

HORIZONS

THE SIXTEENTH EDITION OF THE UIC SCRIBE



The UIC SCRIBE was founded in 2006 as the official student newsletter organized by UIC students.

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HORIZONS

The UIC SCRIBE

SCHOOL, SOCIETY & CULTURE

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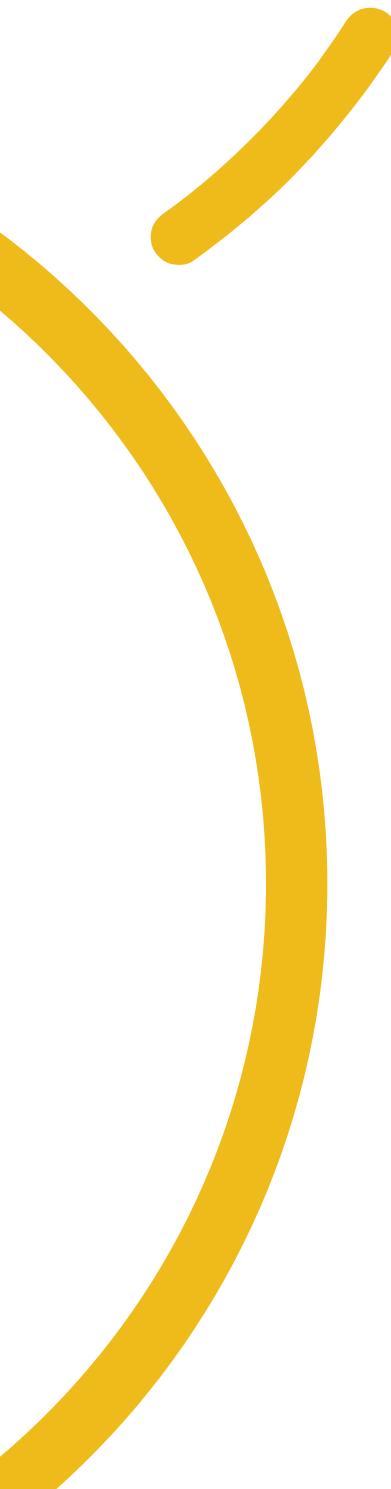
TABLE OF CONTENTS

[SCHOOL]

- + UIC's Academic Advising Program with Professor Mihyun Kim … **7**
- + UIC Exclusive Exchange Student Programs in the US … **9**
- + A UIC Student Abroad with Hyunjae Lee … **13**
- + Interview with Study Abroad Student in Denmark … **15**
- + Career Development Center … **17**
- + Yeerem Kim: On Graduate School and Life after UIC … **19**
- + Interview with UIC Alumni Ga Young Park and Esther Hong … **23**
- + International Alumni Interview: Shayan F. Lahiji, PhD … **27**
- + UIC Alumni Interview … **29**
- + Interview with a UIC Student Currently Preparing for the National Exam for Diplomat Candidates … **41**

[SOCIETY & CULTURE]

- + Chaebol Reform, An Ideal Fraud … **45**
- + IMF and Fried Chicken Restaurants Boom in South Korea … **47**
- + Delivery in a Hurry: A Lurking Danger for Everybody? … **49**
- + Animal Cafe, Is it the Right Way to Love Animals? … **51**
- + Minimalist Living: Less Is More … **53**
- + E-Government Estonia: The Country Where 99% of Administrative Work is Done Online … **55**



A MESSAGE FROM THE **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 16th edition of the UIC Scribe, Horizons.

As university students, we often look towards the horizon to see what the future holds for us. Society tells us that the decisions we make today will set the rest of our lives in stone, and so we're stuck here on the shore, searching high and low for that one right answer, that one right path. But the truth is, there isn't one. This kind of mindset merely fills us with worries and fears, preventing us from actually taking the first step towards new horizons. Although the waves may seem daunting, nothing will come out of just sitting and watching from the shore.

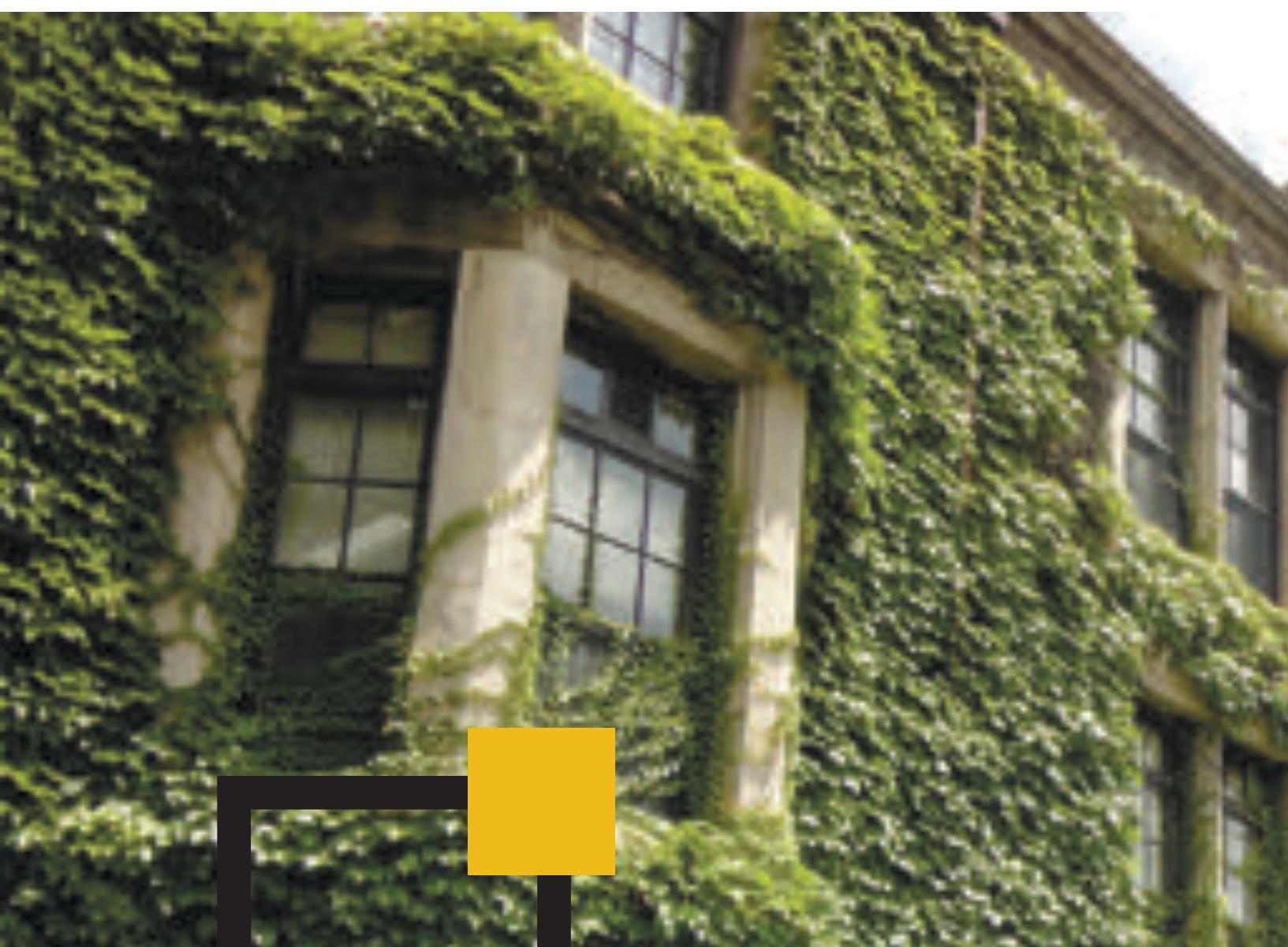
I hope that the articles in this issue of the UIC Scribe, especially our segment on UIC alumni, will help you find the courage you need to take the first step towards your future. Taking this first step will broaden your horizons and hopefully open your eyes to the wide range of opportunities that life has in store for you.

Sincerely,

Elaine Natalie
Editor-in-Chief







SCHOOL



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- + Interview with Study Abroad Student in Denmark … **15**
- + Career Development Center … **17**
- + Yeerem Kim: On Graduate School and Life after UIC … **19**
- + Interview with UIC Alumni Ga Young Park and Esther Hong … **23**
- + International Alumni Interview: Shayan F. Lahiji, PhD … **27**
- + UIC Alumni Interview … **29**
- + Interview with a UIC Student Currently Preparing for the National Exam for Diplomat Candidates … **41**

2019. 05. 23

written by Ye Eun Lee

UIC'S Academic ADVISING PROGRAM WITH Professor Mihyun Kim



Professor Mihyun Kim is the Underwood Division's academic advisor in charge of International Studies, Political Science and International Relations, Economics, and Comparative Literature and Culture majors. Professor Kim is currently co-writing a book on academic advising. The UIC Academic Advising System started in the summer of 2012. As UIC grew larger, the academic advising program, formerly headed by devoted professors of the Common Curriculum, transformed into one led by professional academic advisors.

What are some common concerns of students you can share with us?

Career advice is a topic many students approach me with. The moment you feel free from the pressures of entering college, you will find yourself in the next endless competition—having to improve your resume. A lot of students don't focus on positive concerns like who they are as a person and what they want to do. They make judgments based on external criteria like "what are my colleagues doing to prepare for their career?" or "what career does society favor?" Therefore, through various channels of academic advising (freshman seminar, career workshops, individual consultations), we help students better understand themselves, help find what they want to do in life, specify what kind of preparations are needed, and ultimately, help them lead a happy life as a member of society.

- SCHOOL -

Could you tell the readers about yourself?

When the Academic Advising System was first established in UIC, I had the honor of becoming one of UIC's first academic advisors. I think the reason I decided to pursue a career as an academic advisor was due to the help I've received from the academic advising program during my years studying overseas. Throughout my college life, it was very difficult for me to adapt to my major and school life. But there was virtually no professional help or advice offered on the part of my professors, and I had to struggle alone. However, when I received help from the academic advising program while studying abroad, I was able to map out my academic plan, adapt to school life, and prepare for my life after graduation—this memorable experience I had with academic advising is probably what drew me to the work.

I am grateful for my life as an academic advisor in UIC. I am able to meet UIC students who are the world's best and brightest, and are always full of personality. As an educator, it is rewarding to witness students grow by helping the students themselves understand the vision of UIC education to create a successful college life, and help them utilize UIC's diverse university resources to suit their individual goals.

Initially, it was difficult to provide the right advice to the students' questions. Especially because I had to conceive an answer while listening to the students' concerns, at times I missed several verbal and nonverbal cues. But after seven years, I am more than familiar with the information and knowledge and was able to create my own style of academic advising. I try to see the individual characteristics and educational needs of the student, then determine the amount of information I need to provide, as well as how I should present my advice.

How do you try to give the best advice to students?

My direct and indirect experiences are valuable assets. Direct experiences, of course, come from my own life. As for indirect experiences, I read news articles daily and 1~2 books a month. This helps me understand the changing society and empathize with the sensibilities and concerns of the younger generation. Moreover, as I am also human, my viewpoint and knowledge could be narrow. Thus I always try to have a balanced view, an open mind, and learn from my colleagues. I also realized how important my health was when I suffered from HIVD (spine disc) a few years ago. After work, I try to maintain my health by walking and taking up light exercise with my family. What qualities and experiences do you think are important for an academic advisor to have? Some basic abilities an academic advisor should have is (1) being able to collect and utilize information and resources of the university (2) communication skills (3) empathy (4) providing opportunities that would allow the student to develop on their own (5) being ethical and cooperative (6) professional understanding of the Korean (domestic) and global education environment. It isn't necessary that an academic advisor major in education. There are many examples where educational experiences that stem from diverse majors have positive effects. Also, the most basic yet crucial qualification is good character.

What do you recommend students do to get the most out of their UIC experience?

This isn't an easy question. I worry that a student may think whatever I say would be the "magic wand" that will undoubtedly lead them to a successful college life. UIC students find themselves having to make a lot of decisions (internship, extracurricular activities, choosing subjects and majors, career, etc.). The responsibility that follows these choices isn't light. So I hope students have the wisdom to enjoy these situations when they have to choose a path. Even if you fail, it's meaningful. As you are still a college student, you will have many opportunities to overcome these failures. Whatever experience it may be, I encourage you to actively pursue different opportunities based on a deep understanding of yourself. If you have any questions or concerns in the process, I would very much recommend receiving the help of the academic advising program.

- SCHOOL -

UIC EXCLUSIVE Exchange student Programs in the US

2019. 05. 30

written by Soonwoo Kwon

According to Office of International Affairs, 1,600 Yonsei students go on exchange every year. Yonsei University currently has exchange agreements with 665 universities in 70 countries. Any Yonsei student can apply for exchange student programs for a semester or an academic year. Some of the requirements for the application process are a GPA above 3.0/4.3 and completion of at least 2 semesters at Yonsei. The latest students can go on exchange is the 1st semester of their senior year.

