

Friends of Korea

Fostering cultural awareness and
friendship between Americans and Koreans

여보세요

a newsletter of Friends of Korea

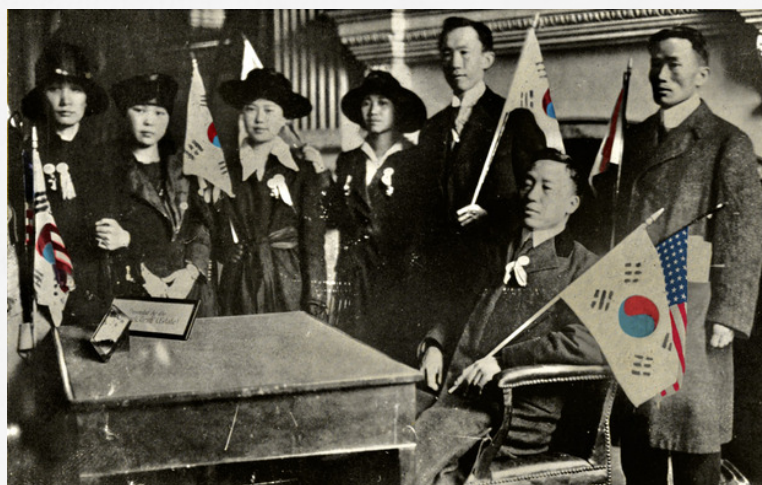
FORWARD INTO MEMORY

by Hope Elizabeth May, PhD, JD,
Fulbright Scholar Grant at the Graduate Institute of Peace Studies (GIP) Kyung Hee University (Namyangju) for the 2017/2018 year. During her Fulbright, she taught a course on the Peace history of the U.S and Korea and researched the March 1st Movement. May is currently Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Center for International Ethics at Central Michigan University, and an International Scholar at GIP.

The March 1st, 1919 Movement as a Lesson of International Ethics and Peace History

The March 1st, 1919 Movement for Korean Independence and Self-Determination is a treasure bequeathed to us from labors past, albeit a rather buried one as most Americans are unfamiliar with this story. It is not without some irony that this article is being written for the Friends of Korea - an organization formed in 2002 that arose out of the labors of Americans who served in the Peace Corps in Korea.

The Peace Corps, as we know, was created by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 and hence after the division of Korea in 1945. President Kennedy's vision was to realize peace through the voluntary service of the American people. But even before the formation of the Peace Corps, and even before World War II and the drawing of the 38th parallel, 100 years ago Americans joined in voluntary political fellowship with Koreans and formed the "The League of the Friends of Korea" in May 1919. This organization, which had chapters throughout the United States (and many in the mid-west) arose out of the March 1st Movement on the Korean Peninsula.



Participating in this peaceful plea of human dignity were children - both boys and girls; students - both male and female; shop-owners; farmers; mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers all were involved in the March 1st Movement which consisted in a series of non-violent, democratic uprisings throughout the peninsula. This peaceful, democratic plea was also an interfaith one, with Cheondogyo (an indigenous Korean religion), Christian and Buddhist united. Koreans waved their beloved flag, the Taegukgi, and read their own Declaration of Independence. The Korean Declaration of Independence of 1919 is truly a remarkable document, written by poet and polymath Choe Namson (최남선) (1890-1957), the Declaration has a conciliatory message, and focuses not on past wrongs, but on the need to rebuild for a new era in fellowship with the Japanese. To quote just a few of the moving sentences of the March 1st, 1919 Declaration:

We are not to reproach Japan's lack of fidelity for ignoring our age-old social foundation and excellent national mentality.

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SPRINGTIME THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gerry Krzic



Spring has always been my favorite season of the year -- the increasing length of the light of the day, the palette of my backyard transforming from dull brown to yellow, purple and bright green, the bluebirds returning to build their nests. But the one thing I wait for the most is the blooming of the cherry trees, when my thoughts turn to memories of weekend trips to Jinhae to see the buds bursting in dramatic white and pink, to spring-time hikes to temples in mountainous North Gyeongsang Province.

