands the imposing Mandaeru Pavilion, which features a raised second-story platform. Mandaeru Pavilion was built to utilize natural terrain and serves as a space for both rest and the pursuit of study, helping people relieve their fatigue that comes from a life of cultivation. Mandaeru Pavilion’s beauty lies not in its dignity but rather its naturalness. Both floors have only pillars, with no doors,



windows or walls, emphasizing the bare wooden frame. Because the lower pillars were built using rough wood, they support the building with their twisted shapes intact. The foundation stones are also unpolished natural stone, rough and crude -- almost as if they were lifted straight out of the Earth. There is no artificial touch to this pavilion. There is a focus on resembling the look of nature, revealing the intent of older Korean architecture, which sought to erase the impression that buildings were artificial structures. This is also the reason that students of architecture will often choose to visit Byeongsanseowon Confucian Academy in order to study old Korean architecture.

Mandaeru Pavilion is a stately building with dimensions of 7 kan (about 14 meters) in front and 2 kan along the side, and its true beauty can be felt by going up to the second floor. The stairs that lead to the upper floor were formed by chopping wood off of a giant log -- an impressive aspect. One feels immediately refreshed when the broad floor, capable of seating 200 people, comes into view. It feels completely empty, as there are no walls, doors or windows. The 7-kan space, built with eight pillars, instead features a seven-fold folding screen, which changes all year round. The green cliff faces and old pine trees of the mountain, the curves of the Nakdonggang River and the white sandy banks are all visible here. It is a mesmerizing sight, and the cold gusts of air serve to awaken one’s sluggish spirit.

Confucian scholars sat here to hold poetry meetings and chat; they likely performed mental and physical training here as they gazed at the



of the Confucian academy was strictly based on self-study. When teachers gave out assignments, Confucian students did their studying on their own. During sessions students would be called out in front of their teachers to take a public spoken test. Those who passed would be given their next assignment, and those who failed would be held back.

Byeongsanseowon Confucian Academy features the Dongjae East Dormitory and the Seojae West Dormitory on each side of the lecture hall. Their sizes appear to indicate that the dormitories could accommodate only about 20 students. Passing between the lecture hall and a dormitory, one can see the Jondeoksa Shrine, which holds the ancestral tablet of Seoae and Suam. The gate of the shrine located at the topmost level of the academy has been painted red to keep out uncleanness.

On the lower left of Jondeoksa Shrine is the Jangpangak or woodblock archive (for storing

woodblocks used to print books), while on the lower right is the Jeonsacheong, a building that was used to prepare ritual food for the shrine. Below the walls, zinnias have been planted. These flowers symbolize the integrity of a “seonbi,” a classical scholar. The landscaping shows the focus of old Korean architecture on complementing the completeness of the buildings through the plants.

In front of the Confucian academy is a broad riverbank of white sand. The picturesque mountain dips its toes into the Nakdonggang River, and under its cliff faces, the blue waters of the river flow endlessly. Turning around, one can pause to once more take in the beauty of Byeongsanseowon Confucian Academy -- its harmony with nature and the beauty of old Korean architecture. 📖

mountain and the river. The ceiling also features curving girders of natural wood, traces of the centuries visible on its surface. You will likely find yourself nodding in acknowledgment at the discerning eye and aesthetic sense of the Neo-Confucianism scholars who sought oneness with nature.

Coming down from Mandaeru Pavilion and stepping into the yard, one can see the “ipgyodang,” a lecture hall, right across from the pavilion. The floor of the lecture hall stands on a stylobate 1.8 meters high. It affords a view of both the Nakdonggang River and the mountain. The lecture hall served as a space for communication and learning, used by teachers and their pupils. It is a typical 5-kan lecture hall and is the largest, sturdiest building of the academy. The education

- 1 The mountain and Mandaeru Pavilion as seen from the lecture hall.
- 2 Byeongsanseowon Confucian Academy, located at the foot of a volcano.
- 3 Mandaeru Pavilion, which has no walls, doors or windows.
- 4 Jondeoksa Shrine, which holds the ancestral tablet of Ryu Seong-ryong.



‘Korean civilian diplomat in Hawaii,’ Director Tony Lee passes away

Lee led local Korean society events for over 30 years, awarded Light of Oriental Award



Tony Lee, who was referred to as “Hawaii’s Korean civilian diplomat.”



A “Korean House Lunar New Year Party” held at Hawaii’s Plantation Village in Waipahu in 2018.

Tony Lee, whose Korean name was Jung Soon-young and who was called the “Korean civilian diplomat in Hawaii,” passed away in her home on Jan. 19 at the age of 84.

The deceased was born in Busan in 1937. She became an orphan when her parents (who had been working for national independence hero Kim Gu) were suddenly abducted to North Korea during the Korean War and experienced much difficulty as a result.

In 1969, when she was 32, she traveled to Hawaii with her friend and ended up settling down there. Calling herself a “promotional ambassador of Korean culture,” she laid the groundwork for what is today’s enthusiasm for the Korean Wave in Hawaii.

She taught Korean dance in 1989 at a Lanakila senior center and made herself known to officials of the state government and Honolulu government that she was indeed a “publicity ambassador for Korean culture.”

The deceased took the position of director for the Korean House of Hawaii’s Plantation Village in Waipahu, a folk village run by the state government that reconstructed the lives of the early immigrants to promote awareness in mainstream society of Korea.