In addition to the general Yonsei exchange programs, Underwood International College offers its own UIC-exclusive exchange program. UIC students have more options to choose from than students in the other colleges of Yonsei University. Another advantage is that UIC-Exchange Student Programs (ESP) participants receive 1/2 of the UIC tuition as a scholarship, while Yonsei-wide ESP participants only get 1/3 of the tuition. UIC currently has 16 partner institutions in Asia, Europe, Australia and America. Among them, there are five partner institutions in the US—Amherst College, Claremont McKenna College, Dartmouth College, University of California, Irvine, and Wellesley College.

- SCHOOL -



Amherst College

Amherst College is a newly introduced exchange partner of UIC starting from Spring 2020. Amherst College is a prominent liberal arts college in the United States, ranking #2 amongst all US liberal arts colleges. The college has 1,849 students in total and is located in Amherst, Massachusetts with a rural setting. It has an outstanding academic program and has 8:1 student-faculty ratio. Amherst has an open curriculum and offers 40 different majors. Some popular majors are economics, psychology and mathematics. The college is also famous for “singing” because of its a cappella groups. Amherst pursues sustainability on campus and it claims to have the oldest athletics program.



Wellesley College

Another renowned liberal arts college in Massachusetts is Wellesley College. Wellesley College is widely known for its famous alumna, Hillary Clinton. Wellesley College is a women's college located in Wellesley, Massachusetts, near Boston. It is a college town in a suburban setting with 2,508 undergraduates enrolled. It is ranked #3 amongst liberal arts colleges in the US and it is one of the top women colleges. Wellesley provides 56 different majors and has more than 150 student clubs and organizations such as community service, publications, and sports clubs. Wellesley is also one of the Seven Sisters Colleges including Mount Holyoke, Vassar, Smith, Radcliffe, Bryn Mawr, and Barnard, and has a cross-registration program with MIT. Some popular majors in Wellesley are economics, biology, and psychology.

- SCHOOL -

Dartmouth College



Dartmouth College is an Ivy League school located in Hanover, New Hampshire. It is a private research university and has a total of 6,409 students. Dartmouth college follows a liberal arts curriculum and has 57 majors with economics, government, computer science, engineering, and history as its most popular majors. Dartmouth is the smallest university among all the ivy league schools and has a student faculty ratio of 7:1. The college has more than 350 clubs and student organizations, and 60% of students participate in Greek organizations. Furthermore, 75% of students are involved in athletics through varsity teams, club sports or intramural teams. Dartmouth's football and hockey teams compete in Ivy League athletic conferences.



Claremont McKenna College

Claremont McKenna College is a liberal arts college that has 1,328 undergraduate students. It is one of the top liberal arts colleges in the US and is located in Claremont, California, with a suburban setting. It has an emphasis on economics, finance, international relations, government and public affairs. It is one of a seven-college consortium called "The Claremont Colleges", which includes Scripps College, Pomona College, Harvey Mudd College, Pitzer College, Claremont Graduate University and the Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences. Students can study and join social activities in any of these colleges.



University of California, Irvine

University of California, Irvine is a public research university and is one of the UCs (University of California), a well-known public university system in California. It is 5 miles away from the Pacific Ocean and is located within Orange County, a metropolitan area in Los Angeles. There are 35,220 students and more than 500 student organizations, including 50 fraternities and sororities. Among 80 majors offered by UCI, some popular majors include social psychology, biology, and public health. Also, UCI is the most energy efficient campus in California and its research contribution in sustainability is significant. Furthermore, as a public university, UCI offers public activities and events, and benefits the society through research.

Exchange programs provide excellent opportunities to study abroad in a different environment and culture. ESP is a valuable experience where you can gain insight, enrich your knowledge, and make new friends. Since UIC-exclusive exchange programs provide more options and benefits, UIC-exclusive ESP is highly recommended for UIC students. Those who are interested in applying for exchange can visit the Office of International Affairs (exch@yonsei.ac.kr), and for more information on UIC-exclusive programs, visit UIC Office or <http://uic.yonsei.ac.kr>.

A UIC STUDENT ABROAD

With Hyunjae Lee

2019. 06. 13

written by Maureen Porter



Underwood International College (UIC) allows students from all over the world to study and learn in a truly international and global environment. Although many students who study at UIC are already not studying in their home countries, UIC also offers numerous programs and support for students who wish to further expand their horizons and study abroad at another university. One such student, who is a member of UIC Scribe herself, is Hyunjae Lee. Hyunjae is an International Studies major currently studying at Wellesley College located in the Boston area of the United States. Wellesley College is a women's liberal arts university, which was something Hyunjae looked for when studying abroad since she enjoys and prefers a lower student-to-teacher ratio, something UIC itself also takes prides in. Thus, at the beginning of January, Hyunjae began her studies abroad. This interview was conducted to learn more about her studies and experiences abroad, and to fully describe how the international setting at UIC prepares its students to perform well in a foreign country.

- SCHOOL -

What made you want to study abroad?

I wanted a different experience. My first two years at Yonsei University were so valuable in that I made some really great friends and I could immerse myself in academics and interesting extracurricular activities, but I was curious about how the college experience was outside of Yonsei and outside of Korea. My friends who went abroad for university also played a big role in encouraging me to apply for a semester abroad. They told me I would be missing out on so much otherwise!



How does Wellesley College compare to UIC?

Wellesley is a liberal arts college like UIC, so they bear a very close resemblance in how the classes are structured—less students, more discussion-based, and an equally great opportunity for more active engagement. UIC and Wellesley both have their charm and there is a lot from both schools that I have yet to experience, so I wouldn't necessarily want to compare the schools side by side. I miss my friends that I left behind at UIC. I miss using Korean with my peers outside of class! I can even say that I miss the UIC professors who led excellent classes that helped me grow as both a person and a scholar. I even miss Daewoo Annex Hall!

One thing that struck me with awe at Wellesley College was how supportive the college community is. Wellesley is like one big family where students call one another siblings ('Wellesley sibs' is a term they actually used!). I have received so much help from my peers and also from the Korean community at Wellesley even though I am only here for a short while. Another thing that fascinates me is how open-minded the students and faculty are to different cultures and experiences, and also how vocal they are about sociopolitical issues as a community in general.

What is your favorite memory so far?

The favorite memory I have so far is hanging out and decompressing with my friends on a Friday night after a long day of classes and assignments, cooking and eating ramen while singing to ABBA songs from the film "Mamma Mia." I am so fortunate to have met my friends without whom I would be struggling in loneliness. They are the ones that make the U.S. feel like home.

What skills did you develop at UIC that have helped you during your study abroad semester?

The common curriculum courses taught at UIC helped me greatly, not only for my study abroad semester but also for my entire college life. Among the courses, the Research Development and Qualitative Methods class (that I took begrudgingly in my first year) helped me learn how to write good research papers by utilizing appropriate methodologies and sources. The Freshman Writing Intensive Seminar helped me formulate more compelling theses and write clearer paragraphs—a skill so useful to have at any point in college, honestly. The professors at UIC who encouraged students to contribute to class discussions, comment, and freely ask questions are also to thank for creating a safe and comfortable environment so that I could rid myself of the public speaking anxiety I had in the past.

Something truly special about UIC is that it prepares its students to be part of the global community. Through its international environment, it allows students to develop the courage to live in and discover new places and to meet new people. It allows its students to not just be passive learners, but to seek out new challenges and explore the world. This is clearly evident in Hyun Jae's experience. In fact Hyunjae has enjoyed her experience so much, and wants to learn more that she has decided to extend her exploration of Wellesley College and will rejoin UIC for her Spring 2020 semester.



Interview with STUDY ABROAD STUDENT in Denmark

2019. 05. 30

written by **Sara Rousalova**

- SCHOOL -



Enjoying some of the great opportunities our university offers, many UIC students decide to escape Seoul for a semester or two and go on a study abroad program. The list of choices features universities from all around the world with many interesting cultural experiences.

How can one make the right choice?

To try to answer this question, I caught Michaela, a Comparative Literature and Culture (CLC) major who spent a semester in the beautiful Copenhagen, and asked her to share her experience studying abroad.

Q. Where did you go as a part of your study abroad semester?

I went to Copenhagen in Denmark. The university I chose was the University of Copenhagen.

Q. Why did you choose this particular place?

I always wanted to spend some time in one of the northern countries, anywhere in Scandinavia really. Mainly because it is a little different than living in North America, Asia, or continental Europe and I have lived in all of these places before. Also, I wanted to experience living in a welfare state, enjoy biking and so on. Stockholm felt a little too big for me, Norway would be too cold, so I ended up in Denmark.

Q. Did you ever regret this choice?

Not at all. I wish I went for two semesters instead of one.

Q. Did you have any bad experiences, any surprising events you could share?

No, I liked it so much I did not want to leave.

Q. Can you describe one best experiences from your semester abroad?

For my friend's birthday we went to these amazing old royal hunting grounds with a huge forest called The Deer Forest. Close by was a beautiful hunting lodge and also one of the oldest amusement parks in Europe. We bought a bunch of groceries beforehand and found a nice little area where we had a really enjoyable picnic while looking at the ocean. Later we returned nearby Copenhagen and went to one of the beaches there. We swam in the sea and grilled a delicious dinner. It was so nice!

Q. How would you compare the people in Denmark to Korea? How did they behave towards you as a foreign student?

It was actually quite similar to Korea. Since Denmark has a very small population and, similarly to Korea, it is a very homogenous society, it's really obvious if you are a foreigner. But once you get to know people, I think they are generally pretty welcoming. In my case, I worked at a café/bar, so I had more opportunities to interact with other Danish students compared to most international students there. There is not really a sense of people being automatically friendly to everyone, but if you need help they tend to generally be very responsive. I would say that if you make the time you will be able to meet nice friends. Denmark also has great social security benefits for foreigners. I had no problem with part-time work or healthcare, so systematically I experienced no big difficulties.

Q. How were the classes different from UIC ones?

I mainly took classes from the English department, so they were all in English and didn't have that many exchange students. The classes there were similar to the Comparative Literature and Culture classes and covered pretty standard literary topics. For example, Shakespeare is everywhere. However, I also took an archeology course and there the classes focused on true hands-on experiences. We went to a lot of excavations, took several trips, and got to have a lot of experiences outside of class. Most of it focused on actual field work. I remember the trips to folk museums where I even learned how to use a Viking loom, how to weave fabric, pull thread... That was very different from UIC.

Q. What would you advise to students deciding where to go to study abroad?

I think it all depends on your priorities. If you want an academically enriching experience, it's best to look for specific universities that offer courses you want to take and maybe offer what you cannot get here. If you consider studying abroad as more of a life experience, which is more common, it is important to think about what kind of differences you want. Do you want to visit lots of museums and exhibitions you can't see in Korea? Then maybe Paris, London or Vienna is great for you, as there are many great student-friendly cultural opportunities. For nature, you can go to maybe New Zealand, Denmark or Sweden.

career Development Center

2019. 06. 20

written by Tamy Vu

- SCHOOL -

Sooner or later, we as undergraduates will have to confront the decision of whether to continue with our studies or to establish a career path and find a job for ourselves. It is important to decide on your future path as soon as possible. Although some might propose that by making many mistakes you will find out what is right for you, those mistakes are still preferably made when you are in the self-development process of the college years. An early decision regarding your career orientation is more beneficial, as it can give you a clearer direction in planning your future. Of course, while it would be good to figure out all of these things on your own, the UIC Career Development Center (known as the CDC) is too good a chance to pass up on.

The CDC was founded when Professor Michael Kim gathered students' resumes for a Global Career Fair and realized that UIC students did not know how to write even a proper, let alone outstanding, CV with which to brand themselves. So he founded the CDC, in order to provide the resources for undergraduates to map out their futures early on. With the help of the Global Career Society (a student-centered club that focuses on enhancing its members' understanding of the global job market and gathering information for career planning), and the voluntary professors who help direct the Center, the CDC can be a great source for whoever is looking for career-related advice.





YSCEC page

A YSCEC page to which every UIC student has access. On this page, information about job and internship opportunities are posted regularly. Additionally, there is basic information on how to write a good resume, which can be very helpful in making anyone a potential candidate for their desired position. While Yonsei also has a website for sharing career-related information, since UIC is an international college, the CDC resources promise more global opportunities which may be more challenging yet suitable for our students. Whether you have a specific goal in mind or are still worrying over what to do with your future, try taking a look at the YSCEC page and looking for a job that might be suitable for you. The perfect job will not appear before you all of a sudden just because you have waited long enough, but the opportunity will come to those who seek it hard enough. Moreover, if you have any questions or concerns, you can address these to the CDC through the YSCEC page and receive an answer usually within a week.