Back here in bucolic Athens, Ohio we are lucky enough to have more than 200 cherry trees lining the banks of our local river - the closest I can get to springtime in Korea. The spring colors, lights and smell bring an optimism and energy, instilling in me hope for the upcoming year. Like these spring scenes, I hope the new format of the FoK newsletter reflects the energy and optimism of our organization. You will notice the inclusion of interviews; articles of the latest Korean-related developments in the U.S. and Korea; books of interest; news of the FoK annual meeting; important upcoming events -- all items which we hope provide interest to the ever-expanding demographics of our membership.

This year we are pleased to welcome the newest cohort of sixteen members to FoK - resulting from a cooperative agreement between FoK and the California-based Pacific Century Institute and New York-based Korea Society through their Project Bridge Youth Ambassadors (YA) initiative. FoK is fortunate to have the able leadership of Mary Broude and Linda Tobash, both long-time, active members of FoK, coordinating our newest group of members. Mary provides more information on this exciting initiative in her article.

Next, for the those of us civically minded, Richard MacIntyre provides an update on upcoming legislation regarding the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019. Due to a loophole in the original law in 2001, many adoptees were denied the right to be U.S. citizens and over half of these came from Korea! The compelling story of Rachel Kim Tschida definitely makes this an issue worthy of attention. And, when talking about the intersection of government and civil rights, Hope May's article reminds us that 2019 is the 100th anniversary of the March 1 Movement (삼일운동), a momentous event in Korean history.

Nancy Kelly's interview with Ambassador Kathleen Stephens, the new President and CEO of the **Korea Economic Institute of America (KEI)**, gives us an insight into KEI's mission to be the premier organization for Americans to understand relations with the Republic of Korea. Ambassador Stephens is long-time member and supporter of FOK and is the first recipient of the Kevin O'Donnell Distinguished Friend of Korea Award.

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Forward Into Memory (continued from page 1)

Busy with rebuking ourselves, we cannot blame others.

Today, our responsibility solely lies in the construction of self, never in the destruction of others.

As a solemn command of conscience, it is to explore the new destiny of ourselves, never to hate and exclude others through past resentment and temporary emotion.

Oh, a new world opens before our eyes.

The age of brute power goes and the age of moral justice comes.

The humanitarian spirit refined and raised in the past whole century is about to start projecting the light of new civilization to the history of humankind.

This conciliatory tone was in stark contrast to another historic document also drafted a century ago but on the other side of the world (in France): the Treaty of Versailles. The Versailles Treaty, which is referred to as the "Peace Treaty" in the U.S. Congressional Record, was finalized in June 1919. Dictated by a spirit of revenge, punishment and a desire to humiliate, this "Peace Treaty" is the "yin" to the "yang" of Korea's forward thinking and humane Declaration of March 1st, 1919.

Let's now cast our gaze towards the U.S. in 1919. In a demonstration of solidarity with their brethren in Korea whose spirit for independence was aflame, Koreans in the United States, led by Phillip Jaisohn (서재필) and Syngman Rhee (이승만), convened the First Korean Congress in Philadelphia in April 1919. Americans joined, and Floyd W. Tomkins was one of them. Moved by the spirit of liberty and fellowship, he convened the "League of the Friends of Korea" in Philadelphia in May 1919.

The League had chapters in Ohio, Michigan, California and other states. Among the purposes of the League was to inform the American public about the true conditions in the Far East. In addition to these cosmopolitan-minded U.S. citizens who sought to aid the cause of Korean liberty, Senators such as Selden Spencer of Missouri and Hoke Smith of Georgia sponsored resolutions supporting the cause of Korean Independence.

The story of the March 1st Movement and the bonds of transnational fellowship that it strengthened are among the treasures that we inherit from our forebears. Thus, the story of the March 1st Movement is not only meaningful for Koreans and lovers of Korea. This is no mere story of 'Korean nationalism.'