Hawaii’s Plantation Village in Waipahu is a folk museum that showcases the lives of the early immigrants of eight ethnic minorities (Hawaiian, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Okinawan, Portuguese and Puerto Rican).

The Korean House allows for a glimpse into the lives of the early Koreans who immigrated to Hawaii and spent difficult lives cutting stalks on sugar cane farms.

She was also the president of the Lanakila Korean Culture Club, a nonprofit organization run by local Catholics for seniors from varied backgrounds and an instructor at the Hale Manu Culture Club, a nonprofit organization that helps students with disabilities through rehabilitation. She engaged in Korean dance, cuisine and other activities, and spread Korean culture to seniors and students belonging to ethnic minorities through cultural lectures.

She was in charge of nearly every Korean culture-related event requested by the state of Hawaii and Honolulu.

Her traditional “hanbok” (traditional Korean clothing) collection, which she put together using her own funds, is also varied enough to be used for a royal fashion show. It is said that most well-known politicians and figures in Hawaii have tried on hanbok -- including Chief of Police Lee Donohue, Moon Dae-yang (former chief justice of the Supreme Court of Hawaii), City Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi, State Sen. Donna Mercado Kim and U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono.

The Korean society in Hawaii dubbed the deceased the “Korean civilian diplomat in Hawaii” in recognition of her passion.

She was awarded the Light of the Oriental Award at the Korean American Day celebration held by the Korean American Foundation Hawaii in 2015 for her accomplishments in spreading knowledge of Korean culture to mainstream society.

Korean American Day was established in commemoration of the day that the history of Korean-American immigration began -- a day in 1903, when 102 Korean youths aboard the steam-powered ocean liner RMS Gaelic arrived at Honolulu Harbor. 🇰🇷

Douglas Kim, Korean American master sommelier

Manages 50 sommeliers and 350,000 bottles of wine
in around 20 hotels in Las Vegas

Korean American master sommelier Douglas Kim, from Chicago in the United States, was named wine director for MGM Resorts International, a large American company operating casino resorts.

According to the Chicago Sun-Times, Kim supervises about 50 sommeliers at 13 resorts and hotels on the Las Vegas Strip, as well as eight nearby hotels operated by MGM. He also has oversight of around 350,000 bottles of wine consumed at those locations.

Kim was born in Korea and immigrated to the U.S. with his parents when he was 2. He grew up in Lincolnwood, located northwest of Chicago, Illinois, and graduated from Niles West High School.

“My grandmother loved to cook, and it was her influence that led me and my two sisters to develop an interest in cooking at a young age,” he said in an interview with the Sun-Times. “Our hobby was making snacks after school.”

With the dream of becoming a chef, he entered the Culinary Institute of America, a prestigious culinary school in New York. A three-week class on wine that he was required to take completely changed his life.

“Wine isn’t very big in Korean culture, which is my background,” he said. “We drink soju or beer. As I attended the class, however, I learned just how mesmerizing the study of wine can be.”

After graduating from the culinary school, he entered the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), where he majored in service business administration. He then began to build his career in earnest at Charlie Trotter’s, a luxury restaurant.

He stated that because his parents operated a laundromat near a restaurant owned by Charlie Trotter (1959-2013), a chef well-known in Chicago, he was able to receive help from Trotter to build up sturdy work experience at a professional restaurant.

According to the Sun-Times, Kim is a master sommelier, of



Wine stored in a wine cave.

Douglas Kim, a Korean American master sommelier, who has been named the wine director of MGM Resorts International.

whom there are fewer than 200 in the entirety of North America and Latin America.

It took him 10 years of tests and effort to acquire the qualification in 2018.

“(Kim) has remained at the top of his field for his entire career,” said Dominique Bertolone, MGM Resorts senior vice president of food and beverage strategy. “I think the secret to his success lies in his ceaseless efforts to focus on customers and give them an experience that they’ll remember. MGM is lucky to have him.”

Kim confessed: “I must meet people from wine suppliers and affiliates every day and process incredible amounts of administrative work. I also need to heed the requests of the sommeliers and find ways to support them. It’s not all roses.

“One of the things I most enjoy doing is deciding what new wines to bring into restaurants,” he added. “I enjoy drinking good wine, but I don’t really have a favorite. When I’m at home, I drink bourbon on the rocks or just beer.” 🍷

Shops near Tsuruhashi Station form Osaka Koreatown

Osaka Koreatown, an association of shops near JR Tsuruhashi Station in Ikuno Ward, Osaka (where the greatest number of Korean Japanese live), was created in January.

This area, which is referred to as Ikuno Koreatown, bustles with around 8,000-10,000 fans of the Korean Wave that come from all over Japan. Most purchase Korean cosmetics, merchandise of Korean stars, Korean food and other Korean-related items, in addition to visiting Korean restaurants. Over 1 million tourists visited the area last year.

Koreatown has been filled with fans of the Korean Wave on the weekends and holidays in the past few years, as they are unable to travel to Korea due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to a survey of a local civic group, 80 percent of the visitors are Japanese women in



Osaka Koreatown in Japan, a place to experience Korean culture.

their teens or 20s.

“Talk of consolidating the three shopping districts began 20 years ago, but the differing characteristics made it difficult,” Hong Seong-ik (65), the first president of Osaka Koreatown, said. “With the boom of the third Korean Wave taking place due to BTS and Twice, sales made by Korean Wave tourists have increased, setting the stage for the consolidation to take place.”