CDC Office

If you have gone through the YSCEC site, learned all the information available there, and are still confused about how to write a resume, try stopping by the office since the CDC has more detailed and exclusive resources there. You can come during office hours to talk with our professors or GCS members, who are trained to give feedback on your resume and direct you through the myriad career resources that the office has to offer. It is important for your resume to appear professional, since if written the right way, it will present a great image of yourself and can make you stand out from tons of other candidates. Yet to write a resume properly it takes four years of accumulated undergraduate experience, and requires critical self-assessment and a proper understanding of our strengths and weaknesses. Listed below are the locations of the CDC Offices:
Sinchon CDC, Daewoo Annex Hall, Room 314
Songdo CDC, Veritas Hall B, Room 421



Alumni Network

The CDC also has a wide network of alumni connections, and supports events such as alumni lectures or the annual UIC Career Talk Fair. No matter the path you want to take, whether it is heading into some specific industry or attending graduate school, our seniors have already done it. They are more than willing to share their experiences and personal stories, as long as you take the initiative to come to them, to listen and to ask questions.

After all this, you may ask: why worry about a career now when you can do it later? In truth we all know that procrastination always feels good until the deadline hits. Nevertheless, being proactive in finding a direction for yourself and creating a proper CV which showcases your accomplishments is much more beneficial in the long run. The CDC is here to help you to map out the journey, whichever direction you wish to take.

- SCHOOL -



yeerem Kim: on graduate school and life after uic

2019. 06. 20

written by Hyunjae Lee

A recent graduate from UIC with a B.A. in International Studies, Yee Rem Kim has a great passion for history and theory. At the beginning of this year, Yee Rem took her passions to the professional field through an internship at the Wilson Center, a highly renowned think tank located in Washington D.C. After her internship, she plans on pursuing a master's degree in History at the University of British Columbia (UBC) this coming fall. UIC Scribe has had the wonderful opportunity to interview Yee Rem about her aspirations and the process of preparing for graduate school.

- SCHOOL -

Have you always been interested in History? Why did you decide to apply to graduate school?

I never imagined that I would be going into History. As my graduation approached, I had to think fast and hard about what I wanted to do for the next chapter of my life. Looking back on my college years, I realized that most of the professors whom I considered my mentors were historians. I saw that the reason for this was that I loved history courses – I had taken at least one every semester, sometimes enjoying them more than my major courses. The course on Korean history and the politics of memory that I took during my last semester finally convinced me to enter academia. Deliberating with and receiving valuable advice from my professors helped me understand myself better, including my interests and passions. I also recognized a great need for a more meticulous study of modern Korean history, which still has an impact on current affairs. Complex yet understudied, Korean history needs to be given more scholarly attention and it is my wish to let more people, inside and outside of Korea, understand the complexity and pain of its history.

What do you want to focus on more specifically at UBC?

The focus for my History M.A. program will be on Korea, specifically the Japanese colonial era and the Korean War that ensued soon after. I am particularly interested in finding the voice of people who might not have necessarily adhered to a particular ideology during the Korean War. At UBC, I will be looking at regions near the DMZ and the people who had to cope with the constant change of power as the war unfolded.

Could you tell us about your application process? When did you start preparing and what kind of preparations did you have to make? Are there any “tips and tricks” to bear in mind as an undergraduate student in Korea?

Because I decided to apply to graduate schools later than my peers, I had to work really quickly. I made up my mind around spring 2018. I wanted to apply in the coming winter, so I had less than a year to prepare. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE), TOEFL, a writing sample, at least three recommendation letters, and a statement of purpose were the big things on my checklist. In reality, it was much more work because each document had to fit each school's requirements. I devoted my summer to preparing for the GRE. I got TOEFL out of the way fairly quickly.

My biggest concern was my writing sample. I wrote a historical paper through which I could showcase my language skills and conduct research in a social history setting with primary sources. Writing it was a real struggle since I had to do it after graduating, outside of the UIC “bubble.” That is why I highly recommend anyone even remotely interested in going to grad school to take the senior thesis course at UIC. I really wanted to, but it didn't work out for me due to a schedule conflict.

Instead, I stayed in close contact with professors at UIC, making frequent appointments even after my graduation. Many of the professors were really helpful and went out of their way to help me – I wouldn't have been able to come this far without their support. My advice would be to make genuine relationships with professors earlier on in your college life and strengthen those bonds. These connections will go a long way not just during grad school application processes but also in life.

It is helpful to have both a general timeline and personal deadlines, for example, for when you want to complete a certain part of your writing sample. Keep communicating with professors and don't be afraid to remind them of deadlines because they are much busier than us. Ask them for recommendation letters ahead of time and send them rough drafts of your writing sample and statement of purpose in a timely manner.

"I CHOSE TO DO WHAT MAKES ME THE MOST HAPPY"



Could you tell us what your official position and duties are as an intern at the Wilson Center's Korea Foundation? How has your experience been so far?

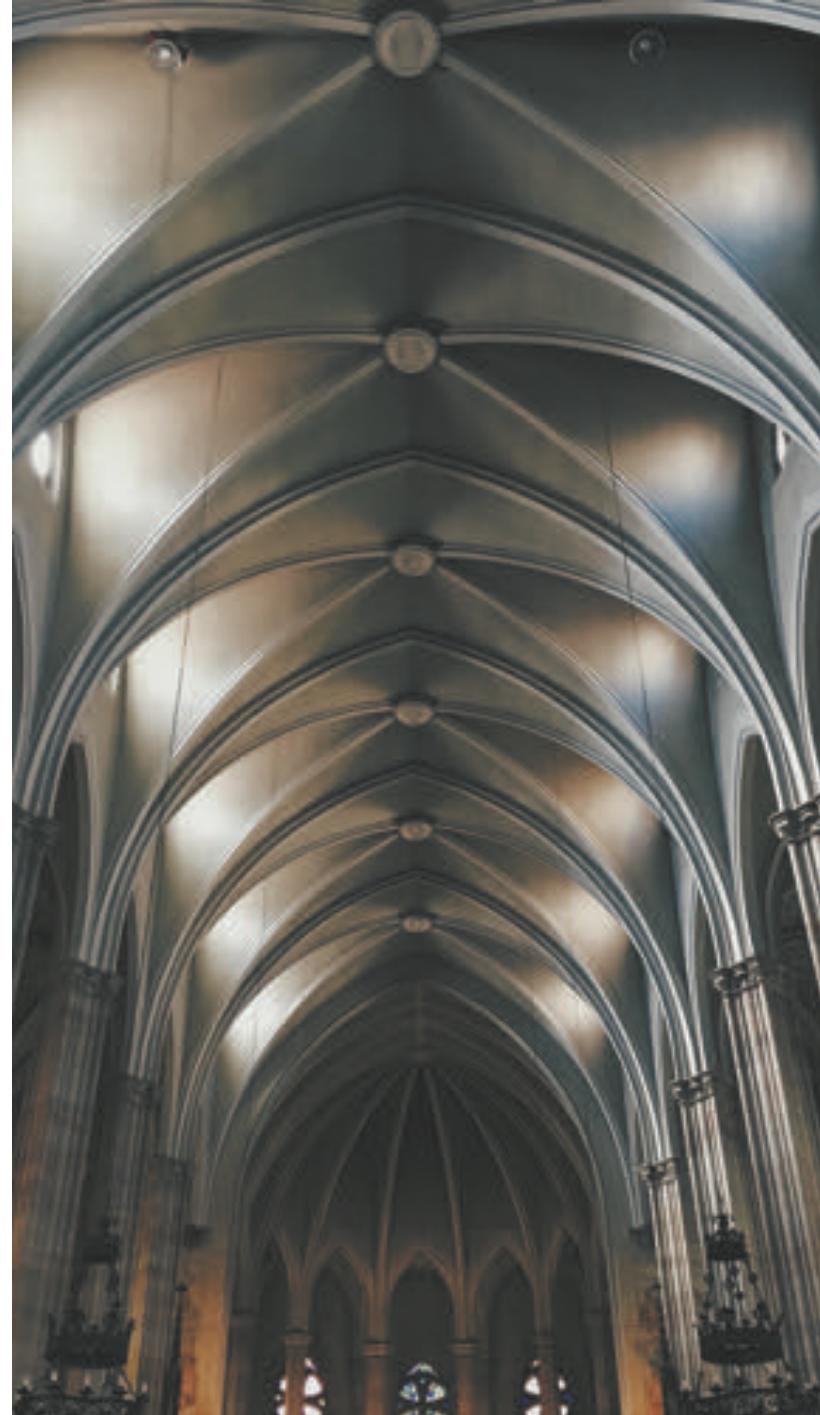
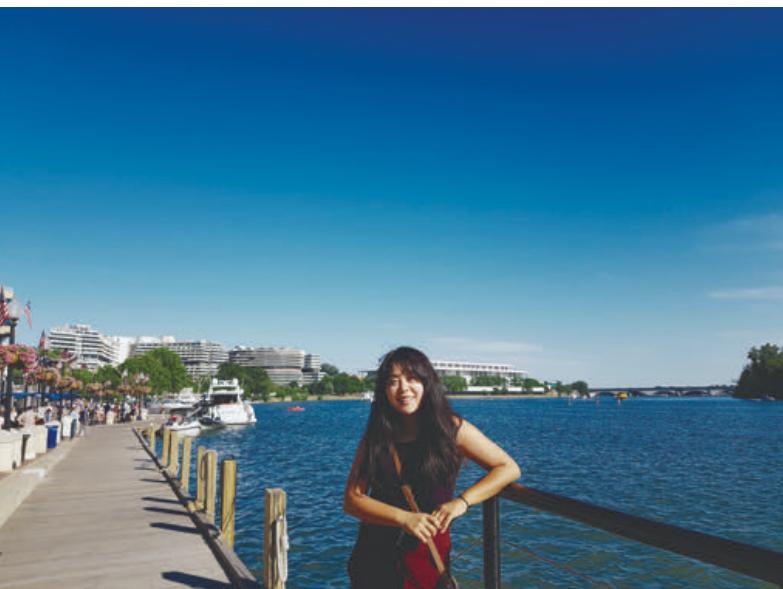
I am working as a junior scholar at the Wilson Center. Occasionally, I help staff interns and research assistants at the Korea Foundation with logistics, which vary from participants registration at an event to room reservations and even taking notes for events. The largest portion of my internship, however, is made up of my research project, in which I spend most of my time going into archives and reading secondary sources to work with. I'm very thankful for this opportunity because it allows me to visit National Archives and work with very valuable and rare materials, such as the North Korean documents retrieved from the Korean War. My project is built around the personal writings of soldiers in the beginning of the Korean War. I am focusing on the perception of the "other" by North and South Korean soldiers and prospects concerning the ultimate goal of reunification. I also have been a part of a research project for the Korea Foundation that all junior scholars were able to contribute to.

The Wilson Center is unique, as it is one of the few think tanks that bridge academics and public policy by conducting research on historically relevant issues as well as current affairs and developing solutions to the nation's problems. It has been quite an experience to come at an exciting period following the Hanoi Summit in February, the Kim-Putin Summit, and North Korea's recent provocations.

**How has UIC assisted you in preparing for grad school?
Are there any resources at Yonsei University
that you recommend utilizing?**

I think the biggest support you can find at UIC comes from its fantastic faculty – the ones who have been through the same process of applying to grad school or venturing on a career path. I have always valued maintaining a good relationship with professors, since the gleaning knowledge and experience handed down from them have been some of the greatest takeaways for me at UIC.

To anyone who is interested in Korean history, I encourage you to take advantage of the resources available in South Korea alone. I know it's more difficult to access some North Korea-related materials in South Korea, but there is still an abundant amount of resources I wish I would have used more while I was there, including those at the Yonsei University Library.



**Please feel free to share any last comments
or words of advice for aspiring grad students.**

I would like to tell students not to be afraid to try something that they never would have imagined doing. And that it's never too late. I might love grad school or hate it, but I will have the experience to judge for myself whether or not I want to commit to a career in academia. History has always been something I enjoyed very much but was afraid to pursue because of the values society has tried to instill in me. With support and encouragement from my mentors, family, and friends, I chose to do what makes me the most happy.

Preparing for grad school wasn't easy. There were times when I would sit in front of my laptop for days and not be able to write anything because I was so overwhelmed with everything I had to do. But I kept going, believing in myself and seeking help along the way. Once I showed my determination, my mentors, family, and friends stood by me, being of help in any way they could.

Interview with UIC Alumni Ga young park and esther hong

2019. 05. 30

written by Ye Eun Jeong



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Former UIC students Ga Young and Esther both majored in Economics. After graduation, Ga Young went on to Yonsei Graduate School in Economics and Esther got a job at a law firm. However, despite their accomplishments, neither stopped there. They dreamed of even further achievements and made the decision to attend Duke University in the United States in order to continue their studies.

