



Friends of Korea

Dedicated to fostering cultural awareness and
friendship between Americans and Koreans

Biographical Sketches of FOK Board of Directors, 2023-2024

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).

Bruce Fulton - Director

Bruce Fulton is the inaugural occupant 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, most recently *One Left* by Kim Soom, the first Korean novel to focus exclusively on the Korean "comfort women." He is the co-author, with Youngmin Kwon, of *What Is Korean Literature?* and editor of the recently released *Penguin Book of Korean Short Stories*. Bruce 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. Bruce was a Peace Corps volunteer in 1978 and 1979 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 is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago, specializing in International Relations.

Before pursuing her doctorate, Jenna was Director of Communications at the Korea Economic Institute of America (KEI). She spent the 2022-23 academic year in Seoul doing field research for her dissertation as a Fulbright research grant recipient. She previously lived for two years in Cheonan, South Korea as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant. She earned a Master of Science in Foreign Service degree from Georgetown University in 2015, and a Bachelor of Journalism from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2011.

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.

Kenneth Klein - Director

Kenneth Klein served as Head of the East Asian Library at the University of Southern California between the years 1983 and 2020. In that role, he oversaw the founding of the University's Korean Heritage Library and worked closely with its Curator, Joy Kim, to build it into one of the country's

leading academic Korean collections. He was particularly involved in the development of Korean and Korean American related digital collections, in particular the Korean American Digital Archive (KADA) and the Peace Corps Korea Archive. He retired from USC in 2020, but continues, as University Librarian Emeritus, to consult with his former colleagues on collection matters and to serve as a member of the Korean American Pioneer Council, a community-based organization formed for the purpose of preserving the recorded memory of the “pioneer generations” of the Korean American community (those who emigrated prior to 1965).

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.

Janice Gow Pettay – Secretary

Janice’s journey began as a Peace Corps volunteer in rural Korea, K-4. Since then, her career has been dedicated to the nonprofit sector, holding key roles in development and executive positions for institutions such as United Way, The Asia Foundation, Sacramento Region Community Foundation, and Palo Alto University. Her academic achievements include a doctorate degree from the School of Education at the University of San Francisco, where she has contributed as an adjunct professor for 25 years.

Currently, Janice is a faculty member at St. Mary's University in Minnesota and also teaches at the Lily Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University, Indianapolis. A prolific author and editor, she has produced notable works on diversity and ethics within the nonprofit sector.

Janice's contributions have not gone unnoticed, as she has been honored with Lifetime Achievement Awards from both Indiana University, recognizing her impactful work in ethical fundraising, and the Association of Fund-Raising Professionals Golden Gate Chapter. Currently, she serves as the secretary for the Friends of Korea board of directors.

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. David served in Korea as a Peace Corps volunteer from 1977-1979.

Linda Tobash - Director

Linda Tobash is Senior Advisor for Education at The Korea Society in New York where she leads a range of programs including language, high school enrichment, and Korean Studies speakers. She began her career in international education as a Peace Corps English volunteer in Cheongju, Chungcheongbuk-do. For 18 years Linda directed University Placement Services at the Institute of International Education assisting international graduate students, including Korean Fulbright students, to gain admission and scholarships at U.S. graduate schools. She also served as Senior Director for Policy, Knowledge and Data at World Education Services in New York. And, early in her career she directed English language and continuing education programs before becoming Admissions Director at LaGuardia Community College, CUNY. Linda holds a master's from Teachers College, Columbia University.

H. Sook Wilkinson - Director

Sook Wilkinson, Ph.D. 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.

Todd Wilkinson, M.D., her husband, served in Korea as a K-III volunteer in Eum Song, Choong Chung Buk Do, and later in the Peace Corps headquarters in Seoul coordinating workshops for the Korean teachers.

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 with the Peace Corps. 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, retiring in 2023. In addition to her service on the Friends of Korea Board, she serves on the board of Humanity and Inclusion (formerly Handicap International – US). She is also involved with the Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation which is raising funds for the Peace Corps Park which will be located near the US Capitol and National Mall in Washington DC.

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