Hong, who is a third-generation Korean Japanese, stated his goals as

follows: “We will first embark on events and campaigns to promote Osaka Koreatown. We’ll create a Koreatown museum to showcase the history of Korean immigration in Japan, in addition to running a variety of programs so that we may become a symbol of multicultural coexistence to the people of the region.”

Korean Egyptians voluntarily hold fundraiser for fellow countrywoman with severe COVID-19 symptoms

Koreans residing in Egypt started a voluntary fundraiser for an elderly woman afflicted with heavy COVID-19 symptoms.

According to a Korean society and other groups in Egypt, Koreans living in Egypt have recently been engaging in fundraising activities for Kwon (75), who was infected with the COVID-19 virus and has been hospitalized.

The fundraising began when a Korean restaurant owner in Cairo uploaded a message on a Korean social media group chat on Jan. 16 that said Kwon had been infected and requested that people buy sesame oil that the elderly woman had made. With Lunar New Year coming up, the same woman offered sliced rice cakes in exchange for supplies to be donated and requested local Koreans purchase them.

Kwon, who is a diabetic, was hospitalized and underwent treatment for severe leg pain when she was infected with COVID-19. She has been receiving care in an intensive care unit and will need to undergo a



large operation because one of her legs is undergoing necrosis. As the hospital fees amount to up to around 20,000 Egyptian pounds (US\$1,271) per day, however, she found herself unable to afford hospitalization. Because her family in Korea was not doing well financially, paying the hospital fees seemed impossible.

The local Koreans and Koreans who’d returned to Korea after living in Egypt who heard the sad news contributed in a united effort, donating enough money to cover her current unpaid hospital expenses.

The Korean society’s plan -- in consideration of the hospital fees, which are piling up every day -- is to use the collected funds to discharge her from the hospital and help her receive care in Korea.

“Thankfully, the local Koreans and even those who had returned to Korea after living in Egypt contributed,” a member of the Association of Korean Residents in Egypt said. “We will do our best to help her return safely to Korea and recover through treatment.”

Korean Canadian's novel 'The Red Palace' is selected as one of most anticipated books of 2022 by Forbes

A novel by Korean Canadian Heo Joo-eun was placed on the "Most Anticipated Books of 2022" list of the American business magazine Forbes.

According to the Forbes website (www.forbes.com) and Heo's social media, Forbes sought to select books that appealed to not only adults but also to young adults. One of them was Heo Joo-eun's (English name June Hur) court mystery set in the Joseon period, "The Red Palace." The book was published by Macmillan Publishers in New York on Jan. 25. It was put on a reading list by the Young Adult Library Services Association and became one of the indie bestsellers of the American Booksellers Association.

The novel is a court mystery set in 1758, a time during the Joseon Dynasty period when Yeongjo of Joseon reigned as king. A 17-year-old girl is the protagonist. She becomes a nurse at the palace, where a



Writer Heo Joo-eun, who wrote the Joseon period mystery novel "The Red Palace."

murder occurs. The book features historical events and figures, such as the conflict between Yeongjo of Joseon and Crown Prince Sado, as well as the ill-fated Lady Hyegyong, the wife of Sado and the mother of King Jeongjo.

The author, who was born in Korea, moved with her family to Canada when she was 7. She then returned to Korea, finished high school and returned to Canada. She majored in history and literature at the University of Toronto and currently works at the Toronto Public Library.

She garnered much interest when she released "The Silence of Bones" in 2000, a novel featuring an indentured servant to the police

department who assists in investigations that involve female victims. Last year she published "The Forest of Stolen Girls," a novel about women who were sent as tribute to China, continuing her focus on novels set in the Joseon Dynasty period.

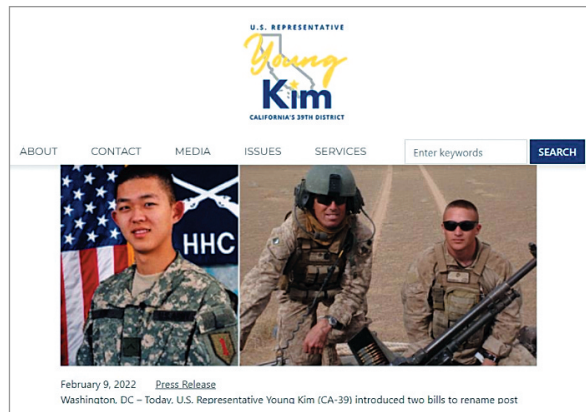
Korean-born American politician Young Kim seeks to create Jang Ho Kim Post Office

A Korean-born American and U.S. representative introduced a bill to rename a post office in honor of a local fallen Korean American hero of the Iraq War.

According to Young Kim's website (youngkim.house.gov), the U.S. representative of California's 39th congressional district recently introduced a bill to change the name of Placentia Post Office, located in Orange County, California, to Jang Ho Kim Post Office.

Kim Jang-ho, who was born in Korea and immigrated to the United States in 1990 with his family, was killed on patrol in Baghdad, Iraq, on Nov. 13, 2006, when explosives set by the Iraqi resistance went off.