The story has human meaning. The cosmopolitan, peaceful and conciliatory facets of the March 1st Movement provide ethical lessons that should be understood by all peoples. 2019, the 100th anniversary of the March 1st Movement, presents an opportune time to unearth more of these important stories of how Koreans and Americans worked in fellowship long before World War II and the division of the peninsula. Perhaps on this centenary year we can properly understand what has been bequeathed to us, so that we may, all of us, Korean and non-Korean, pick up the baton and run the race. The story continues the lesson so well put by a great American and abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879), "my country is the whole world my countrymen all mankind."

As a Fulbright lecturer in Korea, I was blessed with the opportunity to enrich my understanding of the March 1st Movement in 2017-2018. I created a project called 'Forward Into Memory' aimed at educating English speaking audiences about this incredible landscape of stories, known as the "March 1st Movement." As part of this project, I have created educational materials including a "Treasure Box" of resources that help bring the story to life, as well as a website.

To learn more about the March 1st Movement, the Forward Into Memory project please visit <http://www.forwardintomemory.com>

Letter from the President (continued from page 2)

As you can see, this is just a sample of the initiatives in store for FoK in 2019. I encourage all members of FoK to become involved as much as possible in our organization. What can you do so? Send in nominations for the O'Donnell Award; attend the upcoming 2019 annual meeting and public program; participate in a Revisit Program to Korea (for Peace Corps members who have never been back to Korea since their service); sponsor a new member; submit an article for future newsletters. The success of any organization lies in the energy springing from its membership and alliances with other organizations.

I would be remiss if I did not thank the following organizations that have assisted FoK in the past year: the Korea Foundation; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea; the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA); The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the USA; the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in New York, the Korea Society, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Boston, the Korea Economic Institute of America, and TNKorea.

Finally, I would like to thank FoK members Kathy Barco and Sherri Davis, former editors of the FoK newsletter. Their dedication, effort and energy put us on firm footing to go forward in our newsletter. Have a wonderful spring and happy reading.

Gerry



Seeking O'Donnell Award Nominations

**NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY
JUNE 1ST**

The Kevin O'Donnell Distinguished Friend of Korea Award recognizes individuals distinguished by their accomplishments that are consistent with the overarching mission of Friends of Korea: to foster cultural awareness and friendship between Americans and Koreans. The award is a lasting tribute to the extraordinary contributions made by Kevin O'Donnell, U.S. Peace Corps' first country director in Korea and the fourth director of the Peace Corps.

Visit the **website** to learn more about the nominations process and who has been recognized since this award was initiated in 2016.

Many adults in the US adopted from Korea and other countries years ago now need our help.

Congress may soon act on the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019 to provide all of them with proper US Citizenship. Many never were able to become citizens of the US to which they were brought as children and resided ever since.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FOR ADOPTED CHILDREN FROM KOREA

contributed by Richard MacIntyre

"This bipartisan bill would fix a loophole that denies some adoptees the right to citizenship. **The Child Citizenship Act (CCA)** of 2000 guarantees automatic citizenship to qualifying adoptees born outside of the U.S. under the age of 18. However, the CCA did not apply to adoptees who were over the age of 18 years when the law went into effect on February 27, 2001. As a result, an estimated 35,000 adoptees who were legally adopted by U.S. citizens but were over the age of 18 when the CCA went into effect failed to receive U.S. citizenship. Many of these adoptees live in the U.S. susceptible to deportation, unable to travel outside of the U.S. and unable to work legally."

Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019: S. 2522 and H.R. 5233

Bill Summary

Bills have been introduced in the House (H.R. 5233) and the Senate (S. 2522) in 2019. Since the Judiciary Chairs in both chambers have changed, we think this coming year holds the best prospect for success. Read updates at www.facebook.com/FCforAC.

This legislation would affect about 35,000 adoptees from foreign countries who were already over 18 when the previous legislation was passed in 2001. It only included those under 18 at that time. About HALF of those individuals were from Korea, and most of them were infants brought to new families here in the US, sometimes escorted by Korea RPCV's.

