Greetings from the President

By Christopher Park, M.D., Ph.D.

On behalf of the entire ERI board, I am extremely pleased to welcome you to this May 2015 issue of ERI News! It has been a very busy time at ERI the past several months, as the Board has been working hard to ensure ERI’s longevity and vitality by recruiting new members to our leadership team while also planning a number of bold initiatives. As President of the Board, I am particularly excited to see that so many people, both old and new to ERI, continue to volunteer their many formidable talents, time, and resources to further ERI’s mission. All of our supporters’ dedication to ERI serves a hearty reminder of the importance of our work at ERI—exploring and disseminating the lessons learned from Korean and Korean diaspora culture. Given the recent addition of four new Board Members, hiring of our new Managing Director, and recruitment of new Student Interns, I welcome you to meet the newest members of the ERI family while perusing the pages of this newsletter. I also encourage you to learn about our upcoming events, including the 10th Annual Teach Korea Teachers Conference, our continuing efforts to promote Korean culture and cultural competency through our upcoming fall Conference on Cross-Cultural Aging in Korea, and our bold fundraising campaign that will take place over the next year in New Haven and Korea. By the time we issue our next newsletter, you will also have the opportunity to keep abreast of ERI activities and announcements through our new website, which we hope to launch this summer. So, without further ado, I encourage you to sit back, relax, and enjoy reading about what’s going on at 251 Dwight Street!
Upcoming ERI Events

Teach Korea Conference
May 15, 2015
9:00 AM-4:00 PM
Sponsored by ERI in conjunction with the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools (CAIS), the 10th Annual Teach Korea Teachers Workshop will be held at the Hopkins School in New Haven, CT. The theme is Beyond the Inner Room: Enhancing Cultural Competence by Exploring Women’s Roles in Korea and East Asia.

FACULTY MEMBERS:
Michael Pettid, Ph.D., Professor of Asian and Asian American Studies, Binghamton University, The State University of New York
Sonja M. Kim, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Asian and Asian American Studies, Binghamton University, The State University of New York
Hesung Chun Koh, Ph.D., Founder and Co-Chair, East Rock Institute, New Haven
Sandra Wirth, Ed.D., Assistant Vice President/Dean of Students, Goodwin College, East Hartford
Christopher Y. Park, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Member, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York

Conference on Cross-Cultural Aging in Changwon, South Korea
October 7–8, 2015
The Fourth International Conference on Aging will be held at Changwon National University, co-sponsored by East Rock Institute, the Whitney Center, the South Gyeongsangdo Development Institute, and Gochang College of Gyeongsang province. Speakers from the U.S. will include the former White House advisor to Aging during the Clinton Administration, a leading administrator of CCRC in the U.S., leaders of Asian senior care institutes, professors at the Yale University Medical School and Memorial Sloan Kettering, NYC, internationally active geriatric environmental architects, and comparative culture specialists.

East Rock Institute’s Gala in Seoul
October 10, 2015
5:30-9:00 PM
(including reception and dinner)
Venue to be announced

SAVE THE DATE
We will be celebrating 60-plus years of ERI’s growth, acknowledging friends and donors, and introducing ERI’s leaders and the distinguished U.S. speakers of the Aging Conference.

Young Asian American Professionals’ Gathering
July 11, 2015
The Steering Committee for the Young Asian American Professionals’ Gathering will be meeting at The Study in New Haven, CT. By invitation only—details to follow.
“Impressions of Identity: A Conversation with Dr. Hochang Ben Lee”

Interview by Kate Huh

Dr. Hochang Ben Lee, one of ERI’s new board members, has dedicated much of his career to quantifying mental health issues among elderly Korean American immigrants. (For more information about his work, see “Fresh Faces,” page 4.) During our conversation, Dr. Lee shared his impressions of present-day Korea, as well as his reflections on contemporary questions of identity.

Q: How was your recent trip to Korea with your family (in March of 2015)?

A: My trip was a very eye-opening experience. The primary purpose was to introduce Korea to my kids, who are 9 and 12 years old. It’s something that I have wanted to do for a long time, as my kids are now at an age when they can actually start formulating what it means to be Korean. It might be that I was primarily in a relatively wealthy area in Seoul while I was traveling—but I was struck by the consumerism and service- and marketing-based interactions that I was inundated with. By the time my trip ended, I was exhausted, physically and mentally. There were a lot of nice people, unbelievably wonderful people. But at the same time, each interaction was a bit difficult because people were, in general, very tense and driven.