He was a freshman at Fullerton College when he joined the U.S. Army in 2005. He was a private when he passed, 20 years old and the




The website of U.S. Representative Young Kim, who introduced a bill to rename post offices in honor of local fallen Korean American heroes.

only son of his family. He was laid to rest in Riverside National Cemetery and given the Purple Heart (given to soldiers wounded or killed during military action), as well as the Bronze Star Medal.

"We are able to enjoy our everyday freedoms thanks to the sacrifice of those who volunteered to go where they were needed," Young Kim said. "We applaud the sacrifice and courage of those who lost their lives much too early in the war against terror, and are proud of the fact that we can help make sure

future generations remember his name and story."

If the bill is passed and a Jang Ho Kim Post Office becomes a reality, there will be a total of five public buildings or facilities named after a Korean in the U.S. 



German Federation of Korean Associations (GFKA) gives 'Happy Boxes' to compatriots in vulnerable social groups German Federation of Korean Associations (GFKA) President Park Seon-yu delivered “Happy Boxes” to compatriot families in vulnerable social groups last month. The boxes contained Korean-made living essentials, such as one bag of rice, sliced rice cakes, thick soy sauce, soybean paste, red pepper paste and old-fashioned noodles, in addition to 50 masks. This organization worked through 40 Korean societies to select 150 households belonging to socially vulnerable groups, including first-generation immigrants, such as elderly people living alone, those with diseases and low-income elderly, and second-generation immigrants, including those facing difficulties from COVID-19. The GFKA began the project around 10 years ago. The budget for the project this time around was provided by support funds from the Overseas Koreans Foundation, contributions of fellow countrymen and independent funds.



Brazilian Koreatown opens weekend market, sells Korean food A weekend market has been established in the Sao Paulo Koreatown. Consul General Hwang In-sang, who participated in the opening ceremony on Feb. 12 (Korea Day), said, “The COVID-19 pandemic has been ongoing for nearly two years, and everyone is going through hard times, but it is my hope that the weekend market will bring back some life into this Koreatown.” The weekend market, which opens every Saturday, will allow locals to try out Korean food and experience cultural content. The São Paulo National Congress and government sent a letter celebrating 59 years of Korean immigration to the consulate general.

Submissions for 15th Mincho Overseas Koreans Literature Award open until end of May with no genre restrictions The Mincho Overseas Korean Literature Award Management Committee (Chairman Lee Yu-sik) will be taking submissions from overseas Korean writers from March to May 13. The award was established by Lee Yu-sik (pen name Mincho), who lives in Calgary, Canada. He used his own private funds (gathered through his business activities) for this purpose. All non-published recent works can be submitted regardless of genre, including poems, “sijo” (Korean traditional poetic form), essays and novels. This year second-generation overseas Koreans born abroad will be given preference in the judging process. Foreigners learning Korean can also participate. Inquiries can be made via email (ysspoe7788@hanmail.net), but submissions must be made through regular mail.



Madagascar Korean Society delivers emergency relief to flood victims The Madagascar Korean Society (President Won Hyun-heui) visited the Primary School Morondava in the Ambohidratrimo region of Antananarivo, the capital, which was heavily hit by Tropical Storm Ana. The society delivered 10 million ariary (US\$2,500) worth of rice, soap, masks and other items to 400 flood victim families. Won explained in an interview with local press that the society visited to share the pain of the people of Madagascar and give what help they could, affirming their resolve to continue to aid the community in the future. The Deputy Secretary General for Regional Disaster Management, Marohao Thierry, gave a big thanks to the Korean society.

Korean youths in Japan hold 'winter jamboree' to strengthen identities and networks The Korean Students Association in Japan held the “2022 Korean Students in Japan Jamboree” between Feb. 24-26 in Tahara, Aichi, Japan. Korean-Japanese college students and Korean college students studying in Japan invited seniors that were active in mainstream society, listening to lectures and participating in discussions on topics that included “Life as Korean Japanese,” “Our home country and the Korean identity” and “the history of Korean-Japanese immigration.” They also engaged in sports and recreation to boost goodwill. The event was sponsored by the Republic of Korean Residents Union in Japan and the Overseas Koreans Foundation.



Traditional pavilion commemorating Korean War veterans to be built in Christchurch, New Zealand The Korean Society of Christchurch will build a traditional Korean pavilion in a city park in order to commemorate the noble sacrifice of Korean War veterans. The pavilion is to be built in the Christchurch Songpa-gu Sister City Garden inside Halswell Quarry. The Korean society decided to build the hexagonal structure based on a “jeongja,” a hexagonal rest area, as the garden features only Korean symbols like “dolhareubang,” stone lanterns, “jangseung” (Korean traditional totem poles) and no resting spots. The goal is to finish construction before National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (July 27). The pavilion will feature nameplates for the veterans as well. The construction cost, which amounts up to US\$70,000, will be split among the Korean society, Christchurch City Hall, the Songpa Ward Office and the Korean Embassy in New Zealand.

Provides updates on events held by overseas Korean organizations (Korean associations, Korean language schools, etc.).
If you have news you'd like widely shared, please submit it to prc@okf.or.kr

Korean Cultural Center in Thailand holds 'hanbok' fashion show

Hanbok shines as 'elegant and beautiful'

A "hanbok" fashion show was jointly held by the Korean Culture and Information Service (KOCIS) and the Korean Cultural Center in Bangkok, Thailand, on Feb. 14.

