



Friends of Korea

Dedicated to fostering cultural awareness and
friendship between Americans and Koreans

Biographical Sketches of FOK Board of Directors, 2021-2022

Paul Courtright - Director

Paul Courtright grew up in the US, Iran, Taiwan, and Australia and, after university, served as a leprosy worker in the Peace Corps in South Korea (1979-81). He completed his masters in public health at Johns Hopkins University and doctorate in public health at UC Berkeley where he focused on epidemiology and eye diseases. For over 20 years he lived and worked in Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, South Africa, and Tanzania establishing, with his wife, the Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology in Moshi, Tanzania. In 2016 he and his wife moved to San Diego. Semi-retired, he provides technical support for trachoma elimination throughout Africa for a UK organization. In 2020 he published his memoir, “Witnessing Gwangju” (푸른눈의증인).

Gregory W. Engle - Director

Greg Engle is a former Peace Corps volunteer (tuberculosis control, South Korea, 1980-1981) and country director (Ethiopia, 2012-2014). He spent most of his career as a foreign service officer, with assignments in Pakistan, Germany, Ethiopia, Cyprus, Malawi, South Africa, Iraq, Washington and Togo, where he was the U.S. ambassador. Following his retirement from the Foreign Service, he served as senior advisor to the Vice Provost for International Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. He was also associate director of the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law at UT Austin’s LBJ School of Public Affairs, where he continues to teach a graduate course on managing overseas operations. In recent years, Ambassador Engle has performed and conducted songwriting workshops in Swaziland, Lesotho, Mauritania, Cote d’Ivoire, Djibouti and Eritrea under the auspices of the State Department’s Arts Envoy Program.

Bruce Fulton - Director

Bruce Fulton is the inaugural holder of the Young-Bin Min Chair in Korean Literature and Literary Translation, Department of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia. He is the co-translator, with Ju-Chan Fulton, of numerous works of modern Korean fiction; co-editor, with Kwon Youngmin, of *Modern Korean Fiction* (Columbia University Press, 2005), editor of the Korea section of the *Columbia Companion to Modern East Asian Literature* (2003); and general editor of the Modern Korean Fiction series published by the University of Hawai’i Press. He is the co-recipient of several translation awards and grants, including the first National Endowment for the Arts Translation Fellowship for a Korean literary work, the Manhae Grand Prize in Literature, and the first residency awarded by the Banff (Canada) International Literary Translation Centre for the translation of a work from any Asian Language. His most recent translations, with Ju-Chan Fulton, are *Mina* by Kim Sagwa (Two Lines Press), *The Catcher in the Loft* by Ch’ön Un-yöng (Codhill Press),

and *One Left* by Kim Soom (University of Washington Press). Bruce was a Peace Corps volunteer from 1978 - 1980 and returns to Korea on a regular basis.

Christy Gavitt - Director

Christy Gavitt was a Peace Corps volunteer from 1974-76, returning to 'uri nara' for another year as an intern with CARE-Korea. She then worked overseas in international relief and development programs for 32 years, 19 of those years with CARE. Her assignments included emergency programs nine countries, mostly in East Africa. In 1998-99, she did a six-month consultancy in North Korea during the famine. The program focused on the repair of embankments that had been damaged by the previous years' floods. From 2000, she managed HIV/AIDS and mother-child health programs in Mali, Togo, Namibia and Tanzania. After returning to the US, she worked for over five years as the Senior Health Coordinator with the American Red Cross' international program unit in Washington DC. She is currently a global health consultant.

Jenna Gibson - Director

Jenna Gibson was the director of communications for the Korea Economic Institute of America until the fall of 2018. Her duties include handling KEI's media profile and outreach along with managing KEI's online presence. She is interested in public diplomacy and cultural exchange, particularly between the United States and South Korea. Before joining KEI, Jenna lived for two years in Cheonan as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant. There, she taught weekly English lessons to more than 700 middle school students. Jenna earned a Master of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University in 2015. She graduated with a degree in journalism and international studies from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2011. She is currently in a PhD program at the University of Chicago.