Korea is a rich country, by anybody’s definition; all these cultural phenomena, related to Korean TV and dramas and popular music, were very accessible and entertaining for my kids. And within that, I wasn’t sure:

“I wasn’t sure: ‘What is the Korea that I’m trying to introduce to my kids?’”

“‘What is the Korea that I’m trying to introduce to my kids?’ That’s why I think the goal of ERI, in terms of questioning—what Korean values are, how we define them, and how we disseminate those essences to the next generation—becomes even more compelling and relevant.

Q: What is your advice for Korean Americans currently coming of age?

A: You can look at yourself as being an alien in both cultures, or you can accept it and embrace it as somebody who belongs in both places. For second-generation Korean Americans, that’s a tougher task. It’s very difficult to go through those questions while you are already faced with the life transition of being a child, to becoming an independent college student, to thinking about developing a career. It’s a double whammy in terms of thinking about: What is your future? Everybody has a different degree of how much being a Korean means to them; what is important is that whatever you have accepted, you’re comfortable with it. Instead, they need to externalize it. If you can define your identity in service of others, then I think it becomes a far more meaningful and rewarding experience.

EXCERPT: “My Father’s Shoes” by Dr. Hochang Ben Lee

Last summer I made my annual trip to my parents’ house and noticed Dad’s beat-up, dusty canvas shoes on the shoe rack. By then he could not walk without a walker. Even with a walker, he would struggle to keep his shuffling steps moving forward and drag the front of his shoes on the ground to keep his balance. When I picked up the shoes and looked at the bottoms of the soles, I saw several deep holes in them and treads that were all but gone. That afternoon I took Dad to a shopping mall and bought him a pair of sturdy leather shoes. He kept fussing about how expensive the shoes were, but I could see that he was having a good time. Unwittingly, in his broken English, he kept telling everyone at the shoe store that I, his youngest son, was a doctor. As the kind shoe salesman humored Dad by pretending to look impressed, I saw the same twinkle in Dad’s eyes that I’d seen a long time ago but had forgotten. At that time, however, I didn’t know that I was buying him a pair of shoes for a journey on which I couldn’t accompany him.

The piece from which this text is excerpted was originally published in The American Journal of Psychiatry (June 2011).
Im Ja Choi is an entrepreneur who founded Penn Asian Senior Services (PASSi), a community-based nonprofit organization serving ailing Asian American seniors with language barriers.

With a Master of Science degree in Organizational Dynamics from the University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor’s degree from Korea University, Ms. Choi applied her own experience caring for her mother with cancer to identify a critical need for Korean-speaking home health aides in the Philadelphia region. She initially created a home health agency in 2004 to meet the needs of Korean seniors, but quickly expanded the services to include other under-served seniors. As of April 2015, PASSi provided direct care services to over 560 home-bound seniors, with 480 employees in 11 different Asian languages and English. In 2006, Ms. Choi also established the Penn Asian Vocational Institute (PAVI) to train entry-level health care workers.


Patty J. Lee, M.D., is the Vice Chair of East Rock Institute and a member of the Board of Directors. Dr. Lee is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the Yale University School of Medicine and the Director of Research, Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine.

Dr. Lee was born in Korea and immigrated with her family to the United States when she was three years old. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts and Doctorate of Medicine from Brown University before moving to Baltimore, Maryland for her internship, residency, and specialty training in Pulmonary Care and Critical Care Medicine at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. After the birth of her two children, Justin Jae Chul and Rebecca Jae Won Lee, Dr. Lee and her husband relocated to Connecticut. Her husband, Hyun Suk Lee, M.D., is a partner at Hartford Anesthesia Associates.

As the principal investigator of a laboratory studying lung injury and repair responses, Dr. Lee studies the mechanisms whereby the lung responds to and protects against oxidant injury. She has identified important molecules such as heat shock proteins and, more recently, innate immunity receptors that function to protect the lungs against oxidant challenges. Her team has also developed techniques to silence specific genes in the lung and endothelial cells in vivo.