Interestingly, the event took place after the "hanbok controversy" at the Beijing Winter Olympics opening ceremony. The event was held to celebrate the "Drama Hanbok Experience" that opened the same day and runs until April 29.

The purpose of the event was to see and experience hanbok (featured in K-dramas, which are popular in Thailand) together, and increase cultural exchanges between the two countries.

It was originally planned to be held in the Koreatown in Bangkok, but due to rain, it was moved indoors to the Korean Cultural Center.

The event began with a "gayageum" (Korean zither with 12 strings) and traditional dance performance. Participants from both countries then came onstage wearing around 10 hanbok outfits, stoking the excitement.

There were around 30 people in the audience, including Thailand press, and they responded with applause and cheers as the participants walked onstage and greeted them in their lively hanbok. Some in the audience were heard remarking that the clothes were "beautiful."

Choi Young-seok, coach for Thailand's national taekwondo team, appeared wearing a dark blue "kwaeja" (overcoat) with no sleeves. Panipak Wongpattanakit, a student of Choi's who won the gold medal for taekwondo at the Tokyo Olympics, showed off an energetic charm in a pastel-colored "saekdongjeogori" (a girl's jacket with multicolored striped sleeves). The pair showed off elegant taekwondo moves onstage while dressed in

Participants of the Korean fashion show held at the Korean Cultural Center in Bangkok pose for photographs.



Choi Young-seok, coach of Thailand's national taekwondo team, shows off some moves while wearing a hanbok outfit.

their hanbok to the cheering audience.

Chananporn Rosjan, a descendant of a Korean War veteran and winner of Miss Universe Thailand 2005, wore a "dangeu" (court suit) as she stepped into the spotlight.

DJ Bukko, a very popular Thai DJ, also swept the stage in a fashionable hanbok outfit as the audience responded.

"The hanbok wasn't hard to wear at all," Rosjan said. "It was the most comfortable traditional outfit that I've tried.


"It seems that there are various kinds of hanbok, categorized by their fabric and type of needlework," she continued. "I think the strengths of hanbok are that you can choose the type and color you want, style it to your liking, and wear the colors you want for your top and bottom."

Choi, who heads Thailand's national

Taekwondo team, said: "Trying hanbok on was such a great opportunity. I could feel the Korean energy and know what Korean things feel like."

Choi, who was recently naturalized in Thailand, added, "I plan to wear hanbok to many events in the future to allow people in Thailand to learn about Korean hanbok."

Moon Seung-hyun, ambassador to Thailand, said, "I believe it is our job to introduce hanbok as a unique cultural asset of Korea, Korean culture and Korean tradition to other countries, and thus create opportunities for the citizens of both sides to grow closer."

At the event, Moon named four Thai participants who played a meaningful role in promoting the beauty of hanbok among the Thai people as promotional ambassadors of Korean culture. 

Overseas Koreans Foundation and Ministry of Personnel Management implement plan to recruit overseas Korean talent

A path has opened for Korean talent abroad to be actively utilized.

The Overseas Koreans Foundation (President Kim Seong-gon) and the Ministry of Personnel Management (Minister Kim Woo-ho) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for general cooperation regarding the “discovery and utilization of overseas Korean talent” on Feb. 24 at the Diplomatic Center in Yangjae-dong, Seoul.

The two institutions have agreed to discover and recommend overseas Korean talent for major government positions and for work related to public offices, in addition to discovering and promoting successful cases.

Both also agreed to upload major projects and examples on their respective websites, social media and other platforms, as well as cooperate across various fields.



President Kim Seong-gon and Personnel Management Minister Kim Woo-ho pose for photographs after signing an MOU regarding the “discovery and utilization of overseas Korean talent.”

Present at the signing ceremony were President Kim; Jung Gwang-il, the project managing director at the foundation; Minister Kim; and Director Shin Byeong-dae from the Ministry of Personnel Management.

“We hope to play a significant role in actively discovering and appointing next-generation talent from overseas in various fields to expand our network and make mutual progress for our country, as well as for the relevant foreign countries, in

addition to making a significant contribution to humanity as a whole as global citizens,” Kim Seong-gon said.

The Overseas Koreans Foundation has held the Future Leaders’ Conference since 1998 in order to discover next-generation overseas Korean talent worldwide and create a strong network. It has had around 1,500 participants so far. At last year’s conference, the foundation held a meeting with the Ministry of Personnel Management.

2023’s World Korean Business Convention to be held in U.S., the first overseas host

Next year’s World Korean Business Convention will be held in a foreign country for the first time. The very first convention was held in 2002.

The United States is the only country that has applied to host the 21st World Korean Business Convention, which is to be held in 2023. Four chambers of commerce and industry (New York, Dallas, Atlanta, Orange County) under the Korean American Chamber of Commerce USA (President Hwang Byeong-gu) requested to host the event, and the foundation visited the four cities from Feb. 3-11 to conduct due diligence.

The foundation held its first internal evaluation committee on March 3, and selected Dallas and Orange County as the final candidates.

The evaluation committee revealed it made its choice based on a variety of factors, including infrastructure, such as available convention centers and hotels; the possibility of cooperation between the compatriot society and the local mainstream society; and the



The opening ceremony of the 19th World Korean Business Convention, held in Seoul in October 2021.

willingness of the applying organization to host the convention as this is the first time the World Korean Business Convention is being held overseas.