Those adoptees now range from 36 years of age to over 60. Now, unless their adopting parents proceeded with making them legal US citizens before they were 18, they find it almost impossible to provide the required information to become citizens. (Fortunately we did obtain citizenship for our daughter Monica, who otherwise could be included despite now having a family of her own with our two lovely grandchildren.)

They face denial of Social Security benefits, passports, government jobs, and worst of all, possible deportation (generally this has occurred if they have any illegal activities in their history, often long ago, even if they have served time in prison). We know of at least a half dozen individuals who were deported to Korea where they didn't know the language nor the culture; at least one committed suicide in Korea a year ago.

We need to have constituents of many states and districts to speak up to their representatives and senators, especially those on the new Judiciary committees of the Senate and House of Representatives. Please respond to me, former FoK Board member (macintyre1@aol.com), if you are able to connect with your US Senator or Representative on behalf of this bill.

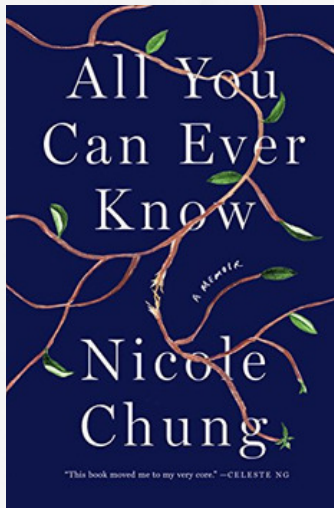
What the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019 Could Do...

The legislation would grant an adoptee born outside of the U.S. who was adopted by a U.S. citizen parent automatic U.S. citizenship if he or she meets the following conditions:

- Adopted by a U.S. citizen parent before reaching the age of 18;
- Physically present in the U.S. in the legal custody of a U.S. citizen parent before reaching the age of 18;
- Never acquired U.S. citizenship before the enactment of this bill; and
- Resides in the U.S. on the date of the enactment of this bill.

The bill would also allow certain adopted individuals residing outside of the U.S. to automatically become a U.S. citizen once he or she is physically present in the U.S. (pursuant to a lawful admission), if they meet the following conditions:

- Meet points 1, 2 and 3 described above;
- Undergo and pass criminal background checks that shows they do not have any unresolved criminal activity; and
- Have not been found guilty of a deportable offense as a result of the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against another person and been deported.



Nicole Chung

ALL YOU CAN EVER KNOW: A MEMOIR

by Nicole Chung

Reflections by Sook Wilkinson, PhD

This book tells the story of the author, who was born in America to Korean parents and was adopted as a baby into a white family in rural Oregon. The author, Nicole Chung, bravely and openly invites us into her intricate world of feelings, thoughts, and observations on many issues: growing up in an all-white community, but having a Korean face; wrestling with her racial and cultural identity; working through relationships with her adoptive parents, birth siblings, and birthparents; evolving a sense of belongingness and personal identity.

Nicole eventually searched for her birthparents and forged a relationship with one of her birth sisters, who served as a bridge connecting Nicole to her birth family, her Korean roots and culture, and some family secrets. I wish I'd had a guide like her sister to help me in my early days in the US. Twenty-five years ago, someone shouted at me, "Go back to where you came from!"

I was a parent volunteer at my children's school rummage sale. A shopper, unexpectedly and unprovoked, began yelling at me. This verbal attack took me by surprise, and I was at a loss as to how to react to it. Having lived in this country for almost fifty years, I now know that who I am to myself and others is an evolving process, challenging me to revise what it means to be Korean American. There's no one right way to be who you are.

I recommend the book highly to anyone who is interested in transracial adoption, Korea, personal growth or for a good read.

Sook is a retired clinical psychologist living in Michigan with her husband, Todd Wilkinson, MD (K-3). Her area of expertise was working with Korean adoptees. 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 (2015)."