Hochang Ben Lee, M.D., is a bilingual geriatric psychiatrist with an added specialization in psychosomatic medicine. He is an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the Yale University School of Medicine. In 2011, Dr. Lee became the founding Director of Psychological Medicine Service at Yale New Haven Hospital.

Dr. Lee grew up in Seoul and immigrated with his family to the United States when he was 12 years old. He received his Bachelor of Science with honors as a triple major in Biology, Philosophy, and Psychology at Cornell University, and received his Doctor of Medicine at Jefferson Medical College before completing his psychiatry residency and fellowship at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. He has been a member of the Healthy Korean Americans Research Initiative team at Johns Hopkins, and is a national expert on issues related to mental health and health service utilization among Asian Americans.

Dr. Lee’s clinical and research expertise is in the assessment and management of neuropsychiatric disorders among the elderly. He was the principal investigator for the Alzheimer's Association-funded Memory and Aging Study among Koreans in Maryland (MASK-MD), which determined the prevalence of dementia in the Korean American community by screening and assessing 1,100 immigrant elders for dementia and depression.
Christine Seo is a visual artist whose background and training in Korea continues to influence her compositional techniques. Born in Seoul in 1965, Ms. Seo displayed an aptitude for art at a very young age and devoted herself to developing her talent. She received her formal training at Seoul Women’s University, where she graduated with her B.A. in Fine Art in 1989. In addition to teaching art at an elementary school in Seoul, Ms. Seo instructed college preparatory students for 14 years at a fine arts academy.

Along with her husband and two children, Ms. Seo moved to the United States in 2000. Her family now resides in Northern Burlington County, New Jersey. When she lived in Irvine, California, Ms. Seo was an active member of the Orange County Fine Arts Association and maintained a studio at the OCFA complex in South Coast Plaza Village. She also worked with Roger Armstrong, a famous Bugs Bunny cartoonist and prominent oil and watercolor artist. Upon moving to New Jersey, Ms. Seo became a New Jersey Watercolor Association member.

As a master of watercolor and oil painting, Ms. Seo specializes in landscape and horse scenes. Her compositional technique is dynamic and natural; she rarely uses pencil to sketch the initial forms in her paintings. Ms. Seo associates this ability with the sense of spontaneity that can be seen in many traditions of Asian painting.

Managing Director:

Mia Paek Oram brings 30-plus years of work experience in such diverse fields as technical electronic engineering, education, business management, banking, and financial planning to her role as East Rock Institute’s new Managing Director.

Born in South Korea, Ms. Oram immigrated to the United States with her family in her early twenties. While living in Germany for six years, she traveled widely in Europe with her engineer husband. She is fluent in Korean and English, and possesses a working knowledge of German.

In addition to her cross-cultural perspectives, Ms. Oram brings to ERI a wide range of information technology, business, and management skills related to the development of databases, web management, life insurance, and marketing. She is a longtime volunteer at Korean American churches in Georgia and Connecticut. She brings over 16 years of experience teaching, developing, and managing Korean schools as Vice Principal of the Connecticut Saturday Korean School in Orange.

Ms. Oram has received numerous honors for her work, including several accolades for employee excellence at TranSwitch Corp., a semiconductor company, and a Teacher of the Year award for her Korean language instruction in Connecticut.

Yale Undergraduate Interns:

Hayun Cho is a sophomore at Yale University studying Literature. She has been working at East Rock Institute since her freshman year.

Hayun is currently the secretary of the Yale Asian American Studies Task Force, a student group devoted to increasing and legitimizing Asian American representation in Yale’s undergraduate curriculum. She is a managing editor for AURA: The Yale Undergraduate Journal of Comparative Literature and an active member of Jook Songs, Yale’s Asian American spoken word group. This summer, Hayun will be studying Korean language and literature at Seoul National University.

Kate Huh is a Literature major at Yale who studies Korean and Chinese on the department’s intensive track. She is the founder of AURA: The Yale Undergraduate Journal of Comparative Literature, an international publication based at Yale. Additionally, Kate is the founder of the Korean Literature Club on campus and has served as the editor-in-chief of various other student publications.