The final result will be decided at the 40th World Korean Business Convention Management Committee meeting, which will be held in Yeouido, Seoul, together with the National Assembly World Korean Economic Forum on April 6-7.

“We’re grateful to the compatriot society in the U.S. for showing such eagerness to host the World Korean Business

Convention,” Jung Gwang-il, the project managing director at the foundation, said. “We believe an overseas convention will provide a great opportunity for mutual growth for the compatriot society and our own country.”

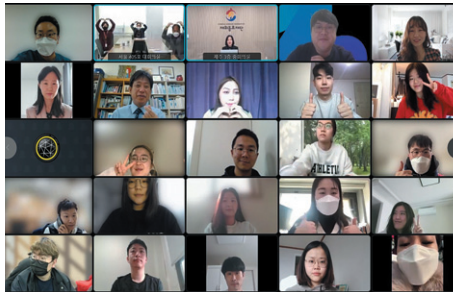
The foundation has held the World Korean Business Convention since 2002 for the overseas expansion of small and midsized businesses in Korea, and the creation of a worldwide Korean network.

2nd Invitational Scholarship Student Graduation Paper Presentation is held; around 1,500 scholarships awarded since 1997

The Overseas Koreans Foundation held the 2nd Invitational Scholarship Student Graduation Paper Presentation on Feb. 25 to provide networking opportunities for overseas Korean youths and to share their academic accomplishments.

Participating at the event were 10 graduates from China, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan (eight with master's degrees and two with doctorates), as well as about 80 enrolled students from China, Latin America and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and six college professors, making for around 100 total participants.

Students awarded scholarships presented their graduation papers and shared their career plans, as well as their thoughts on graduating.



The 2nd Invitational Scholarship Student Graduation Paper Presentation, held online, for the enhancement of overseas Korean youth.

This was followed by their seniors and mentors offering encouragement and advice.

A Q&A segment was used to share information on issues that included the paper-writing process and academic life.

“They are the future of compatriot societies, and we hope they'll become talented individuals who will contribute to both the overseas Korean societies and Korea,” President Kim Seong-gon said.

The overseas Korean invitation scholarship project, which has been held every year since the foundation was created in 1997, has awarded scholarships to around 1,500 students so far.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, this year's event was held completely virtually.

Overseas Koreans Foundation Book Recommendations



'Almost American Girl'

Robin Ha/Gilbut School

“Almost American Girl: An Illustrated Memoir” became popular after it was published in the United States, not only among children and young adults but also among teachers, as well as in libraries. The comic book details the things the author Robin experiences after immigrating to the U.S.

The work shows how the author adapts and struggles in a completely new environment and experiences growth. It is a very detailed story told from the point of view of the Korean author living in a new land, allowing the reader to experience the loneliness, excitement, fear, anger, confusion, joy and other emotions without any filters.

It also allows readers to peek into sensitive social issues, such as cultural differences between the U.S. and Korea, racial discrimination, society's opinions on single mother families and gender roles. The friendship and love for family, as well as the portrayal of a strong Korean woman, found throughout the book is enough to capture any Korean reader's heart.

This book is a story about life as a U.S. immigrant and the unchanging bond between a mother and a daughter.



'A Multicultural Expert's Story about 'Real' Diversity'

Cho Hyung-sook/Sanjini

Cho Hyung-sook, a professor at Seowon University and an educational expert on multiculturalism and multilingualism, published a book containing suggestions for Korean society in

order to prepare for the multicultural era.

Cho uses the example of a 7-year-old child who says, “I'm lonely,” instead of “I'm bored” to show the reality of how children from multicultural families are being excluded from mainstream groups. In the book, she discusses the value of diversity and analyzes how our society, which has already entered a multicultural age, can prepare.

She details solutions to problems like cultural differences in an easy-to-understand manner based on her time spent studying in the United States. The book shows the current state of multicultural education that Korean society provides (through schools, for example), as well as suggests improvements for how TV variety programs can treat immigrants and multicultural families.

Invitational training through Korea International Cooperation Agency becomes known as 'cradle of talent' in Guatemala

The invitational programs operated by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) for public officials and other important people from developing countries has established itself as a "cradle of talent" in Guatemala.

According to KOICA, Guillermo Castillo (vice president of Guatemala), Leslie Samayoa (technical vice minister of the Ministry of Health), Fanuel Garcia (head of the National Forensic Sciences Office), Ronny Lopez (Constitutional Court judge) and Edwin Ardiano (adjunct director general of the national police) are some of those who have received KOICA invitational training in Korea.

Ever since the programs began in 1991, 1,010 trainees have participated. They now work as public officials in various parts of the Guatemalan government, putting into practice the knowledge and experience gained in Korea.

After returning to their home country, the trainees work in their respective roles and gather yearly for trainee meetings and the like for knowledge proliferation seminars, donation activities and workshops, among other reasons.

They are active as "Korea-friendly" personnel, spreading the knowledge and experience they gained through their time in Korea and attempting in various ways to apply the advanced techniques they learned.

The training briefing session held online on Feb. 18 by the KOICA Guatemala office and SEGEPLAN (Guatemala's Secretariate of Planning & Programming) was a great success, with 55 public officials participating. KOICA promoted the 17 long-term master's and doctorate degree programs to be implemented this year to the officials and provided information on the courses, application forms and methods of applying. This year's training will start in the August semester and run anywhere from 14 months to a maximum of three years.