Suzanne Crowder Han—Vice President

Suzanne Crowder Han has served as a writing consultant for the Korean Ministry of Culture and Information and later for Korea Telecom. Since 2005, she has been the director of the CIEE Study Center in Seoul (Council on International Educational Exchange). She serves on the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society, Korea branch, and has published several books about Korea. As a Peace Corps volunteer in Korea, Suzanne worked in tuberculosis control, then in maternal and child health. She then worked as a trainer for several Peace Groups including the last group.

Esther S. Im - Director

Esther S. Im is Program Manager at the National Committee on North Korea, an NGO working to support and facilitate principled engagement between the U.S. and North Korea. Previously, she was a Junior Fulbright Researcher in South Korea (2015-16) and a Researcher at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, where she covered sanctions, nonproliferation, and disarmament issues during South Korea's second term on the Security Council (2013-15). She also has research and programmatic experience from internships at the US-Korea Institute at SAIS, Wilson Center, and Council on Foreign Relations. Esther has a MSc in Foreign Service from Georgetown University (MSFS) and a BA in International Relations-Political Science from Wellesley College. A native of Little Rock, Arkansas, Esther likes to read and brew makgeolli in her spare time.

Daniel D. Kim - Director

Danny Kim is Assistant Professor in the Department of History at California State University, Fresno. He completed his PhD in Korean and Japanese History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, focusing on the 1920s and 1930s while Korea was under Japanese rule. Prior to Fresno, he was Research Professor at Korea University and visiting faculty at Portland State University, involved in building a Korean Studies program and teaching a variety of courses on Korean culture and history. As a former Fulbright scholar in Korea, Danny understands the importance of cultural awareness and exchange. While born in the American south, Danny considers the beautiful state of Oregon to be home. He is currently working on a manuscript on a women's rights organization in the 1920s.

Joy Kim - Director

Joy Kim is the Curator of the Korean Heritage Library (KHL) at the University of Southern California (USC). A graduate of Ewha Woman's University (BA, Library Science) and UCLA (MLS), she has held various leadership positions, most notably the President of the Council on East Asian Libraries (CEAL) of the Association for Asian Studies. A member of the USC faculty, she has published numerous books, book chapters, and articles on Korean librarianship and has also consulted for Yale, Vassar, Emory, and Duke University. In 2011, she was awarded the Order of Civil Merit from the Korean Government for "outstanding contributions to advancing awareness of Korean culture abroad" through her work at USC KHL and CEAL and her passionate work promoting the understanding of Korea. Personally, her background makes this position especially meaningful. She was born and raised in the countryside near Chonan and was a student at the middle school where two Peace Corps volunteers taught.

Gerry Krzic—President

Gerry Krzic is the director of the ESL and International Training & Development Programs at Ohio University. Prior to joining Ohio University, he was a Peace Corps volunteer in Korea, a Fulbright Scholar in former Yugoslavia and a university faculty member in Japan. He has written grants and conducted workshops for educators and students from the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and South America. He has served on National Fulbright ETA Selection Committees. His advanced degrees are in linguistics and intercultural communication. In 2014, he was awarded a Global Engagement Award by Ohio University for his dedicated service to international education.

James Mayer – Vice President

James Mayer spent 34 years overseas working for the U.S. government: for Peace Corps as country director [Korea, Philippines, Fiji, Kenya, Papua New Guinea and Tanzania]; for the Agency for International Development [Niger, Botswana, Burundi, Rwanda, Ivory Coast, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Ethiopia and the Congo]; and in assignments in Washington, D.C. He also worked as manager of AirTran Airways in Los Angeles and Regional Manager for Hallmark Aviation Services in Southern California. Jim has received numerous awards, including Civil Honor Award from the Republic of Korea. He is a member of the LAX Kiwanis Foundation, as well as a trustee of the Orange County World Affairs Council.

Ekaterina Mozhaeva - Director

Ekaterina Mozhaeva is the Event and Communications Officer at the Center for East Asian Studies, Stanford University working with East Asia-focused faculty, programs and departments to bring preeminent scholars and researchers to Stanford and other East Asia-related programming. She works on the Korean Humanities Lecture Series which aims to expand knowledge and understanding of Korean history, art, literature and language. Previously, as a master's student at Georgetown University, she focused on issues affecting the Korean peninsula and interned at the East Asia Institute in Seoul. Ekaterina served two-years as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Cheongju, followed by study at the Sogang University Korean Language Education Center (KLEC) in Seoul and interned at the Korean Human Rights Foundation.