A volunteer English tutor for refugees and recent immigrants, Kate is passionate about language education and legal literacy as forms of social empowerment. This summer, she will be studying Korean in an intensive language program at Seoul National University. With the support of a fellowship from Yale, she will also be conducting an independent research project on literary culture in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in China.
Unlike many of the high school students who visit colleges, I had a specific mission to fulfill. I was determined to explore the arts department of each school and investigate all the possible art-related art majors that each school offered. I have had a passion for art since a young age, and I plan to pursue it in my college career. My interest in art may seem a little unusual because the stereotypical Asian parent typically ingrains the mantra “Study, study, study” into their children’s heads. However, my parents couldn’t be more different. Although they do place an emphasis on academic diligence, my parents have always been fully supportive of all my interests, bizarre as they may be. Their unwavering support for everything that I do is admirable, even when I was an extra in an atrocious Off-Broadway show during my freshman year. (And by off-Broadway, think severely off-Broadway. Like possibly high school-level.) My thankfully short-lived career as a crochet enthusiast was accommodated by my mother humoring me and buying numerous skeins of yarn from Michael’s discount bins. She makes the harrowing drive into Washington, D.C. every Tuesday for my internship, in which I am creating an art exhibit that showcases artwork for disabled artists around the world. My father always drove me to weekly golf practices and faithfully watched me hit balls into an open field for four hours. Therefore, my parents were more than ready for me to drag them into college art galleries and chaotic painting studios.

My parents and I had dinner with Dr. Hesung Chun Koh, who was gracious enough to set me up with Kate and Hayun for my visit to Yale the following week. In addition to Hayun showing me Yale’s art building, I was allowed to tag along with her to a literature seminar, which was a remarkable experience that forced me to reconsider the value of high school English curricula. The discussion that took place concentrated on the role of catharsis in Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, and the subjects addressed ranged from Oedipus Rex to the definition of truth. The emphasis on student opinion convinced me that my high school has been incorrectly teaching English. I cannot speak for schools other than my own, but the “seminars” held in my AP Language and Composition class are mostly dictated by eccentrically strict guidelines and are dominated by the teacher. Class time is mostly spent on worksheets and bland, half-hearted attempts at intellectual conversation, which usually end up with students looking up SparkNotes on their phones to avoid excessive work. Seminars are no different. The freestyle method of the Yale literature seminar was much more intellectually stimulating than the occasional seminar my high school class would hold.

I would have to say that my favorite moment during the whole trip was exploring the Princeton campus with my parents. As the youngest of three children, I rarely get to spend time with both of my parents simultaneously, so walking through the beautiful Princeton campus with them was definitely a treat. In fact, a piece of advice that I would give high school students organizing college trips is to spend that time exploring colleges with their parents as well. Dr. Koh has always believed in inter-generational learning, and the college visiting experience is a perfect time to practice that and spend time with your parents. Although going to college is a big decision for a student, it is equally as significant for the parent as well.

Although I am still a junior in high school, the time to apply for colleges is approaching fast. The school year is almost over and the Common Application essay prompts for the graduating high school class of 2016 have been released already. I cannot deny that reality is going to become very stressful for me soon because of the oncoming college application process. But I’m still daydreaming about Princeton’s stunning campus architecture and Yale’s gargantuan art department building; I can only hope that I can make the daydream come true.
Korean Kimchi Hut and Condiment Jars, Changteok Tae:
Promoting Cultural Competency Through Korean Food Culture and Asian Brush Painting

Artwork and article by Dr. Hesung Chun Koh

This article has been adapted from an address by Dr. Hesung Chun Koh, titled “Initiating Conversation About Korean Culture Through a Painting of a Kimchi Hut,” at the opening reception of the 2015 Whitney Center Art Exhibit, held on May 2 in Hamden, CT.


Korean Kimchi Hut and Condiment Jars, Changteok Tae features a nostalgic backyard scene of traditional Korea. Brimming with culinary essentials such as soybean sauce, bean paste, and fish or shrimp paste, various condiment jars sit on a platform next to the kimchi hut. Traditionally, one could gauge the wealth and lifestyle of a Korean household by observing the number and size of its condiment jars. The kimchi was made from mid-November to early December and stored throughout the winter underground, in an earthen jar placed under the straw hut.

Kimchi adds zest to all kinds of meals and comes in about 300 different varieties. The majority of these contain nappa cabbage, radish, and cucumber. These vegetables are garnished with garlic, ginger, green onion, and red pepper—and usually with a wide range of other ingredients such as fish paste, pine nuts, and pear. Such supplementary ingredients produce distinctive local flavors.