Korea Foundation creates very first Korean Studies master's program in Vietnam

This is the 30th year of official diplomatic relations between Korea and Vietnam, and the first Korean Studies master's course will be established this year in Vietnam.

The Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities will launch a Korean Studies master's program in September this year, to be managed by the Korean Studies Department. The Korean Studies Department was the very first of its kind in Vietnam. The



Guillermo Castillo, vice president of Guatemala, who participated in KOICA master's and doctorate training.

department was established as a Korean Studies major course in September 1994, after which it was elevated to a department in 2015.

It has been supported by the Ho Chi Minh Consulate General, as well as Korean government institutions like the Korea Foundation, Korea International Cooperation Agency, Korean Education Center and Korean Cultural Center, in addition to many Korean corporations like Samsung, LG, Lotte and POSCO. It is regarded to have led Korea-related education and research inside Vietnam.

The Korean Studies Department is currently led by professor Nguyen Thi Phuong Mai, who is one of the first graduates it produced, and acquired his master's and doctorate degrees at Seoul National University.

The department did a local demand survey and seminar prior to creating its master's program, taking input from experts and gaining public support.


As the master's program will be created this year, Korean studies research will now be performed at a deeper level in Vietnam, and this is likely to result in the production of many academic materials and papers.

It is also expected to produce many excellent graduates who will contribute to the enhancement of the relationship between the two countries and to the economic/social development of Vietnam.

King Sejong Institute Foundation collaborates for propagation of Korean language and culture

The King Sejong Institute Foundation (President Lee Hae-young) will collaborate with overseas cultural centers to expand the propagation of the Korean language and culture.

The foundation provides varied cultural content from its online learning platform, Nuri-Sejonghaktang, to the Korean Culture and Information Service's monthly publication, KOREA. The publication provides a webtoon introducing Korean food popular overseas, such as pork belly, "dakgalbi" and "pajeon," and educational content on Korean culture.

"We joined the Korean Culture and Information Service for the 'Overseas Propagation Activation Conference' created by the government to encourage the spread of Korean culture. This is how the collaboration began," an employee at the foundation said, 



Professor Nguyen Thi Phuong Mai of the Korean Studies Department (L), Ho Chi Minh Consul General Kang Myung-il (C) and Ngo Thi Phuong Lan, rector of Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities.



Korean Culture and Information Service monthly publication KOREA.

A Short Letter to Overseas Korean Youths

Recently the Overseas Koreans Foundation held an “Invitational Scholarship Student Graduation Paper Presentation” for overseas Korean youths. It was a meaningful occasion during which overseas Korean youths shared their academic accomplishments and communicated with professors, seniors and juniors. At the presentation, the youths spoke about various difficulties they faced, including their academic concerns regarding moving on to graduate school and writing papers, in addition to the social role of overseas Koreans.

As I listened to their concerns, it occurred to me that the troubles of those in their 20s are largely similar. By consulting with over 100 students every year, I was able to understand and emphasize with this generation’s thoughts and difficulties a little more. Though I was able to give them answers to academic questions, I couldn’t suggest career paths to these young people standing at a crossroads or be so irresponsible as to tell them to “Just hang in there.” It troubled me that I was still very inexperienced to give them life advice, and I didn’t know what to say to them.

Most of people’s concerns arise from the mystery that surrounds their future paths and their inability to know what will happen. You could say we are sometimes placed on a path we do not know from the very start. In particular, living as overseas Koreans, we had to accept that our given conditions were harsher than those given to most; we had to pioneer our own path instead of following one laid down for us by our predecessors. Fear of the mysterious leads to ignorance in the end; we are left with regret and curiosity regarding the paths that we chose not to take. This might also be because of a lack of conviction in the path we chose. Ultimately, the heart of the question is behavioral in nature, asking, “How can my goal be achieved, and do I really have the ability to achieve it?” rather than an existential and possessive one like “What kind of person shall I become? What do I wish to achieve?” As such, we must ask ourselves such questions endlessly and never stop seeking the answers. I’d like to share some opinions that are completely personal out of a desire to be of what help I can.

First of all, it’s important to focus on the small things, the small changes. Ironically enough, we endlessly take in fragmented information but don’t take much interest in the small things -- the insignificant things. Everyone is indifferent to the things and the people around them that don’t have much to do with them. Sometimes,



Kim Ryung,
assistant professor at Hongik University
Overseas Koreans Foundation
invitational scholarship student (2011)



however, it’s the small things that change the world; it’s the small things that are subdividing our lives and preferences down to the nano level.

A simple example could be derived from the recent trends in bags. With various simple payment methods becoming more widely used, people are carrying around fewer items. The space and practicality offered by bags became redundant, and bags became smaller. Now micro bags like saddle bags, belt bags and so on have

replaced big bags. The currency-related role shift brought about new trends in various areas, such as fashion and cosmetics. This means that the more sensitive you are to changes, the easier it is to spot new opportunities.

I also recommend getting used to taking charge of your life. That means you need to either read or meet people. Search engines may have answers to your queries, but they don’t offer wisdom. In this so-called “era of voyeurism,” more and more information is available every day. It is reading, however, that lets you understand the world, and other people’s experiences that let you grow your understanding of society. Second, it’s important to consistently work to create an environment that allows you to jump into action, as well as opportunities to do such. It’s impossible to lead a life that you are in charge of without experience. Diverse experiences will allow you to expand your opportunity pipelines.