Timothy O'Brien - Director

Timothy O'Brien has worked for many years as a lawyer and consultant in international firms with a focus on Korea; he is currently Of Counsel to Dentons Lee in Seoul. His work takes him back to Korea several times a year. Prior to his legal career, Tim was a Peace Corps volunteer at Gunsan Commercial High School and South Middle School and an advisor to the Ministry of Education in Seoul. As a Peace Corps staff member, he served as regional director for Chungcheong-do and Gyeongsang-do and as program officer for Peace Corps Korea in Seoul. Tim's wife, Hyon O'Brien, is a former op-ed columnist on personal topics for the Korea Times. Tim also serves on the board of directors of the International Foundation for Ewha Womans University, his wife's alma mater.

Janice Gow Pettey - Secretary

Janice served as a village health volunteer in rural Korea in the late 1960s. Her subsequent career has been in the nonprofit sector, primarily in development and executive positions for institutions like United Way, The Asia Foundation, Sacramento Region Community Foundation and Palo Alto University. She earned her doctorate degree in the School of Education at University of San Francisco, where she has taught as an adjunct professor for 25 years. She also teaches for the Lily Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University, Indianapolis. Janice is the author/editor of books on diversity and ethics in the nonprofit sector. Korea is a country close to Janice's heart. Beginning as a Peace Corps volunteer her interest and work have developed over the decades. Janice lives in San Francisco with her family.

David Roden—Treasurer

David Roden had a 30-year career in international commercial banking and served for 17 years as an external non-executive director of Halla Climate Control, including two years as audit committee chair. He currently serves as Honorary Consul for the Republic of Korea in Michigan and as President of the Consular Corps. David has extensive experience in working with Asian organizations and in North America and facilitating their success including: Japan Business Society of Detroit Foundation, Japan American Societies of Detroit (officer), Japan American Society of Chicago, Friends of Asian Art and Culture of the DIA, and National Association of Asian American Professionals. Additionally, he is a founding member of the Private Director's Association Detroit chapter.

Linda Tobash - Director

Linda Tobash served as an English teacher and trainer with the Peace Corps in Korea in Cheongju, Chungcheongbuk-do. Upon returning to the US, she completed graduate studies in TESOL and intercultural communication. Throughout her career she has been involved in international education and is currently Senior Advisor for Education at the Korea Society. Previously she directed intensive English and continuing education programs in the City University of New York system as well as served as Director of Admissions at LaGuardia Community College. She also spent many years at the Institute of International Education, where she directed University Placement Services which assisted Fulbright foreign students, including Fulbrighters from Korea, gain admission and scholarships at U.S. graduate schools. And, she was Senior Director for Policy, Knowledge and Data at World Education Services in New York.

H. Sook Wilkinson - Director

Sook is a retired clinical psychologist with a special interest in international adoption, children and families. She is the author of [Birth is More than Once: The Inner World of Adopted Korean Children](#) (1985), co-editor of [After the Morning Calm: Reflections of Korean Adoptees](#) (2002), and [Asian Americans in Michigan: Voices from the Midwest](#).

She served in many leadership positions in professional and community organizations. She played an instrumental role in the formation of Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (MAPAAC). Governor Granholm appointed her to serve as its founding Chairwoman. Governor Granholm also appointed her to the Board of Trustees at Northern Michigan University. During her tenure, she was elected by her peers to serve as the Chair of the Education Committee, Vice Chair, Chairwoman of the Board, and Chairwoman of the Presidential Search Committee.

Her current board affiliation includes Michigan School of Psychology, National Association of Asian American Professionals Detroit Chapter, and Southern Michigan Bridge Association.

Nancy Kelly – Chief Operating Officer (volunteer)

Nancy Kelly served as a maternal child health volunteer in Korea and was in one of the last groups to serve in Korea. Upon returning home in 1981, she enrolled in Johns Hopkins University and completed graduate studies in public health in 1984. She became the founding executive director of Health Volunteers Overseas in 1986. In addition to her service on the Friends of Korea Board, she serves on the boards of Global Impact, as well as Humanity and Inclusion (formerly Handicap International – US).

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