Archaeological records document the existence of kimchi from before the seventh century A.D. Scientific evidence of the medicinal properties of cured vegetables dates back to the 1700s. Fermented vegetables both supply the body with vitamin C and give it an opportunity to utilize and assimilate the nutrient. The Russian scientist Elie Metchnikoff concluded in the early 20th century that those who lived to be over 100 years of age had diets that were rich in lactic acid. Home-stored vegetables in brine were often included in the regular diet of these vigorous people. History further shows that Danish sailors ate cured vegetables to avoid seasickness, which British sailors emulated. Meanwhile, over the span of two thousand years, ancient Chinese laborers kept up their strength by consuming cured, salted vegetables and rice wine as they built the Great Wall.

With the use of imported red pepper, Korean women developed kimchi, which is unique among all fermented foods. Low in calories but high in fiber, kimchi has the bulk that is necessary for proper digestion. It is rich in calcium, iron, and other essential minerals and vitamins. Korean women have employed sophisticated fermentation techniques in making kimchi since before the seventh century. This zesty dish stimulates the appetite, supplies vitamin C in winter, and has medicinal properties. For example, the New Haven Register reported on its connection to the prevention of SARS some years ago. In addition, a recent feature in the Sunday New York Times Food section spotlighted many different dishes made with kimchi. It has become not only a side dish on Korean tables but a globally sought-after ingredient.

**HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF DR. CHU WAN KIM**

*Dr. Chu Wan Kim*, a pioneer in the field of radiology in South Korea and a longtime supporter of ERI, passed away last Wednesday at age 85. Dr. Kim graduated from the Seoul National University Medical School in 1953 and went on to become one of the first radiologists in the South Korea. In 1955, Dr. Kim was sent by the Seoul National University Radiology Department to be trained at the University of Minnesota and in 1957 became one of the first Korean radiologists to be certified by the American Board of Radiology.

Upon his return to Korea, Dr. Kim made tireless efforts both as a pioneer in the field and as an educator at the Seoul National University Medical School. In 1978, Dr. Kim founded the first diagnostic ultrasonography center in Korea at the Seoul National University Medical Center. He became professor emeritus at the Seoul National University Medical School in 1996. From 1973 to 1974, Dr. Kim served as the president of the Korean Radiology Association. In 1980, Dr. Kim founded the Korean Diagnostic Ultrasonography Association and served as the president for the first four terms. Earlier this year, Dr. Kim was inducted to the Korean Medical Association Hall of Fame. Dr. Kim met his wife, Dr. Joongsuk Huang, during their medical school training. They have three children, six grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

**Editorial Note:** Dr. Chu Wan Kim delivered a warm speech of welcome at a reception honoring the 1996 ERI U.S.-Korea Forum delegates, who included the following ERI board members/advisors and their spouses: Mr. Dean Markham (former Deputy Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives and seven-term state legislator, Certified Public Accountant), Attorney Earl Weiner (Partner at the Sullivan and Cromwell law firm, NYC) and Gina Ingoglia (landscape architect and internationally acclaimed author of children’s books, such as *The Lion King*), Howard Kyoungju Koh, M.D. (Professor at the Harvard School of Public Health, served as U.S. Assistant Secretary of Health under the Obama administration) and Dr. Claudia Arrigg (Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Ophthalmology Surgeon, Harvard Medical School), and Dr. Hesung Chun Koh, ERI President, as the team leader and organizer. This reception was held at the Yonsei University Medical School following Dr. Howard Koh’s lecture on cancer control there.

Some years later, Dr. Chu Wan Kim’s three children, Dr. Young Goo Kim, Dr. Yoongu Kim, and Mrs. Jakyung Kim Hong, established an endowment fund in honor of their father and for East Rock Institute at the Community Foundation of Greater New Haven. His family continues to be strong and generous supporters of ERI.

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**Starting at Harvard South Shore**

*By Dr. Byung Kil Kim*

This July I will be starting my residency training at the Harvard South Shore (HSS) Psychiatry Residency Program. Becoming a psychiatrist has been a dream of mine for many years. Under the mentorship of Dr. Hesung Chun Koh, I was encouraged to incorporate my diverse background into my interest in psychiatry.