- SCHOOL -



1. What made you decide to go to Duke?

G: I am going to Duke for the Economics Ph.D. program. During my junior and senior years, I took several Economics classes related to law and game theory, and found economics intriguing. Through engaging in my own research in economics classes, I discovered the joy of conducting research and wanted to elevate my skills to a professional level. That is why I decided to go to graduate school at Yonsei University and get into a Ph.D. program in the U.S. for a broader experience.

E: I am going to Duke University School of Law. I have always wanted to study law since I was little, and I had initially planned to go to law school in South Korea. While in law school and after graduation, I wanted to gain more rigorous expertise and experience in the public interest law sector. However, while contemplating my options, I thought such public interest law is a relatively underdeveloped field here in South Korea. So after spending some time in the U.S. with my sister and by gaining manifold indirect experience either through books or through meeting people, I decided to pursue my career in the U.S. Particularly, I thought Duke would be the right choice because Duke offers in-depth career consulting and various relevant programs.

2. Why did you choose Duke specifically?

G: If you apply for a Ph.D. program, you should consider the 'research fit', which means to explore to see if there are professors whose research topics match your interests. Since my interest lies in Health Economics, I applied for universities where there are professors who have an interest in this topic. There are quite a number of professors at Duke University whose research interest matches mine, such as analysis on health insurance or health outcomes after a certain event. Moreover, I chose Duke because it offered much more funding than other schools.

E: My case is similar to Ga Young's. I was searching for universities with strong Public Interest programs. Public Interest, defined loosely, deals with the interaction between the law or institution, such as the legal system, and the constituents - mainly those who are marginalized and underprivileged, and tries to implement policies that are more geared towards advancing the public interest on 'not for profit' terms. I assisted my sister's volunteer work in Englewood, Chicago and I thought it would be really worthwhile to work for children and juveniles in those underdeveloped regions. After graduation, I aspire to work in the field to directly use my knowledge to advocate for the rights of clients who are voiceless and marginalized and help them navigate through the complicated legal system. Moreover, just as Ga Young said, I mainly chose Duke's Law School because they offered more scholarship funding than other law schools that I had been admitted to. For me, minimizing my financial burden was one of the most important factors in deciding where to attend.

- SCHOOL -

3. How was your undergraduate college life?

G: As a freshman, I hung out with my friends a lot rather than spending much time studying. After I decided to go to graduate school as a junior, I put in more effort to get a good GPA. I took math courses to apply for the Ph.D. program, and I think I studied harder than I did as a senior in high school in my final undergraduate semester. I also joined the academic club called JSC (Junior Scholar Club) in the Economics Department. There, I read and discussed economics papers. The students I met in JSC were thinking of taking similar paths as mine, and I received a lot of help from them. On the other hand, my friends from UIC all had different majors, thus I could broaden my perspective and get motivated by their passionate lives.

E: During my college years I mainly concentrated on studying. I was planning on going to law school in South Korea and maintaining a high GPA was very crucial. It had been academically rewarding to study at Yonsei and UIC. The CC courses and discussion-based lecture style proved very helpful for law school admission where English language skills are important. During my vacation months, I was able to recharge by reading many books and travelling abroad. One of my insecurities was my lack of work experience, so I worked at a U.S. law firm for about a year after graduation. As for extracurricular activities, I participated in the law school academic club at Yonsei Business School. In that club, most of the students aim to go to law school, so we would conduct preliminary legal research and hold debates on various topics.



4. What's your plan after graduating from Duke?

G: I want to stay in academia, which means continuing my research as my career if possible. One other aim is to work at an international organization such as WHO (World Health Organization), as I plan to major in Health Economics. I want to get some field experience in such organizations.

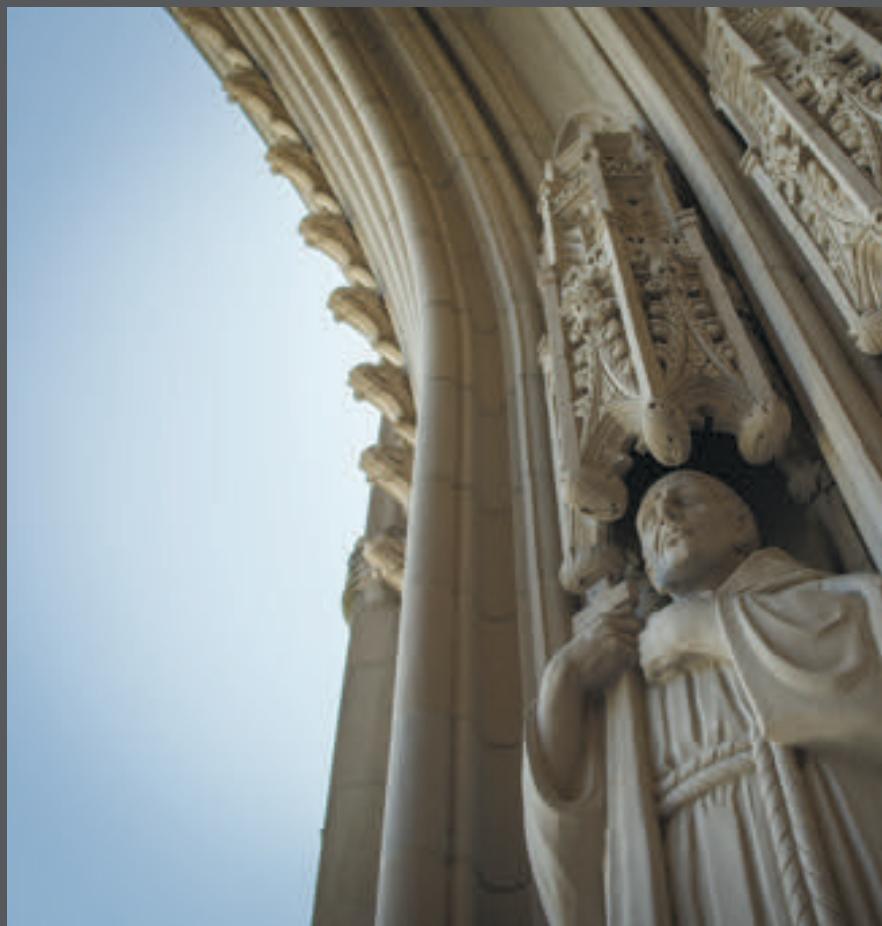
E: I want to undertake legal clerkship and work under judges in the court. But this is extremely competitive, so I would need to have a very high GPA while in law school. Then, I would like to work in a public interest law agency with a focus on children and juvenile delinquency. One of the most meaningful experiences during my college years was my volunteer work with Saeteomin (North Korean refugees). Likewise, I would like to help those in need of legal assistance to access the legal system and help them speak up for their legal rights. Even though I will likely become a lawyer in the U.S. and work there, one day I want to come back to South Korea and use my expertise to assist Koreans in family and children law.

- SCHOOL -

5. What do you want to achieve in your life?

G: I consider myself to be lucky. I could come this far because I was in an environment where I could fully focus on studying, and received so much support from other students and professors. Therefore, I wish to pay back this support by contributing to society with my research.

E: I agree with Ga Young. I also think that I have received so much from society and I would like to contribute back to society through spreading good influence.



Ga Young and Esther's TIPS for studying abroad

G: If you are planning to apply for the Ph.D. program, you can show your academic strength by taking Mathematics courses, including Analysis. In my case, I took Mathematics courses and got a minor degree in Applied Statistics. Moreover, I highly recommend submitting a writing sample to show your research ability and knowledge. Important aspects to focus on are your GPA, taking Mathematics courses, and having good writing samples.

E: There is a saying: Law school admission is a number game. Your GPA and LSAT scores are pivotal in deciding which law school you can enter. However, looking back, you need really strong soft factors as well. You will have to prepare a coherent personal statement that reflects your strengths, recommendation letters from professors, and a resume (with extracurricular activities). In regards to the recommendation letters, you need to be close to professors and get them to know you well. I was quite shy to use office hours and talk to professors, and I regret not having met them as often.

For a high LSAT score, to break the 170 mark, reading books has been really helpful as the test requires good reasoning and reading comprehension skills. Moreover, I continuously read the Economist magazine and non-fiction books in various topics. Even though I haven't really studied the law in depth, I believe both law and economics have concrete logical structures to induce an optimal and rational answer. Hence, majoring in economics was very helpful in preparing for LSAT. I took a 6-month leave of absence to prepare for the LSAT. To get a high score in LSAT, you need to practice until you can find the logical structure of the questions' arguments (between the premises and the conclusion) where reaching the answer thereof becomes almost natural and reflexive to you.

G: As what Esther has said, getting recommendation letters is also important when you apply for the Economics Ph.D. program. As each university requires three recommendation letters, you need to have acquaintance with more than three professors. Therefore, I recommend keeping in touch with professors so that they have some time to get to know about you.

International Alumni interview:

Shayan F. Lahiji, PhD



2019. 06. 13

written by Yerim Kim

I met Dr. Lahiji at an LSBT alumni talk held earlier this year. I had the wonderful opportunity to interview him, and got to know more about his journey from UIC to graduate school as well as his research on painless drug delivery systems.

1. Please introduce yourself (student year, major, your current work, etc.)

I'm Shayan F. Lahiji, a postdoctoral associate at Yonsei University in the Department of Biotechnology. In 2013, I received my B.S. in Life Science and Biotechnology from Underwood International College (UIC), and in 2019, I graduated with a Ph.D. degree in Biotechnology from Yonsei University.

Since 2014, I have published 5 papers as first author, 9 papers as co-author, and applied for 4 patents in Korea, U.S., Japan, Europe, and China. In addition, I have been the recipient of several awards, including the "Best Researcher Award" at the 3rd World Biotechnology Conference, the "Young Researcher Award" at the 8th Pharmaceutics & Novel Drug Delivery Systems conference, and the "Best Research Award" from Yonsei University.

2. What made you want to pursue science?

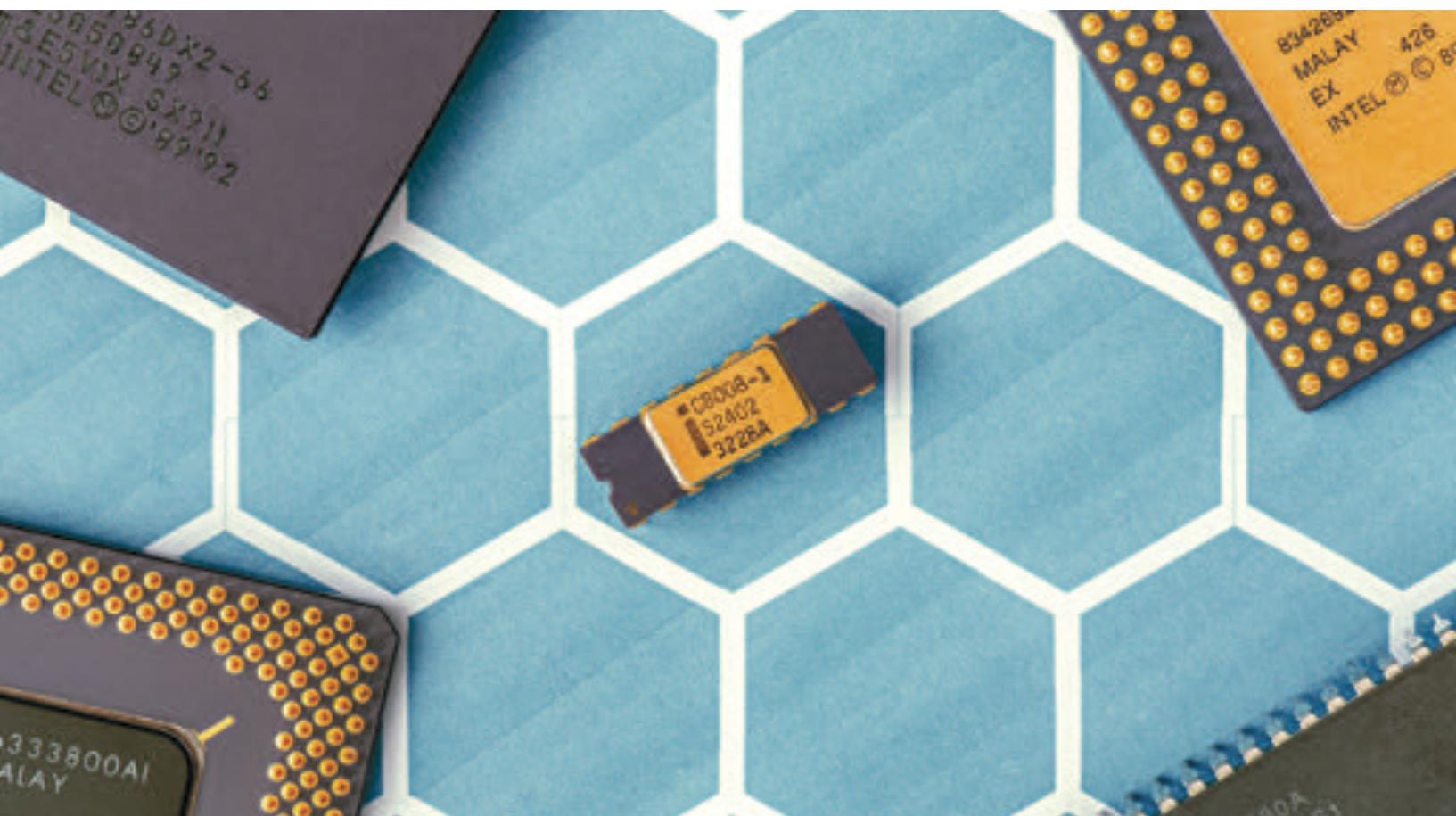
Since I was young, I was so passionate about science. When I was in high school, I wanted to know how the world really works rather than memorizing science. I tried to make sense of what I saw and wondered about its existence. I realized that through science, I would be able to understand and explain the phenomena in our universe, predict upcoming events, and develop technologies for a better life. It was very clear early on for me that my career would be related to designing and developing technologies that could make a difference in our lives.