AN INTERCOUNTRY & TRANSRACIAL ADOPTEE'S PERSPECTIVE

by Rachel Kim Tschida

Reprinted with permission from www.intercountryadopteevoices.com/

I am currently pursuing a master's degree in public affairs, and I'm taking a course on immigration policy. A recent question that was presented to our class was, "How has the anti-immigrant climate in America affected people you know?" I immediately thought of the impact it has had on intercountry (and often transracial) adoptees.

Speaking from my own lived experience, it was actually startling for me when I first realized that I was an immigrant. This might sound crazy but growing up in an American family with American parents, it just never crossed my mind. Yes, logically I knew that I was born in Korea and came to America when I was 6 months old, and my first passport was issued by the Korean government for my first plane ride aboard Northwest Airlines from Incheon to Seattle, and then Seattle to Minneapolis-St. Paul.

I have photos and newspaper clippings from my naturalization ceremony when I was 1 year old (my mom dressed me in a red white & blue dress for the occasion). I even received a hand signed letter from U.S. Senator Rudy Boschwitz, congratulating me on becoming a citizen (and how he also immigrated to the U.S. as a child). However, "immigrant" was never part of my self-identity.

This all started to shift a few years ago, when I heard about a Korean adoptee who was in deportation proceedings. At first, it didn't even make any sense to me - how could an adoptee, someone who was adopted by Americans like me, be deported? At the time, I didn't realize that not all adoptees were naturalized - either their parents didn't know or for some reason or another, just didn't complete the process. After reading the case of this adoptee, and going down a Google rabbit hole, all of the pieces started to come together.

The next time I stopped by my parents' house I thanked them for following through on all of the steps of my adoption and naturalization. I also asked to get all of my documents, including my certificate of naturalization and adoption file, just in case.

Through conversations that I have had within the intercountry adoptee community, I have realized that I am not alone on the complex path of self-discovery around adoptee/immigrant identity. There are some intercountry adoptees who do not identify as immigrants, while there are others who proudly and adamantly claim their immigrant status. I have also realized that I had one of the better possible adoption outcomes, with regards to how seriously and diligently my parents went through the adoption and naturalization processes. In the massive folder of adoption paperwork from my parents, I found notes in my mom's handwriting with reminders like "call attorney" or "don't forget to file naturalization paperwork."

Throughout the past 2 years, I have seen an increased level of fear and anxiety within the community. As anti-immigrant policy proposals have increased in number and frequency, related discussions within intercountry adoptee community groups and online chats have proliferated.

Everything, from whether or not we need a certificate of citizenship AND a certificate of naturalization, to stories of naturalized Asian American citizens who have been de-naturalized for spelling mis-matches in their application (which can be prevalent when translating Asian names from their native characters into Romanized letters), to the impact the proposed removal of birthright citizenship would have on the American-born children of non-naturalized adoptees.

This particular issue adds even greater distress around family stability to adoptees whose very lives were impacted by the separation from their birth families. Adoptees have given each other advice such as carrying proof of citizenship at all times, having copies of adoption certificates and naturalization certificates when traveling abroad and re-entering America, immigration and border control, and hiring immigration attorneys.

This exceptionalism narrative - that adopted children of American parents are "good immigrants" yet at the same time almost never viewed as immigrants by their families, the immigration process, or society at large, is probably why I also did not identify as an immigrant myself.

There was the assumption (and expectation) that we would be easy to assimilate into American society via our American families. It poses an interesting question: how can America view an Asian, African, or Latino child who has crossed the border with his or her Asian, African, or Latino parents so differently than an Asian, African, or Latino child who was adopted by (white) American parents?

Adoptive parents and adoption agencies successfully lobbied for the Child Citizenship Act of 2000, which granted automatic and retroactive citizenship to some (but not all) intercountry adoptees. Now, adoptive parents would only need to ensure the adoption was legally finalized based on the type of visa issued, and they would no longer need to go through the naturalization process. This seems in theory like a clear victory for the adoptee community that would close a gap in our immigration system. However, it continues to reinforce the exceptional immigrant narrative.