Last October, I stayed at the Whitney Center as a guest of Dr. Koh for two weeks, where I was given an opportunity to give a lecture on the basic principles of Traditional Asian Medicine (TAM). During that period, I also completed two weeks of observer-ship under Dr. Kyungheup Ahn at the Yale Intensive Outpatient Unit. These experiences, along with my encounter with Dr. Hochang Ben Lee at Yale, gave me a great sense of pride and confidence as a Korean entering the field of psychiatry. I feel that Harvard South Shore is a great fit for me, as its unique blend of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Harvard facilities would provide me with tremendous resources to pursue my interest. The opportunity to work with military veterans is particularly intriguing to me, as my own experience in the Korean Army helped in shaping my interest in mental illness. I also look forward to raising my young family in the culturally rich city of Boston.

The lessons I learned from my mentors have been invaluable, and I hope to be in the position to do the same for other young Koreans and Korean Americans in the future.
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- CT Trust for Historic Preservation
- Korean Cultural Center NY: Korean Dance
- Overseas Korea Foundation: Archive Digitization & Web Development

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Dr. Hesung Chun Koh, the Chair of ERI, was invited to a symposium at the CT Saturday Korean School Teachers’ Workshop on January 31, 2015, held at Bethesda Lutheran Church in New Haven, CT. Dr. Koh asked teachers to share their experiences of the challenges and rewards of teaching at the school. She stated that East Rock Institute and the CT Saturday Korean school share the mission of strengthening Korean American identity. Dr. Koh first made her definition of “identity” known and introduced how “Diaspora Identity” is different from conventional notions of identity.

Dr. Koh presented two major characteristics of Korea. The first was its unusual autonomy while situated in the midst of major world civilizations such as Mongolia, Russia, China, and Japan. Dr. Koh then called our attention to the unusual political stability of Korea. She pointed out that the diaspora of Koreans is the fourth largest in the world, after the Chinese, Jews, and Italians. This signifies Koreans’ global adaptability and creative syncretic cultural values.

Dr. Koh reminded us to take ownership of these facets of Korean identity. She emphasized that language teaching needs to be accompanied by proper cultural knowledge. Dr. Koh closed her talk by reminding the teachers that recent demographic shifts indicate that Koreans will no longer be a racial minority but part of a majority. Thus, we must teach leadership. Dr. Koh reiterated that Korean school teaching should be relevant to students’ everyday life and learning at schools. She ended her talk by saying that helping students find their passions and life goals is more important than instilling in them facts and skills.

There was an extensive open discussion of the major challenges and rewards of teaching at Saturday Korean school. The topics of discussion included the difficulties of teaching students with disparate levels of competency in Korean language and culture, how to motivate these students, the best ways to involve parents, how to link vocabulary to cultural values, and how to make lesson plans relevant to our children.

Ms. Hyosoon Park, who teaches 4–6 year olds, shared a story about the non-Korean-speaking parents of a Korean adoptee: an Indian father and American mother each repeating the names of vegetables (for instance, “오이” for “cucumber” and “호박” for “zucchini”) while driving home and reviewing their child’s lesson. This story touched the hearts of those present.

Dr. Koh concluded the session by sharing the East Rock Institute motto: “To Search, To Learn and To Service.” Moved by Dr. Koh’s advice, the participating teachers expressed their respect for her legacy and their commitment to instilling pride in Korean culture and identity.
ERI’s Achievements
East Rock Institute:
- Is the oldest organization devoted to research on Korean and Korean American culture in the U.S.
- Publishes the only journal devoted to Korean, Korean American, and Korean Diaspora studies.

ERI’s Activities and Community Commitment
The Most Representative Activities of ERI:
- Teach Korea Corps is ERI’s project concentrating on developing curriculum on Korean culture and history for American schools and concurrently a teacher training movement appealing to Korean American young professionals.
- ERI’s development of authentic leadership for Korean American young professionals through ongoing series of publications and leadership workshops.
- Innovative integration of education and cross Cultural Aging initiatives through international collaboration between US and Korea.