Finally, I recommend having an awareness of -- and a sense of responsibility regarding -- the problems of the current era. Sometimes the present era will burden us more than we can stand. A single mote of the current world’s dust feels like a mountain on our backs; our own lives are often more than we can handle. Despite this fact, we mustn’t give up on becoming people who can take the lead in creating understanding and communication, defeating the misunderstandings and distrust between our countries of residence and the country of our ancestors.

I am reminded of a passage from “It Passes” by Cheon Yang-hee:
“It’s still the small things that change the world; a wind blows past.”
May all your admirable efforts shine! 🌟

Recruiting Study Korean overseas reporters (7th recruitment, to last until March 14)

The Overseas Koreans Foundation will recruit overseas reporters for the educational site Study Korean, which provides support to Korean language schools all over the world.

Selected overseas reporters will be required to upload articles regarding Korean language schools in their region (country), as well as educational topics, or provide column coverage (photos/videos/ interviews/etc.), uploading the content to the Study Korean site. Two maximum uploads are allowed each month and approved manuscripts will be rewarded with a designated writer's fee.

The activity period will last for 12 months, from April 1 to March 31, 2023, which could be extended after an evaluation.

Those who'd like to apply may download an application form from the website (<http://study.korean.net/>) and submit it via email (studykorean@okf.or.kr), along with a resume, a cover letter and a free-form column, by March 14.

The selection results will be provided individually on March 28. Inquiries can be made via email (studykorean@okf.or.kr) or phone (+82-64-786-0269).



Applications for Overseas Koreans Foundation's 2022 'survey for support projects regarding activities of organizations related to overseas Koreans'

The Overseas Koreans Foundation will be accepting project applications prior to providing support to civic groups related to overseas Koreans.

Applications can be made until March 21 on the Korean Net website (www.korean.net) after a group registration.

The potential recipients of support include projects for the activation of exchanges and the advancement of rights and interests, projects for harmony and the activation of exchanges between Chinese Koreans residing in Korea and overseas Koreans in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and projects for improving the Korean identity of next-generation compatriots residing in Korea.

Projects, such as multicultural projects for foreigners, projects viable

with resources of individual organizations (publishing of regular/occasional newsletters or journals, etc.), small groups for holding simple social gatherings, current expenses for organization management, scholarship funds, requests for donations, individual (research) activities, for-profit activities, religious projects, projects related to Korean politics and similar ones will be excluded from support.

Research organizations and press in Korea, in particular, cannot apply.

Results will become available in mid-April after a review by the Committee for Deliberation. Project-related inquiries can be made via email (sw21@okf.or.kr) or phone (02-3415-0113).

Upcoming plans for Overseas Koreans Foundation executives in February 2022

President Kim Seong-gon	Feb. 10: Lecture at the National Training Institute of Education, Science and Technology of the Ministry of Education
	Feb. 23: YTN evening news interview
	Feb. 24: MOU signing between the foundation and Ministry of Personnel Management
	Feb. 25: Participation in scholarship conferment ceremony for invited scholarship students and for graduation paper presentations



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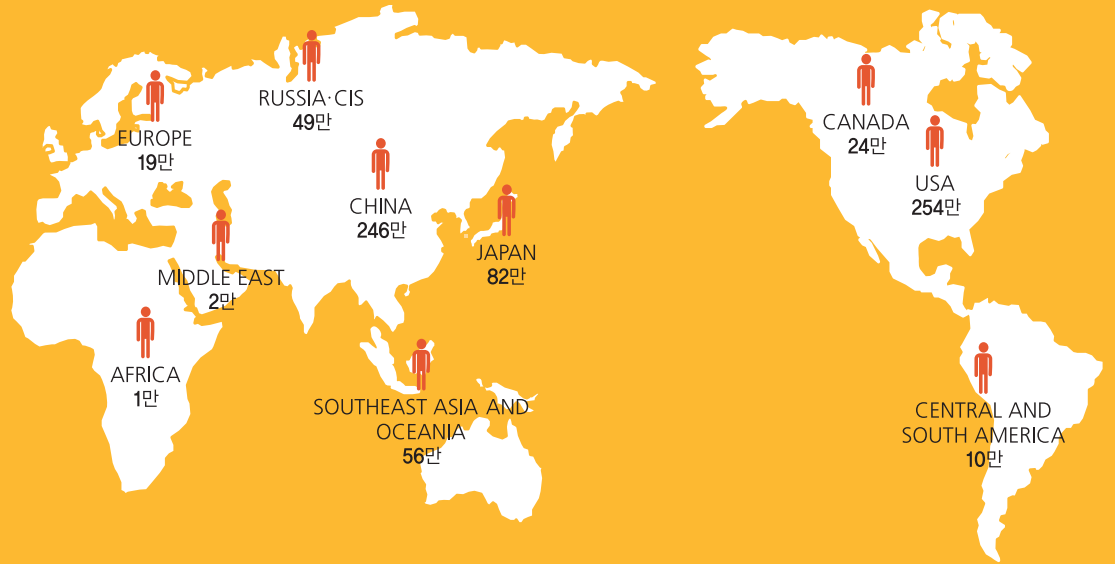


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