That said, even in 2000 concessions were made to the Child Citizenship Act in order to get it through Congress. The most notable and damaging was that it excluded adoptees who were already 18 on the day the law was enacted, February 27, 2001. There was an assumption that adoptees over 18 could easily navigate the immigration system and apply for citizenship themselves. Despite the “forever children” narrative that is also often placed on adoptees, this was an abrupt shift in suddenly viewing us as adults and transferring the responsibilities (and failures) of adoptive parents onto adoptees.

This also seemed to define the shift toward placing adoptees in the same category as all other immigrants, at least in the eyes of immigration enforcement. Unfortunately, there are many intercountry adoptees who have no viable path to citizenship, for various reasons. They may have entered on a non-immigrant visa, or their parents did not keep their adoption files which are the only proof that an adoptee entered the country legally via adoption.

Despite the air of “exceptionalism” in the passage of the Child Citizenship Act, one could also argue that adoptees had no agency or self-determination in their adoption whatsoever – they didn’t choose to be separated from their birth family and be sent from their birth country, nor choose to be adopted by Americans. Therefore, those who hold the most power within this adoption system should also bear the responsibility – American parents, adoption agencies, and the American government. For better or worse, the premise of adoption is built upon the promise of offering a “better life” and “creating a family” – and the denial of American citizenship is a complete contradiction to this promise. For many adoptees, their American families, homes, and lives are all they know.

Since 2000, there have been numerous attempts to amend the Child Citizenship Act, in order to grant retroactive citizenship to those who were excluded. The most recent attempt, the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2018, did not pass despite being bipartisan and bicameral.

The Adoptee Rights Campaign (ARC), a national organization led by adoptees without citizenship, will continue to advocate for a legislative solution. Other adoptee organizations and community organizations such as Korean American or other Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) social justice organizations have also mobilized around the country, in an effort to raise awareness and engage with their local, state, and federal elected officials. It is worth noting that the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2018 has been specifically positioned as a family and human/civil rights issue, and not an immigration issue – and that previous attempts to add adoptee citizenship to other immigration reform bills failed.

INTERVIEW WITH KATHLEEN STEPHENS

Nancy Kelly recently sat down with Kathy Stephens and interviewed her about her new position at KEI, being back in Washington DC and her thoughts on the current situation on the Korean peninsula. It was a wide ranging conversation...



Kathleen Stephens

Tell us about your new position at KEI.

I moved back to Washington in September of last year to take the position of President of KEI. I was not looking for a new position - I was quite settled in Stanford (Kathy was the William J. Perry Fellow for Korea at Stanford University's Shorenstein Asia Pacific Research Center from 2015-2018). I was not planning to make a move. But, as we all know, interest in Korea was at an all-time high in 2017 and 2018. I was frequently contacted by friends and colleagues, both in Korea and here in the US, concerned about the situation on the Korean peninsula.

So when I was offered this position, I realized that KEI was a strong platform to engage in a broader discussion to support a greater understanding of the US/Korea relationship, and regional dynamics - such as the north/south relationship and the role of China in the region.

I am glad to be back in DC. I have a lot of friends here and am enjoying reconnecting.

Since some of our readers may not know about KEI, can you tell me more about the history and mission of the organization?

The official name is the Korea Economic Institute of America, although it is usually referred to simply as "KEI." It was founded in 1982 with financial support from the Korean government, one of several organizations they funded to promote knowledge and understanding of Korea including, among others for example, the Korea Foundation. . KEI partners with the Korean think tank KIEP.

KEI is a not-for-profit educational organization, promoting dialogue and understanding between the United States and Korea. We have an active board of directors and a staff of ten.

Initially KEI, as you can tell from the name, was focused on economic issues. Our scope has expanded over the years, however.

We now seek to advance scholarship and understanding of Korea in ways that will inform both policy-makers and the American public of the full range of security, economic and political implications of our connections with the Korean peninsula.