Global Leaders in Support of ERI
Numerous high-ranking officials, prominent scholars, and other renown global leaders have participated in ERI-sponsored events, including:
- U.S. Ambassador James T. Laney to Korea
- U.S. Ambassador James Lilly to Korea
- Korean Ambassador to the United States Dong Jin Park
- Korean Deputy Prime Minister Cho Soon
- U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills
- Korean Ambassador to Russia and Finland In Ho Lee
- Howard Kyongju Koh, M.D., Assistant Secretary of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Service (Formerly Associate Dean, Harvard School of Public Health)
- Master Kayagum Performer and Scholar Hwan Byung-gi
- Wan Kyu Cho, Formerly President of Seoul National University and also Minister of Education, Republic of Korea.

East Rock Institute
Founded in 1952—Is the Oldest and the Most Innovative Nonprofit, Research, Educational, and Cultural Organization.
East Rock Institute is a unique Organization in the world. Founded in 1952, ERI has for more than five decades cultivated understanding between East and West and pioneered the exploration of Korean culture and identity in the U.S. and among other major nations of the Korean Diaspora. ERI’s accomplishments include sponsoring a wide variety of events, programs, research projects, publications, and artistic performances and presentations.

Well-established and internationally recognized among academic-cultural institutions, ERI also remains a trailblazer that continues to explore uncharted areas of scholarship and practice.

**AREAS OF IMPACT**

**Defining and Promoting Ethnic Identity**

What does it mean to be a Korean living outside of his homeland? What are the unique challenges and opportunities facing past, present, and future generations of Korean Americans? Thousands of first- and second generation Korean Americans have examined their cultural identity and leadership capabilities through ERI conferences. In recent years, ERI’s Young Professional Retreats have given college graduates opportunities to discuss issues common to the emerging generation of Korean American young professionals, and to meet and network with others.

ERI has also provoked discussion of Korean and Korean American religion, as well as arts and culture, through conferences, publications, film festivals, performances, and exhibits. With ongoing cultural and leadership programs in the coming years, ERI will continue to strengthen and maintain Korean cultural identity for the next generations of Korean Americans.

**Stimulating Groundbreaking Scholarship**

ERI has contributed more to Korean American and Korean Diaspora studies than any other organization in the world. Our academic and research endeavors often involve perspectives and the collaborations of scholars from many nations, as was the case in the Korean Diaspora Project, which closely examines four major Korean communities in Japan, the United States, China, and the former Soviet Union. Since 1984, ERI has disseminated research and scholarly ideas, through its academic journal, the Korean and Korean Americans Studies Bulletin (soon to be Asian Culture and Diaspora). It is the world’s only journal dedicated to covering Koreans in America together with Korean culture in Korea. Through its innovative website, called INSTROK (Information System for Teaching and Research on Korea), and its teacher training programs and curriculums, ERI gives scholars at the University level and teachers at the college and secondary school levels the tools they need to advance research and teaching in Korean culture and history.

**Reaching Korea culture through fashion**

ERI has been making a constant effort to promote and educate others about Korean culture in various aspects, and one of them is through clothing. ERI accomplished this through fashion show featuring authentic Korean fashions from the Koguryo period (57 B.C.) to the present day. ERI’s fashion shows have been well-received and have brought attention to Korean culture through fashion and clothing.

**Serving as a Unique Resource**

ERI is a unique resource: a combination of a think tank, a clearinghouse and a referral and educational and career guidance center. ERI’s headquarters are home to one of the most special libraries and archival collections for Korean culture and Korean American and Korean Diaspora studies. In this scholarly environment, ERI offers numerous internship opportunities to Koreans, Korean Americans, and others with a scholarly interest in East Asian studies. Qualified interns work as managing editors of ERI’s academic journal, as research assistants, as conference planners, and as web site developers in collaboration with ERI staff members. Often, these opportunities are significant in furthering the career goals of students.

ERI assists a variety of people and organizations, informs the public, and creates personal, individualized opportunities for students and scholars to benefit from becoming a part of the ERI family.

**“To search, to learn, to serve”—this is our motto. With a long history of achievement, ERI looks forward to what it can accomplish in the next generations. Imagine the possibilities!**

The three-part yin and yang symbol, omnipresent in many Korean crafts and shrine doors, conveys the essence of Korean folk belief that if two seemingly opposing forces are reconciled, it produces luck and happiness. The third, integrating force that is added to the Chinese yin and yang is believed to bring about a positive force for change. This symbol, in Hesung Koh’s opinion, best characterizes what is distinctly Korean in Korean culture.