3. What projects are performed in a typical week of your job?

Receiving governmental funds and grants plays a crucial role in determining the future direction of our research. Therefore, the work at our laboratory is mainly divided into two categories: writing proposals and performing experiments in accordance with the projects. If we have some extra time, we can work on new concepts and technologies that could have the potential to receive funds. A typical week at the laboratory for me involves writing proposals, designing the experiments, performing experiments, writing scientific articles, and reading the recent publications of the researchers working in the same field.

4. Do you have any advice for students interested in the field of science?

To be mentally strong! During the past 7 years of my research, I learned that experiments do not always go as expected. Even a simple experiment may sometimes fail many times and take much longer than a complex experiment. On the other hand, in order to publish a scientific paper, we have to go through a process of evaluation by experts who may have different perspectives and opinions regarding the research that we have performed for more than a few years. Thus, in my opinion, it is extremely important to be mentally strong and to learn from the failures.



5. How did you prepare for your career (previous internships/ school clubs at college/ study abroad programs, etc.)?

A year before graduating from UIC, I started reading scientific articles related to novel technologies. Among those articles, the ones related to pain-less drug delivery systems caught my attention the most. Back then, there were only a few laboratories around the world that focused on the development of painless drug delivery systems and luckily, one of them was at Yonsei University. I started working as an intern and after a few months of experiencing laboratory life, I decided to apply for the graduate program and continue my education at the same laboratory.

6. Can you tell us about your research?

My research is focused on the design and development of novel patient-friendly drug delivery systems, known as dissolving microneedles. I have developed various applicators to pave the road for replacing hypodermic needles with painless and environmentally friendly dissolving microneedles. So far, I have successfully encapsulated hair-loss treatment agents, insulin, and anti-wrinkle compounds within microneedles. Currently, I am involved in a project to customize the previously developed applicator systems to launch a product that is focused on market needs.

7. What do you hope to achieve in the future?

I have a passion for sharing knowledge, which makes writing articles and teaching a pleasure for me. Since there are not many courses related to drug delivery technologies and systems, I am planning to create content related to drug delivery systems and teach in this field.

8. As one of our alumni, please give us some advice about UIC student life.

Networking is important. Participating in group activities and university clubs prepares you for your career and is the easiest way to expand the circle of your friends at university. I joined taekwondo, hiking, cycling, language exchange and most of the English-speaking clubs that I could attend.

Conduct regular meetings with your academic advisors and professors. It is not easy to make a decision about your career after graduation. Do not be afraid to share what you are struggling with to professors. They can help you to find your path and build a successful career.

Practice to overcome your procrastination habits. Try to specify what you want to do and stay motivated to do the work.

Be Happy. There are always ups and downs in life, as it is a journey of discovery, but what matters the most is to enjoy life and to trust yourself.

Productivity. Try to make fewer decisions and work smarter rather than harder.

UIC ALUMNI INTERVIEW



2019. 06. 29

written by Yurie Lee

The UIC Dean met with UIC alumni on a peaceful Saturday morning to discuss their current and future plans as graduate students. During their introduction, it was interesting to note their diverse backgrounds, having come from different universities, countries, and fields of study. We took a closer look at our sun-baes' evolving goals as they progress on with their different steps of life.

- SCHOOL -

This interview asked six alumni about their life as a UIC student, why they decided to enroll in their graduate schools of choice, future goals, and tips on undergraduate life and studying abroad.

Kyooyung Ra



Why did you choose to enroll in USC?

When you are in the media field, you really can't do better than the University of Southern California. It is the best school you can go to for Cinema & Media Studies in America, specialized in this field. To be honest, I didn't even know I would have a chance with USC's film school when I first wrote the applications for graduate schools. I never would have imagined I would get into the school at the heart of Hollywood productions, with tuition and stipends funded as a TA.

My other choice for accepted graduate school was Harvard, also accepted with full financial support and fellowship. My Asian parents (being the typical Asian parents) are still strung up on me giving up Harvard for USC, but I don't regret my decision at all. I know many students think Harvard would be the best choice for anything they want to do. I myself had a hard time giving up my acceptance to this prestigious institution, constantly finding myself in a dilemma. In terms of media studies and production, however, you don't give up your ticket to Los Angeles and the University of Southern California.

How was your life as a UIC student? Could you share any memorable events from your school days?

I was... I would say, a mild rebel.

I came to UIC in the entering class of 2010 and graduated in 2019. Half of that time was spent on my gap years. I wanted to jump into the media industry as early as possible and learn how to direct, edit, and write with hands-on experience. I worked through advertisement companies, independent media institutions, broadcast companies, and etc. throughout this time.

The rest of the time I wasn't studying or working, I was dancing. I was also a performer, something that started as a hobby since high school but later developed to an almost profession now. I've kept myself pretty busy in college.

I loved school, don't get me wrong. Majoring in PSIR and CLC was a blast. In hindsight, having chosen the two majors with the most amount of reading was not the smartest move on my part, but the studies helped me grow so much intellectually. These were also the academic fields that let me have a really good verbal fight with the professors in class... and if I was good at it, I was graded well for it!

The experiences all helped me throughout my career trajectory in the media industry. Having a humanities background, stage performance career, as well as hands-on industry experience in creative production and writing were all strengths that helped me stand out from my peers and colleagues.

What tips would you give to yourself as an undergraduate?

Don't listen to other people.

I don't mean that in an obnoxious way. Or maybe I do. Take advice that is relevant to you, not unnecessary commentary from people who do not understand what you are doing. Don't try to follow the path people have already taken and paved for you. Bulldoze through your own highway.



- SCHOOL -



What is your plan after graduating USC?

My primary plan is to pursue a PhD in the same field, to teach the brighter minds of the future generation later in life. However, I would also love the opportunity to work more in the industry in America before settling down for doctoral studies, if possible.

Do you have any last comments to students who aspire to enter the same field or study abroad?

Don't break the rules. Make the rules.

As I said, don't take advice from people who don't know you. By the time you decide to enter the industry or go to graduate school, things will be so much different from what I experienced.

Always stay relevant. Keep up with trends, but never follow them blindly. This is especially true for people who are in the media and creative industry. Just because everyone is rushing into YouTube now in Korea, don't jump on the wagon. Vlogs and hauls were trending almost a decade back in America, and only now are they beginning to be popular in Korea. If one viral video starts trending, everyone is copying it. We are so quick to jump on trends, and yet ironically, we are so slow.

Remember what happened; be keenly aware of what is happening now. But most importantly, think about what will be happening from now on. Why else do you think we learn history as part of our common curriculum? Don't let your tuition go to waste.

- SCHOOL -

School





UIC Alumni Interview

So Heum Hwang

Why did you choose to enroll in Umeå University?

I wanted to find an environment where I could expand my knowledge of my major, but in a place where different cultures mix together. The diversity of culture was why I wanted to study in Europe, not in the States, and Umeå University was ranked 1st place for three years in a row in the Red Dot Awards. Also the fact that the school only has 10 students per year made me decide to go to this school, since I wanted a focused environment where I could form close relationships with professors and other students.

How was your life as a UIC student? Could you share any memorable events from your school days?

The best moments/events in UIC were all the career tours or additional class related tours that UIC provided. I always learned so much from people abroad, especially when I was in Geneva University for exchange (which was a UIC-only exchange school). I volunteered for International Design Factory Week 2016 which was held in Ideasquare (which is a Design Factory in Switzerland), and I met all the professors from UIC at the event in Geneva; it was nice to bond with them in another country.

What is your plan after graduating Umeå University?

I will search for a job in interaction design in Europe, possibly in Sweden or in other Nordic countries.

What tips would you give to yourself as an undergraduate?

Participate in all the events, grab all the opportunities as a UIC student, and stay active.

Do you have any last comments to students who aspire to enter the same field or study abroad?

Keep a good track record of your portfolio and works. Record all the processes, and have your own story as a designer.

- SCHOOL -

School



UIC Alumni Interview

YEJI PARK

- SCHOOL -



Why did you choose to study in the Netherlands?

My decision was mainly based on the country's social and academic atmosphere. I chose to study in the Netherlands and at this specific university (Leiden and TU Delft) as I was convinced that the country is where the transition toward the circular economy is taking place most actively. Moreover, the course provides the best practical and multi-disciplinary programme from which I can gain technical expertise to bring to my profession after graduation. Another reason would be its social atmosphere and culture, where society actively supports and promotes sustainable, eco-friendly, and disruptive business models.

What tips would you give to yourself as an undergraduate?

I would like to share two tips: try everything you want, but also take good care of your GPA (study hard, play hard! ;))

First, I hope the undergraduates give themselves enough time and space to try out everything, as much as possible. Only through this will you learn what you really like, are good at, or feel comfortable with. It is of course important to look back and think ahead of the things you really want, but still make sure to put more time to actually take action and put your thoughts into practice. "Doing" will teach you a lot more than simply "thinking or wondering".

Second, try your best to take good care of your GPA. I thought I would be the last person to share this kind of advice, but as I was preparing for the next step after graduation, I learned that maintaining a good GPA gives you many more opportunities in the future as it serves as major proof of your diligence and level of commitment - especially when it comes to applying for graduate schools.

**Make sure to put more time
to actually take action and put
your thoughts into practice.
“Doing” will teach you a lot more
than simply “thinking or wondering”**

How was your life as a UIC student? Could you share any memorable events from your school days?

My days at UIC were amazing. I truly loved and enjoyed the interactions and great memories I had and built with my classmates, not only within my major but also within the entire UIC. I especially loved how open, creative, and fearless we are when it comes to challenging ourselves for new opportunities and pioneering unexplored activities. As UIC and especially the new YIC (International Campus) were pretty new at the time of my freshmen year, everything my classmates and I started out was the very first experiment that had been ever initiated on the campus. Some of the most memorable projects were Sugarfree, the first drama club at YIC; and Greener, the first green campus project at YIC. In both cases I participated as one of the founding members. I still vividly remember the unforgettable feeling of joy and fulfillment I shared with the members when we successfully performed a 45 minute-long musical at the very first student-initiated chapel session at YIC. Filming a music video of the green campus project with active participation of UIC students has lasted as one of the most memorable events as well.

What is your plan after finishing graduate school?

I'm planning to study Industrial Ecology in the Netherlands. My plan after the course is not fully determined yet - I am keeping the doors open and looking forward to embracing new perspectives and interests I will encounter during the course. Still, my long-term plan is to build expertise in the field of circular economics through providing technical advice to help organisations transform their industrial processes and businesses into more sustainable models. After 5 years of building expertise in the region where such transitions are happening most actively, I would like to commit to spreading the same kind of transition in other societies where the demand is high, yet not fulfilled.

Do you have any last comments to students who aspire to enter the same field or study abroad?

I would like to tell students to mainly check two things : whether it is the right course/field of study you are really looking for, and to see if the field has a good outlook.

- SCHOOL -



UNDERWOOD
INTERNATIONAL
COLLEGE

School



UIC Alumni Interview

Jungwon Son

Why did you choose to enroll in USC?

So my top choices were either USC or Cornell, but the programs are quite different. The program at Cornell was highly focused on management and business while USC's MS in Business Analytics is focused heavily in analytics, machine learning, etc. My goal for graduate school has always been to gain a valuable, sellable asset for myself when applying for jobs. Hence, I chose to go to USC, especially because it is a top 3 program in its field and is known for its sophisticated program in this field.

How was your life as a UIC student? Could you share any memorable events from your school days?

I'd like to think back on my undergraduate years as not just a UIC student but a Yonsei student. UIC provided the opportunity to meet a variety of people and I am blessed to have met so many friends from so many different backgrounds.