We have several programs which are unique to KEI and successful over the years. The 'Ambassador's Dialogue' is an example. We host the US Ambassador to Korea and the Korean Ambassador to the US for a one week tour of numerous cities across the US. This is the only program of its kind and one that I participated in several times when I was the Ambassador to Korea. In addition to the opportunity for these ambassadors to meet and talk with a wide range of policy makers and state and local officials, it is also a wonderful opportunity for the two ambassadors to get to know each other better.

Another program we have is the 'Future of Korea' which we conduct in partnership with the World Affairs Councils. We send panels consisting of representatives from the US Department of State, the Korean Embassy and KEI to four to eight cities a year to discuss the latest in US-Korea relations. Topics are varied and might include, for example, an assessment of Trump administration initiatives related to trade, or the rise of China as a regional power. Again, one of the benefits of these sessions is the personal relationships and connections that develop.

We work with a broad range of partners including many universities, think tanks and other organizations interested in Korea. We have an extensive list of publications, including numerous academic papers that we commission annually.

These papers, usually about 10 per year, are on topics of current interest to Korea watchers and are compiled and published by KEI in a volume called On Korea. By the way, all of our publications are free and can be accessed on our website (www.keia.org).

We are working on upping our game in digital media, building on the success of our blog, The Peninsula, and our podcast series, Korea Kontext. There is much more we can be doing in that arena. These too can be accessed on our website.

I would be interested in your thoughts on the role that the Korean government has played in people to people relationships?

The Korean government has invested a lot over the years in strengthening the relationship with US. The establishment of the Korea Foundation is a good example of this. Funded in part from passport fees, the Korea Foundation has had an expansive portfolio of activities including, funding Korea studies programs at numerous universities and, of course, the revisits for returned PC Korea volunteers. There have also been trips for veterans of the Korean War and numerous other activities the Korean government has supported. KEI is supported through its partnership with KIEP, and works with the Korean embassy and others to promote people to people activities.

These efforts are admirable and quite notable. The Korean government realized many years ago how important it is to develop a relationship with the people of the US, to go beyond the government to government interaction.

Have they been successful?

Any of us who has seen the huge change over the years in what Americans think and know about Korea would say yes! There's a lot of factors, of course, including the growth of the Korean-American community. Measuring the Korean government's success, I think you can see that in polling on U.S. support for the alliance, and in the explosion of interest in and availability of Korean studies in American universities.

Will you share some of your thoughts on the current situation on the peninsula?

I think it would be fair to say that there have been some significant changes over the past couple of years. Kim Jong-un no longer tries to claim that South Korea is a failed state and a puppet of the US. The way he handled the visit to Pyongyang by President Moon last year signaled to his own people a different approach to South Korea.

The weight of "the Korean issue" has shifted to Korea itself. There is a sense by many, both in Korea and in region, of a changed America. We in the US tend to be Washington-centered but I think we need acknowledge that President Moon has been skillful at forging an inter-Korean process while simultaneously emphasizing the US-Korea alliance as foundational.

If there is a second summit with President Trump and Chairman Kim, I hope that what emerges is a sustainable process that will start to define and implement a road map for denuclearization and better relations.

I do believe that change is possible. This division has lasted 70 years; a peace process is extremely complicated, especially intertwined as it is with North Korea's nuclear ambitions. My own experiences in the Balkans and Northern Ireland with the Dayton Accords and the Good Friday Agreement, which didn't involve nuclear weapons, shows just how complex these negotiations can be. The focus now needs to be reducing the opportunity for active conflict while developing a process that will enable all parties to make progress on the issues at hand, including denuclearization with a goal of peaceful transformation.

It will not be easy. There is some skepticism, and even strong disagreement, with any effort to engage North Korea among some people in South Korea. This feeling is most often found in older Koreans - especially those who are old enough to remember the war and its devastation.

All in all, President Moon does appear to have strong support, although there was some softening of the support last year when little tangible progress was apparent from the Singapore summit.

I do think that the South Koreans have welcomed the attention from the US over the past couple of years and that many are hopeful that progress will be made.

As I said when we started this interview, this is an important time in US/Korea relations. We need to work closely with other democracies on these important issues and to build resiliency in our alliances. KEI can have an important role in fostering greater understanding of the issues – security, political and economic – that are critical to the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula and, more broadly, to the region and to the world.