My most memorable experiences from my school days include my time at YMCG (Yonsei Management Consulting Group, a business school society) and the basketball clubs I've been a part of (Haze and Gyenongpae). YMCG has many students from UIC, which sparked my interest in joining and, while there, my interest in different business fields were sparked. Moreover, the basketball clubs as well as the football team I was a part of (Yonsei Eagles) continued to provide me with opportunities to meet different people from different majors.

I am especially grateful to UIC because of the professors that care so much about the students. I took RDQM in my freshman year, but continued to correspond with Professor Rennie Moon, who was one of the first people to get me interested in the field of analytics - something I ended up liking so much that I'm going to grad school for.

What is your plan after graduating USC?

I want to continue my pursuit in analytics by working as a data scientist at a tech firm like Google, Amazon, and so on, or as a researcher in the finance industry.

What tips would you give to yourself as an undergraduate?

Make sure to take care of your grades because they really are all you have to prove as a student.

While it is important to have a variety of experiences, always think about why you are doing something but also the significance of it. Everything - as long as you try - can become a story that reveals a little more about yourself.

Do you have any last comments to students who aspire to enter the same field or study abroad?

If you want to enter the same field, but are unsure about it because of your major, do not worry. Most of what I know about the analytics field is self-taught through online resources. The field of analytics is undeniably growing and one of the factors is the fact that so many resources are available online. Moreover, it's never too late. I decided on going to grad school just a year ago!

"While it is important to have a variety of experiences, always think about why you are doing something but also the significance of it. Everything can become a story that reveals a little more about yourself."

- SCHOOL -

UIC Alumni Interview

Hyojeong Park

Why did you choose to enroll in Carnegie Mellon University?

CMU is arguably the premier institution for studying Human-Computer Interaction, and it has a robust network of alumni working in the field. Each HCI program has its strengths, but CMU has more focus on computing, an area I want to dive deeper into during my graduate years.

How was your life as a UIC student? Could you share any memorable events from your school days?

I studied at Wellesley College for a year as an exchange student, which was a UIC-exclusive exchange program. Wellesley is located outside of Boston, and it has a breathtakingly beautiful campus. The academics were challenging, but it was the most memorable and fruitful year in my college life. An exchange student visa (J-1) in the U.S. allows you to do a paid internship, so look further into it if you're interested!

What is your plan after graduating Carnegie Mellon University?

I hope to build products for millions of users in the world. I'm most interested in technology assisting and enhancing human creativity. I wish to work on building a creative software that utilizes cutting-edge technology to power the artists and designers.

What tips would you give to yourself as an undergraduate?

This may sound banal, but self-care is really, really important. If I could go back a few years, I'd eat healthy, exercise, and get the right help when needed. On the first day of my internship that I worked so hard for, I almost passed out at work because of an unexpected health problem. Now I'm exercising every day and paying the debt to my body. If you start caring for yourself earlier, you'll be able to achieve so much more.

UIC Alumni Interview

Soeu Choi

Why did you choose to enroll in ESSEC business school?

Although I majored in International Studies, most of my internships were in the corporate sector, which is why I naturally wanted to learn more about business. By pursuing graduate studies in management I wanted to build a solid base in business, but I was also attracted by the idea that I would be able to complement what I learned with practical experience.

How was your life as a UIC student? Could you share any memorable events from your school days?

I actually led quite a reserved life as a UIC student. I mostly stayed with a few close friends and I think most of my activities were outside of school, through internships or extra-curricular activities. My most memorable events would be hanging out with my friends in Songdo and going to the major university festivals.

What is your plan after graduating ESSEC business school?

I plan to remain in France for work. I grew up in the UK and France so I am looking forward to going back to Europe to study and eventually finding a job. ESSEC Business School is renowned for its luxury management programs, so that is one domain I hope to discover more in-depth.

What tips would you give to yourself as an undergraduate?

I think it's important to be strategic in your planning and time-management. The time you have in university is limited, thus combining studies with extracurricular activities, university clubs, hanging out with friends, etc. can be difficult to manage all at once. I think it is important to set priorities so that you can channel your time and efforts most efficiently.

Do you have any last comments to students who aspire to enter the same field or study abroad?

The classes at UIC really taught me to develop a critical mindset and to express myself more clearly in writing. Whichever sector you go into, however different, I think there is much you can gain from the classes you take in UIC.i



Interview With a UIC student currently preparing for the national exam for Diplomat candidates



2019. 05. 23

written by Min Jun Kim

It is national exam season right now and a lot of people are going through preparation or are planning to take the national exams at the moment. The personal insight of one of our UIC students into this kind of experience may help those undergoing the process!

1. Please introduce yourself (student year, major, where you lived, etc.)

Hello, my name is Soo Bin Lee, and I am in the class of 16.5, majoring in International Studies. I lived in Moscow, Russia prior to coming to Korea for university, and am taking a semester off in order to prepare for the national exam for diplomat candidates.

2. You mentioned that you lived in Russia for most of your formative years. What made you come back to Korea, specifically UIC, for university?

Although I attended an international school which had a comparatively high number of Korean students (relative to other international schools in Moscow), I always dreamt of returning to Korea after I graduated high school because I felt like I would never get used to Russian culture. But now that I look back at my experiences in Russia, I consider myself to have been very privileged, as I was able to learn so much more from school other than merely reading books and rote memorization.

UIC has always been my dream school since my freshman year in high school, when I went to Athens for a Model UN Conference where I was able to participate as a delegate of South Korea. My experience at the Model UN Conference helped me think about what I truly wanted to become in the future. The experience allowed me to realise I wanted to use my strength in linguistics to investigate ways to contribute to my home country. Furthermore, as I saw many alums experience difficulties in maintaining their levels of English and Russian proficiency after graduating high school and attending Korean universities, I wanted to study in an environment that allowed me to maintain my level of English and learn about politics and international studies, which eventually brought me to think of applying for UIC.

3. What is your motivation in wanting to become a diplomat?

My motivation in wanting to become a diplomat actually goes hand in hand with my motivation to apply for UIC. The Model UN Conference I attended triggered me to become involved in debate much more actively than in previous years. The experience also got me interested in learning about South Korea's positions and policies on humanitarian and political issues. But most importantly, when I stood on the platform and suggested my resolutions, I realised this is what I wanted to do for my career: represent and further my country's interests in the international scene.

4. The national exams are notorious for being extremely difficult. How have you found the journey so far?

I honestly would NOT recommend this path if you are not confident in being able to overcome hardships and are looking for shortcuts in life, because this exam takes so much time and patience to prepare for. But when I find it difficult to be patient I try to imagine myself as a diplomat, working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and traveling around the world. I believe that you can endure this long process of learning and solitude if there is a clear goal that you have to strive towards. I don't believe I would have begun this journey without such determination and drive.

I don't think this process is difficult because of the ginormous amount of economics, politics, and international laws to memorize, but due to time spent isolated from friends and family.



5. You have passed the first round of exams and are now preparing for the second round. Which subject in the first round would you say was the most difficult for you and why?

The first round includes Constitutional law and PSAT (Public Service Attitude Test) which tests you in three different areas: data interpretation, circumstantial judgement, and linguistic logic. But in order to get to the first round of exams, I needed to achieve three things: first (or second) level in the Korean History exam, a TOEIC score over 870, and a certificate in a secondary foreign language (which was Russian for me).

I found Constitutional law the hardest. I only had three months to cover all the constitutional provisions and articles along with achieving a high score in PSAT. The precedents were fun to read, but things like memorizing the number of people in the assembly, term of office, etc. was very, very irritating. I don't think I even remember them at this point.

6. In such a high stakes and high pressure environment, how do you relieve stress?

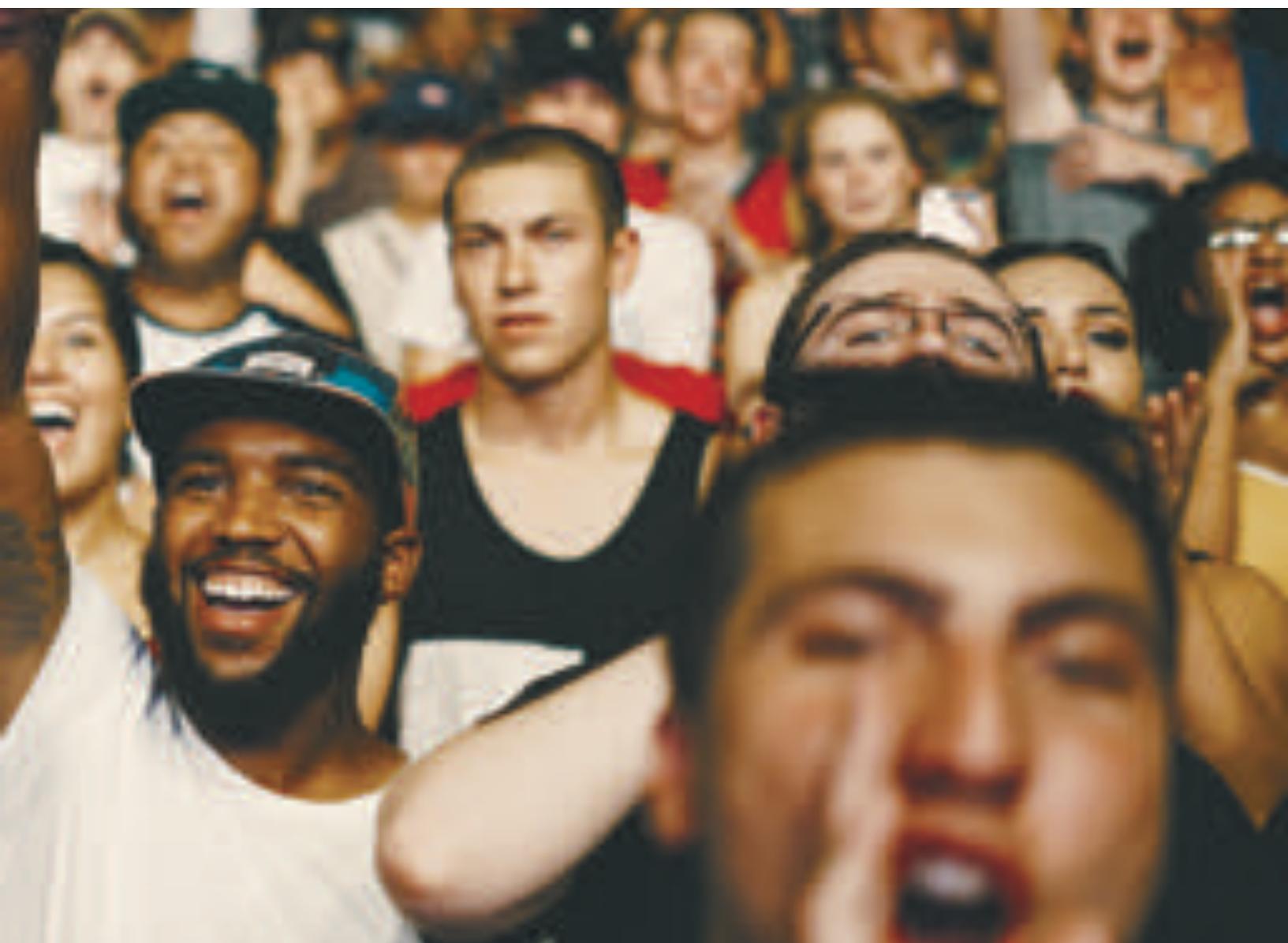
I find that talking to those I am close to and trying to stay motivated is very important. So I try my best to keep in touch with friends by having dinner or going to coffee shops to talk to them. I also enjoy hanging out with my new friends from cram school, as we all live very close to each other. I also try to walk as much as I can, since I spend most of the day sitting on a chair and studying. There is also a small stream and trail near my house, so I often take walks whenever I'm overly stressed. These days I walk the trails with my friend from cram school.

7. Do you have any final comments to share with us?

Don't lose hope during the process. There may be many ups and downs but try to keep yourself motivated by reminding yourself of what you are ultimately trying to achieve!



SOCIETY & CULTURE



- + Chaebol Reform, An Ideal Fraud … **45**
- + IMF and Fried Chicken Restaurants Boom in South Korea … **47**
- + Delivery in a Hurry: A Lurking Danger for Everybody? … **49**
- + Animal Cafe, Is it the Right Way to Love Animals? … **51**
- + Minimalist Living: Less Is More … **53**
- + E-Government Estonia: The Country Where 99% of Administrative Work is Done Online … **55**
- + The Incantation of Hope … **57**



CHAE BOL REFORM, AN IDEAL FRAUD

2019. 05. 09

written by Hayun Lee



Chaebol, large industrial conglomerates run and controlled by a family, has become the keyword in describing the South Korean social landscape today. Since the emergence of chaebols during South Korea's guided capitalism growth era, they have dominated South Korean economics. According to Korea's Fair Trade Commission (FTC), the governmental antitrust watchdog, there are now 45 conglomerates that fit the chaebol stereotype, and the top ten chaebols own more than 27% of all business assets in the country. The top five chaebols, Samsung, Hyundai, SK, LG, and Lotte, together represent half of the country's stock market's value.

The term chaebol instantly brings two incidents into a South Korean's mind. The first, comparatively minor incident, is the 'Nut rage incident' whereby, Cho Hyun-ah, then the vice president of chaebol group Korean Air ordered a plane after take-off to return and threw out the flight attendant that enraged her by serving nuts in plastic packages. This case highlighted the extent of chaebol power tripping and their lawless actions.

The second incident is former President Park Geun-hye's impeachment. President Park was impeached after the Madame Choi political scandal and collusions with chaebols. For this, several chaebols were charged for bribing President Park. This included Samsung's (the biggest of them all, run by the infamous Lee family) de facto head, Lee Jae-yong, who was prosecuted and sentenced to five years in jail for bribery and four other offenses, but got out in six months after the court suspended his jail term.

These two recent incidents are just the tip of the iceberg of the chaebol controversies. Chaebols, by dominating the South Korean market through octopus-like expansion into all markets, including electronics, cars, food and hotel businesses, have accumulated popular discontent for years.

Moon Jae-in, the incumbent president of South Korea, opportunistically tapped into this popular discontent with the policy pledge to rage a crackdown on the chaebols and pursue economic democratization. Economic democratization means Moon will pursue economic justice-resolving inequality and the wealth gap by creating new quality jobs and expanding welfare for the marginalized population. In his inaugural speech to South Korea's National Assembly, Moon vowed "politics-business connections will disappear... I will lead the reform of chaebol."

However, the extent of chaebol reforms and economic democratization is stalled by reality. Parliamentary and corporate opposition prevents Moon from making significant reforms to South Korea. Despite Moon's landslide presidential election victory, his party, the Minjoo party only has 120 out of 300 seats in the National Assembly. Even with the liberal coalition formed with the People's party and the Justice Party, they lack the 3/5 majority necessary to push for legislations. Moreover, South Korean economy's reliance on the chaebols' export performance means no harsh regulation will be imposed that will hurt their performance. Furthermore, Moon's primary economic policy of income-led growth requires the fundamental cooperation with the corporates, in order to increase employment growth.

It is important to remember, as Kim Sang-jo, head of FTC has clarified, "Chaebol reforms are never about destroying and disbanding the chaebols. Chaebol reform is about helping and inducing them to grow into important assets in the country's economy through rules." The FTC, South Korea's regulatory authority promoting economic competition, stresses the need for creating a level playing field for small and medium-sized companies in a chaebol-dominated environment. The FTC has received some successes by pressuring chaebol groups to stop murky cross-shareholdings and pull back from unfair intragroup deals.

For example, Chaebol reform has lost more steam due to the economic slowdown. Park Sang-in, professor of Seoul National University said "The government should be working to reduce the dominance of these groups and lay the groundwork for fair competition...but in this regard, the government has done nothing."

Corporate bashing and chaebol reform is a favorite policy pledge of election candidates. As unlikely as it is, the impeached President Park's 2012 election campaign also included chaebol reforms. However, her presidency ended by reconfirming the collusion between politics and business.

Moon's chaebol policies has failed to formulate in his two years of presidency. Instead, raising the minimum wage by almost 30% since 2017 brought hardship onto small and medium sized corporates he was supposed to help compete with chaebols.

IMF and Fried Chicken Restaurants Boom in South Korea

2019. 04. 26

written by Jeong Ye Eun

The recently released film ‘Extreme Job’ (‘극한직업’) became a big hit by reflecting the reality of the self-employed situation in South Korea with comedic elements. The middle-aged main character of the movie, who opens a fried chicken restaurant, serves as a symbol of middle-aged people in South Korea today.

Recently, the number of self-employed people has been rapidly increasing in Korea, and most of them are now-re-tired company employees. Since fried chicken is the most popular type of food, opening fried chicken restaurants has become the easiest choice to make for self-employed workers.

As a result, the number of fried chicken restaurants in Korea is higher than the number of McDonald’s outlets worldwide. In 2013, according to KB Financial Group Research, there were about 36,000 fried chicken stores in South Korea, while only 35,000 McDonald’s stores worldwide. Currently, The Korea Herald estimates that the number of fried chicken stores in Korea has soared to roughly 87,000.

Then why, and since when, have these retired workers decided to become self-employed?

In the year 1997, the Asian financial crisis hit South Korea, causing dramatic changes in the country’s economic structure. After the IMF implemented a structural adjustment program in Korea, foreign investors took a large amount of Korean capital from major companies, and as a result, only the largest conglomerates could survive. The number of places with available jobs sharply decreased, the gap between the rich and the poor enlarged, and social polarization became a serious problem that needed to be solved.

Nowadays, if the Korean GDP increases, the profits mostly go to multinational companies, and this growth does nothing to ensure an increase in the employment rate. Consequently, if companies want to hire new employees, they need to fire existing workers, since the number of positions is very limited. Today, according to Statistics Korea, in 2018, the average retirement age of workers in South Korea is 49.1 years old.

With such social trends, Korean people are forced to be self-employed, as there is nowhere they can be hired. Especially for the middle-aged male workers, who are forced to retire from companies but still have families to support, they have no alternative to becoming self-employed and opening up businesses.

Before the 1997 Asian financial crisis, when these middle-aged male workers were able to retire well into their 60s, their kids had already graduated from college and had found jobs of their own. However, now, if middle-aged workers retire in their 40s, their kids are still attending high school or college. What’s more, even if their kids have already graduated from college, they cannot easily find jobs due to the relatively high youth unemployment rate, which was 10.68% in 2016 according to the OECD.

Therefore, middle-aged retired workers reach their final destination—at their self-established fried chicken restaurants. According to OECD statistics in 2017, South Korea’s percentage of self-employed workers out of the total employment rate was 25.4%, which is the fifth highest among OECD countries. Compared to Japan, which has a rate of 10.4%, South Korea’s percentage is twice as high even though Korea and Japan share similar economic structures. These statistics just go to show how deeply Korean people rely on self-employment.

However, the real social problem is that in hastily opening up these shops without proper preparation, most of such businesses end up facing bankruptcy and bringing even harsher economic conditions down on their households. Since retired workers usually use their severance pay to open their shops, if they fail in this endeavour, they are left with nothing in the end.

22 years have passed since the 1997 Asian financial crisis, but the aftermath of this event still tortures South Korean society today. 87,000 chicken restaurants; behind such a daunting number, there is an even more dismaying history that continues to be a dire reality that we should not ignore.





DELIVERY IN A HURRY

A LURKING DANGER FOR EVERYBODY?

2019. 06. 20

written by Jungwon Choi

Massive piles of printouts, devastating amounts of assignments. At the furthest corner of a bleak dormitory room, a tortured soul was blankly staring into his computer screen. Then at the bottom corner of the screen an advertisement popped up. It was an image he had already seen at least several times: BTS members happily devouring a plate of chicken. He never liked them or fancied their music. Yet at that moment, their elegant postures were inexplicably glorious, and this stunned him. No, he was definitely not into beautiful boys. Then came the moment of realization: it was the chicken sticks in their hands that he was infatuated with. BTS, whose name itself was now a sensation, was no more than a fancy stage prop next to the sticks. It was not their stage. Instead, the spotlight was owned by the plump drumsticks on the plate. He could imagine the crunches of that crispy chicken breast in his mouth and the sweet sound was already echoing in his eardrums. He declared at last, “I’ve had enough of this!” Then with a treacherous smile, he cheerfully asked, “anyone up for food?” There was no need for words. After a few exchanges of meaningful smiles with his roommates, an agreement was quickly made. “Chicken?” The other two fiercely nodded.



Most UIC students, at least once during the term, have had those nights where the hunger is just intolerable. One simply cannot focus when the stomach continuously rumbles and grumbles, howling for something to fill it. Delivery food can also be a delightful, refreshing replacement when one is tired of the monotonous pattern of cafeteria meals. Enjoying delivery food has become a routine for many Yonsei students, and the existence of a place such as the “chicken stairs” in the International Campus proves this to be true. Also, ordering a box of chicken in Songdo is easy - to the point that one must practice some degree of self-discipline to maintain both a healthy diet and a thick wallet.

Songdo, where the International Campus of Yonsei is located, boasts many decent restaurants that offer quick delivery services. The list of dishes one can choose from is simply remarkable: from classic dishes such as pizza, Korean-style fried chicken, hamburgers to more local ones including Jajangmyeon (black bean sauce noodles) and Jokbal (pig's trotters). Every day and night, countless calls are made to these shops and one is bound to see motorcycles hurriedly bustling through the streets of the campus. However, many controversial issues have arisen from this practice of delivering food into university campuses. One challenge is conspicuous right outside the corridors. The disposal of compiled food waste can come to be overwhelming, and this can culminate in severe consequences. Such piles of trash can disrupt the studying environment and degrade the aesthetic aspect of the entire campus, which directly links to the university’s public reputation. According to Busan Ilbo, the administrative board of Busan University of Foreign Studies banned any food deliveries inside the campus in 2016, as the enormous waste piles deriving from food delivery threatened the promotion of its “green campus.” Indeed, this type of concern is also applicable to the Songdo Interna-

tional Campus. During the midterm week, when the demand for nighttime snacks reaches its peak, one witnesses the genesis of rubbish mountains upon the trash bins. As a result, the community rooms on each floor are permeated by the disturbing scent of the decaying mixture. Though there are cleaning crews tasked with their removal, thoughtless disposals could easily overwhelm them.

Another challenge is the traffic safety of the campus. Most of the delivery personnel, especially those under major food delivery platforms, such as “Baedal Minjok” and “Yogiyo,” are incentivized to transport the food as fast as one can, since each successful delivery directly translates into profit. This has led to drivers prioritizing speed over safety and the resulting herd of motorcycles recklessly driving around the campus might endanger the students and faculty members. There was a traffic accident in Hanyang University in 2016 where a truck loaded with food supplies crashed at a sloping road. While there were no severe casualties, a passing student was slightly wounded. Campus security is something that should never depend on mere luck.

In spite of all the drawbacks, there is no doubt that the students ultimately deserve the freedom to select the meal they wish to have. While UIC has not yet experienced any significant disputes with school executives concerning the matter of delivery food, it is unquestionable that takeout foods are popular in the campus and the problems are inevitably present. Considering the precedent from other schools, the student body must appreciate the efforts of the cleaning crew and pay them their deserved respect. One can always start helping by cleaning their surroundings after devouring their BTS-endorsed plate of treasure.

ANIMAL CAFE, IS IT THE RIGHT WAY TO LOVE ANIMALS?

2019. 05. 16

written by Lee Jung Youn



These days when we walk down the street, we can easily find numbers of signboards advertising cafés with animals. These cafés, generally referred to as 'animal cafés' in South Korea, provide unique experiences; customers are able to observe diverse animals from a very close distance and sometimes even feel and hold them while enjoying similar services to ordinary cafés. It is indeed a thrilling experience to many animal lovers. Some of these cafés serve the role of animal hotels and care centers as well, places that look after animals when their owners have to leave them alone for a while. With such benefits, the animal café business market has increased in recent years. Along with this growth, the species that are involved in the business have also diversified from everyday pets like dogs and cats to more rare animals like raccoons, tortoises, sheep, and even meerkats. This animal café culture certainly provides an enjoyable time for customers, but is it also beneficial for the animals inhabiting the cafés?



Before we take a closer look at the current conditions of animal cafés, let's examine the government regulations regarding these businesses. An animal café, in a strict sense, is a type of a zoo. However, according to South Korean Law, the minimum qualification for an institution to be considered a zoo is to hold more than ten species of animals or more than 50 animals, which is not applicable to most animal cafés. Such cafés are classified as restaurants and food service businesses instead, so they are out of the boundaries of law and without any specific regulations that inspect the actual conditions of these institutions. Also, since these institutions are not registered as 'animal cafés,' they are not differentiated from other ordinary restaurants on official documents, which makes it even harder for inspectors to investigate them.

The animal protection nonprofit organization AWARE (Animal Welfare Awareness, Research, and Education) published a report in June 2018 about the animal cafés' current conditions. Their report found 95 institutions throughout South Korea and most of them were not listed as 'animal cafés' in official records. The report also showed the list of problems largely divided into categories of raising environment, safety and hygiene, and the conditions of animals. The following problems show the devastating state of animal cafés: absence of safety distance and barriers, confinement of animals in small isolated areas like high shelves, lack of proper animal hideouts or shelters, mixture of different species in a single space regardless of their prey-predator relationship, etc. Close proximity and excessive contact with customers could seriously disturb the animals and there is no proper education for customers to teach them how to treat animals gently. Improper shelters with wire netting floor might cause deformation of legs and the isolated shelves might cause extreme anxiety. Isolated spaces might

prevent animals from acting unpredictably, but it stresses them out. In 2017 at an animal café in Seoul, a coati was killed by a silver fox, which was living in the same cage. Although a silver fox is actually a predator to a coati in wildlife, the institution kept two animals in the same cage simply because they had a similar appearance. To satisfy customers' desire and to easily manage their business, business owners are maximizing the exposure of animals without any consideration for the animals' lifestyles.