Thank you for your time.

PROJECT BRIDGE

Youth Ambassadors

submission by Mary Ostenson Broude

Mary Ostenson Broude was a Peace Corps Volunteer and taught English at Seoul National University/Language Research Institute.

In 2018, Friends of Korea welcomed 16 new lifetime members who had just completed the academic year as Project Bridge Youth Ambassadors. Project Bridge is an annual year-long intercultural outreach program for 16 high school juniors and seniors (8 from LA; 8 from NYC) from diverse cultural backgrounds. It is the signature program of LA-based Pacific Century Institute (PCI) in conjunction with New York-based Korea Society.

The 1992 Los Angeles riots deeply impacted socially, physically, emotionally and economically the Korean American community in LA. Project Bridge was established the following year to instill a sense of understanding and respect to “bridge” the gap between cultures so riots or similar experiences will not happen again.

CONTACT KEI

To learn more about the Korea Economic Institute and upcoming events please click on the bold text above for more details.

1800 K Street, NW Suite 300 (3rd Floor)

Washington, DC 20006

Telephone: (202) 464-1982



LA Youth Ambassador panelists at June 2018 Peace Corps Korea reunion: Tracy Luong, Kevin Tang, Katie Xing, Litzy Santoyo.

During the academic year, the Youth Ambassadors attend workshops that focus on intercultural understanding, building and strengthening presentation and public speaking skills, education about Korea (culture, history, language, economy, policy) and the 1992 riots. Activities include seminars, workshops, field trips, community service and a fully subsidized educational ten-day study tour of Korea. The Korea trip includes visits to historical sites as well as a home stay with Korean high school students. At the end of the academic year, the Youth Ambassadors present their project papers and graduate from the program. Ambassador Kathy Stephens, former Peace Corps Korea Volunteer, is Chair of PCI’s Board of Directors. In 2018, the PCI Board approved a proposal in which PCI sponsors lifetime membership in Friends of Korea for each year’s class of 16 Youth Ambassadors.

SAVE THE DATE

The benefits to both the Youth Ambassadors and FoK are many. For example, after completing the Project Bridge program Youth Ambassadors now have an opportunity for ongoing engagement with Korea, Koreans and Korean Americans through FoK activities. Friends of Korea now has the opportunity to welcome and integrate into its structure a younger age demographic so that its mission of fostering cultural awareness, understanding and friendship between Americans and Koreans is sustained.

Examples of recent activities involving FoK and Youth Ambassadors include a Youth Ambassador panel discussion at last summer's Peace Corps Korea reunion, a day of kimjang followed by a visit to a Korean Senior Center in LA where the kimchi was distributed, and attendance by several Youth Ambassadors at the November 2018 FoK Annual Meeting in NYC. Future activities include working with PCI on the 2019 Youth Ambassador graduation event in LA, reaching out to Youth Ambassador alumni to introduce them to FoK, career development workshops and participation by the Youth Ambassadors in the 2019 FoK Annual Meeting.

The Youth Ambassadors are extremely talented, articulate, interesting and enthusiastic students. With our shared interest in Korea, they will be an integral part of Friends of Korea moving forward.

DATE

November 2nd, 2019

SUBJECT

The Friends of Korea annual meeting will be held in the Bay area (final venue to be determined but likely in San Jose) on **Saturday, November 2nd**. More details will be posted on the website as they become available.



NYC Ambassadors at 2018 FoK Annual Meeting:
Rehnooma Momo, Jasmine Nadal Chung, Ray Gardner;
shown with Gerry Krzic (FoK President) & Nancy Kelly (FoK
Vice President)

For more information on Friends of Korea, visit our website at www.friendsofkorea.net. Friends of Korea is dedicated to enhancing cultural awareness and friendship between Americans and Koreans. We accomplish our mission through a variety of programs and activities focused on education, philanthropy and networking. We invite you to join if you are not already a member. Thank you.