While there is a significant number of animal café businesses in South Korea, the overall global trend is to reduce such institutions and even further, to abolish them. Visitor-oriented institutions, such as zoos, all over the world are changing into animal-oriented shelters. San Francisco Zoo is one example. They provide full-time veterinary facilities and professional staff to look after 197 species of animals. Each animal goes through the annual health check system based on deep understanding of each species' needs. Also, the information recorded throughout the process is a valuable source for further rescue operations and appropriate care for wild animals.

Although animal cafés in Korea and San Francisco Zoo are similar in the sense that they are facilities holding animals, their ultimate purpose is much different. The former aims to achieve customer satisfaction, to develop exotic experiences, and reap corporate profit, while the latter aims to be a proper sanctuary for animals. Getting closer, touching, and feeding animals are exciting experiences, of course, but that's not the only way we can express our love toward them. Now is the time to look back on what we have done to them. We should confront the fact that our pleasure was built on the suffering of animals. Keeping that in mind, our street full of animal café signboards would look different.

Minimalist Living:

Less Is More

2019. 04. 18

written by Yeon Seo Koh



Let's face it, most people believe that money can buy happiness. I mean, don't we all love spending money to reward ourselves with material items? Whenever we finish our duties or fulfill our goals, we tend to go and buy new clothes, jewelry, expensive meals, or even plane tickets to vacation spots. We spend money on these material goods to taste the pleasure of accomplishment, to bask in that moment of happiness when you feel like you spent your money on something you deserve.

We live in a world driven by consumerism. Every day when we turn on the television or access social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram on our smart phones, we are exposed to commercials and posts that trigger our desire to consume. Take the thriving home shopping market in Korea as an example. According to Euromonitor, a global market research company, the industry has shown a rapid growth of 53 percent since 2012. With an average of 100,000 transactions each day, these home shopping channels have over 30 million household views annually. In fact, consciously or unconsciously, we often purchase goods, whether it be food, clothing, cosmetics, or accessories, that we don't necessarily need. The media tricks us into believing that we can achieve happiness by acquiring more and that we would feel left out if we don't follow the latest trends. We become trapped in an endless cycle: We can't stop surrounding ourselves with all the stuff.

Minimalism is a lifestyle we can adopt to resist our urge to consume, and to break free from the consumerism trap. We have to constantly remind ourselves that more doesn't mean better. Once you try it, you would be surprised by how little you actually need to survive.

The Minimalists, American authors Joshua Fields Millburn and Ryan Nicodemus, say,

"Minimalism is a tool that can assist you in finding freedom. Freedom from fear. Freedom from worry. Freedom from overwhelm. Freedom from guilt. Freedom from depression. Freedom from the trappings of the consumer culture we've built our lives around. Real freedom."



So, how can you become a minimalist?

Ask yourself important questions before you take any action.

In what ways would my life become better by having less? What will happen when my complex life is simplified? What does simplifying mean for me?

It is important to acknowledge that embracing minimalism does not bring about the same benefits for everybody. The benefits are different for each individual even though the methods of simplification may be alike.

Write it Down: Set yourself a Goal

Rather than simply stating "I am going to become a minimalist", it is more realistic to set a specific goal (ex. "I am going to wear only thirty-three items of clothing for the next three months"), and write about why you want to carry out a simple lifestyle and how you are going to achieve that goal. You can organize your thoughts on paper and look at the notes later on to constantly remind yourself why living more simply matters to you.

Start Small

You won't have any momentum when you first start. You need it to build up over time. So, don't force yourself to make radical changes. Start with one item at a time. Try getting rid of one item each day for two weeks and see what happens. Or you can start with your desk or closet. Get rid of unnecessary items that you have not used for a while. It can even be items that simply do not bring you joy. Discard the duplicates. De-clutter the area and make more space. A significant amount of stress will be removed by simply reducing the number of items.

Constantly question the necessity of your possessions

Do I really need this? Am I going to miss this item if it is out of my sight? What would happen if I gave it away to another person? Will other people make more use of this item than me?

Embracing the Minimalist Lifestyle: Interview with Yuki Kubota, a Keio University Student

When and why did you decide to become a minimalist?

It was two years ago in 2017 when I moved to Japan to attend college that I decided to become a minimalist. While living by myself, it was challenging for me to keep track of all my belongings and to organize them in a way that made my house tidy. There were always so many items invading my personal space that I got stressed out just by having to make enough room for me to study in peace. I think that was when I decided to live a simple life. I taught myself to let go of my belongings.

What were some of the challenges you faced?

I found it relatively easy to throw away duplicates like extra wire hangers, utensils, pillows, and bedsheets, or items that I've never really used like diaries and herb candles. The real challenge was to throw away my clothing, accessories, bags, textbooks, and toys even if I no longer wore them or used them. I think it was because of all the memories that I could retrieve by simply looking at the items. I did manage, however, to minimize my belongings because my first priority was to make more space in my house. With all the items, there was no way I could do that.

What are the main benefits you were able to receive from your minimalist lifestyle?

I know that some people might find this a bit funny but I really like the feeling I get when I enter my house. The simplicity of my house stimulates comfort and peace. There are no longer piles of clutter that used to make me frown. There is enough space for me to roll around on the floor! As a person who lives alone, I also find it convenient that I don't have to invest much time in cleaning my house. It only takes me ten minutes per day to clean up any of the mess that I've created or to throw away the waste. I have more time to spend with my friends, to finish my assignments, and to simply listen to music while relaxing on my tatami mat. Overall, I think I'm happier than I used to be before I embraced a minimalist lifestyle.

E-Government

Estonia:

The Country Where 99% of Administrative Work Is Done Online

2019. 05. 02

written by Hyein Ahn

There is a country where 99 percent of government administration happens online. Its citizens can handle almost all of their public service needs from the comfort of their own homes at any hour of the week. Marriage, divorce, and real-estate transactions, for which citizens still has to venture out of the house, are the only exceptions. They have access to digital health data and hassle-free tax payments online. Over 85 percent of schools use an e-School system and purely digital study materials. It takes just a few hours and an Internet connection to set up a company. The country is Estonia. Located in Northern Europe with a population of 1.3 million people, it is a pioneer in converting public services into flexible e-solutions, which is often cited as the ultimate benchmark for how citizens should engage with government for their daily needs.

Estonia is relatively new to its independence. When it declared itself a sovereign nation and stepped out of the shadow of Soviet occupation in 1991, there were few resources available in the way of technology. Less than half of its citizens had a phone line.

The first Prime Minister of Estonia, Mart Laar, brought about the shift that would change the shape of his country's future. Laar decided to invest in IT solutions while pushing the country through modernization, laying the foundation needed for the country to take an information technology route. In 2002, Estonia first started its electronic ID program and became "effectively, a disconnected society," according to a World Bank report. The initiative enhanced Estonians' digital awareness and constructed nationwide Internet access points.

However, the push for change was still in motion. Estonia acknowledged the need to build a strong digital information infrastructure for e-IDs to thrive. This became the reason behind Estonia creating X-Road, a secure data exchange for citizens, private companies, and public institutions that links information instead of just storing data. X-Road allows people to use their e-IDs to access information regarding public services. A resident with an e-ID can accomplish everything from filing taxes, reviewing medical reports, to voting through X-Road. Additionally, the service has a backup system on servers in Luxembourg designed to make the government function even during an invasion.





E-Estonia has equipped its citizens with state-issued digital identification regardless of their location. Anyone can provide digital signatures using their ID-card, Mobile-ID, or Smart-ID, allowing citizens to safely identify themselves and the state to authenticate people without physical contact. To borrow a description from the Estonian government itself, this was a step “moving towards the idea of a country without borders.” Non-residents are also allowed to apply for ID cards which enable them to have the same access to Estonia’s various electronic services that a permanent resident would be given.

The trust among e-ID users and the strong individual oversight over personal data are the primary driving forces that made E-Estonia a reality. E-ID users can easily check which X-Road participants hold their information and which of them can or already have accessed it. A strong transparency policy enforces proper usage, as well as E-ID users taking action themselves against any suspected violations of their privacy.

With the advent of the digital age, we have begun to form new conceptions of governance, social management, and ethics in data ownership. If the government of the people is meant to be for the people, it must become even more convenient and accessible all the way down to the least privileged of its citizens. While the Estonian system may not be the answer for every country, it provides a window into what it would look like if governments were committed to adapting with the times and provided sustainable services which simultaneously enforce the individual right to privacy and control over personal data.

THE INCANTATION OF HOPE

2019. 05. 02

written by **Jungwon Choi**

This is the description of the Patronus charm, a defensive magic of extraordinary nature, casted by one of the most renowned protagonists in the modern fantasy genre: Harry Potter.

The fantastic wizarding universe of Harry Potter has captivated millions of readers around the world with its bountiful array of fascinating magic. Among them, the Patronus charm, which summons a corporeal spirit guardian for protection against the dementors (the creatures that feed on human happiness) ranks at the top of the list.

This spell feels more vivid as life resonates within us. There seems to be some true inherent magic which attaches this spell to the readers, soul to soul. The secret element, which enables this spell to transcend the boundaries of fantasy, was no other than the author J.K Rowling's genuine life experience—she came up with this idea while she was battling clinical depression, and the essence of truth her soul bled through the struggle sank into her writing.

In order to cast the spell, one must think of a memory and, as quoted from Rowling, “not just any memory, a very happy memory, a very powerful memory.” While recalling the happiest memory for us would not summon any mystic shapes of animals jovially leaping around the room, the product could still be as powerful as that of the fictional spell.

Nostalgia, which refers to a sentimental longing for the past, is capable of having numerous positive benefits for a person—from improving mood, to strengthening positive self-esteem, to even providing existential meaning. While the whirlpool of intense emotions accompanying the process could sometimes be overwhelming, recollection of the past could be a piece of magic in real life, perhaps the only one, which could be performed to overcome the creeping depression.

The most popular symbol of nostalgia is the stars. Using stars as a symbol in order to create a sense of nostalgia has always been the favorite device to be employed in all artistic mediums. It is not difficult to encounter the stars serving as the source of reminiscence in recent popular media of books, music and movies.

Now, the reason why the symbol of stars appeals to people the most remains elusive.

There are endless possible explanations, but perhaps it is because to adults, childhood is like a sky full of stars. It was when the stars were windows to their dreams; when they were able to hear the playful whispers of the sky; when they believed that friendships would last forever. When all of us were honest and not afraid to open our minds to others. People miss the time they naively dreamed and wondered about the world. One day they may gaze at the night sky and realize how stationary their celestial friends have remained. They are awed and aggrieved at the same time as change has overwhelmed their lives. Childhood was the period when our hearts could perceive the “invisible”—something that only resonates with innocence—which the majority of the adults can no longer discern.

Now we must not confuse ourselves. Growing up is not the problem; in fact, it is an inevitable process. The true change begins not from gaining more knowledge but forgetting.

The force of oblivion insidiously swallows the innocence in one's heart and even forces one to neglect his or her identity. Amid countless piles of homework, endlessly shifting social circles, and daunting uncertainty about the future, people forget the children they once were. As one's sight narrows down to what one can see with the eyes, the mind naturally fails to generate hope, an emotion which is summoned through the visualization of love, the mechanism of the Patronus charm previously stated. The inaptitude to produce hope significantly increases one's emotional vulnerability to solitude and depression, which can result in severe levels of pain, anguish and distress.

The solution is to resist the ceaselessly approaching clutches of oblivion by conjuring hope from “the happiest memory” of your life. Accept the slight ache of yearning which comes with it as the wistfulness reminds us of the true value of a moment. If one learns to savor the bitter-sweet flavor, one shall have the courage to advance forward into the uncharted realm of the future.

Let us stargaze. Let our imagination wander and wonder. Climb the stairs of stars and follow the Milky Way, to reach the place where no present-day forgetfulness can haunt us.

So now, as our beloved Professor Lupin instructs:

“Close your eyes. Concentrate and explore your past. Have the memory? Allow it to fill you up. Lose yourself in it. Then speak the incantation: Expecto Patronum. Very good. Now, shall we? Wands ready.”



A photograph showing silhouettes of seven children walking along a dark, flat horizon against a vibrant orange and yellow sunset sky.

Designed by Saehyun Lee & Seoyeong Rhee