# Kansas Asia Scholars Program 2002-06: <u>Spiritual Diversity and Social Work in Korea</u> The University of Kansas School of Social Welfare



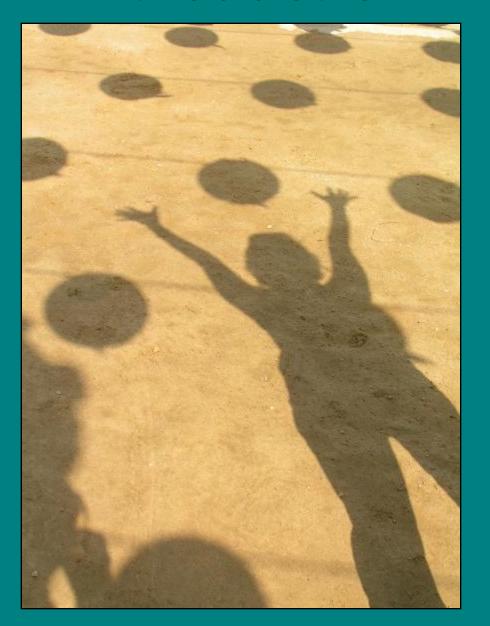
Composed by Edward R. Canda, Jamie Cole, Lindsay Paulette, Andrea Pfeiffer, and Loretta Pyles. Edited by Edward R. Canda.

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### Presentation Outline

- •Introduction to the Program
- Spiritual Diversity in Social Welfare
- Other Cultural and Historical Experiences
- Concluding Thoughts

# Introduction



Shadows of Buddhist lanterns and student at Seokguram grotto, Gyeongju City



Picture on Left: First year group photo in Tongyong on the south coast, 2003; including Program Coordinator Kim Kyung Mee, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left

Picture on Right (2003): (From Left) Aundrea Bontrager, Liz Snyder, Jaima Barnes, Loretta Pyles, and Lindsey Eppley



## KAS Program

- For four years (2002-06), Professor Edward R. Canda (University of Kansas School of Social Welfare) directed the Kansas Asia Scholars Program for Social Work in the Republic of Korea.
- In cooperation with the KU Center for East Asian Studies, under the KAS Program for China, Japan, & Korea directed by Professor William Tsutsui.
- Co-taught with Professor Seung-Hee Park of Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul and assisted by Kyung-Mee Kim (now professor at Soongsil University in Seoul) and Hwi-Ja Canda, LSCSW. Thank you!
- This presentation is a summary of four years of experiences.
- Our visits to agencies were brief. This presentation represents our impressions, rather than formal evaluation. We emphasize points that especially intrigued and inspired us. We are not experts on Korea culture. But we are very grateful to our teachers and friends for helping us learn. We hope that you will become enthused to learn more about Korean culture and social welfare, too.

## Acknowledgments and Notes

- Thanks to the Freeman Foundation for generous funding and to Professor William Tsutsui for initiating, administering, and supporting this project.
- Thanks to the Shumaker Family Foundation for funding to complete this presentation online.
- We greatly appreciate the generosity and time of the agencies' staff and the Sungkyunkwan University student volunteers who made these trips so wonderful.
- Thanks to student participants (who are all now graduates of KU) for photos, assistance with presentation design, and insightful comments. Due to limitations of space, we could not include photos or comments from everyone, but all the students made valuable contributions.
- Agency staff invited us to tour their agencies and take photographs.
- No identifying information or images of clients or minors associated with agencies are included.
- Other photographs were taken in public settings and events.
- We always asked Korean hosts if it was appropriate to photograph, even in public settings.
- In this presentation, we used the ROK government romanization system for Korean words.

### **Purposes of the Program:**

- 1. Introduced social work students to connections between diverse Korean philosophies and spiritual traditions and social welfare.
- 2. Compared Korean perspectives with American approaches to social work and social welfare.
- 3. Provided the opportunity for intensive study of the connections between culture and social welfare in East Asia.
- 4. Increased students' knowledge of East Asian cultures and social work in order to prepare students to serve clients from diverse cultures and spiritual beliefs, especially Korean and Asian-American clients.



Pine forest near Silla royal graves, Gyeongju City

"We met throughout the Spring semester and were introduced to Korean culture by Ed and Hwi-Ja Canda and guest lecturers. We learned the Korean alphabet, about current social problems, how to eat with metal chopsticks, and basic cultural competence. In many meetings we discussed how spirituality and social work intersect in South Korea, focusing on Buddhism, Shamanism, Confucianism, and Christianity." – Beth Chronister, BSW Student

### Travel Learning in Korea



# Exploring Korea in Summer Travel for 3 weeks

Discovering a home away from home...





**Above:** Seagulls and the South Korean flag

Left: Our home away from home: Seoul Guest House (2003)



L To R: Amy Ruse, Zach Colt, Stephanie Hanson, Jamie Cole, Amanda Blackhorse, Student Volunteer, Kerry Carlon, Ed Canda (Professor), Hwi-Ja Canda (Program Coordinator), Sheena Jacobi-Students and KU Instructors 04-05

"This trip was not only a lesson in Korean culture and social welfare, but also a lesson in navigating egocentrism and embracing beauty through group dynamics, team-work and personal adaptability."

-Aundrea Bontrager, MSW student

"It is important that I continue to learn about beliefs different from my own and that I look at them from a well-rounded perspective. As Professor Yi Dong-Jun (Korean philosophy professor) wisely stated, 'Any idea, regardless of times, can be well applied or misapplied. If there is a bright side on the one hand, then there is a dark side on the other. In such a viewpoint, we should not casually judge any religion or thought in a one sided manner."

-- Sheena Jacobi, BSW Student

#### KAS Korea Students and Instructors 05-06



Pictured from top left: Aubrey Fraker, Beth Chronister Andrea Pfeiffer, Brooke Nelson, Marli Adams, Ed Canda (Professor), Lauren Hays, Christi Hansen, and Hwi-Ja Canda (Program Coordinator)

### Lauren Hays, BSW Student

"I was extremely impressed by all the hospitality we received. I realize much of it has to do with the relationships that the Candas made over the years. But everyone was so nice to us and made us feel very welcome. I still cannot believe all the wonderful meals we had. It really made me feel special as a welcomed visitor...

This experience was so wonderful because I got a chance to learn about Korean culture and to share my experience with nine other wonderful people, plus many more along the way! I was amazed each and every day by the new things I learned about the people and culture. It definitely added to my international knowledge!"

# Sungkyunkwan (SKKU) University, KAS Host University



Outside Concert at SKKU



Memorial for student killed in university political demonstration

# Host University Logo: Gingko Leaf with a Symbol of 4 Confucian Virtues: <u>Benevolence, Proper Conduct, Moral Courage, Wisdom</u>







"The accentuation in Korean culture on balance and harmony propelled me to look for areas in my own life that may need some balancing. It also helped me to appreciate our KAS group dynamic. Each of us had a role to play."

-- Sheena Jacobi, BSW Student

# Spiritual Diversity and Social Welfare





Examples from field visits

# Buddhist Affiliated Agencies

### Including

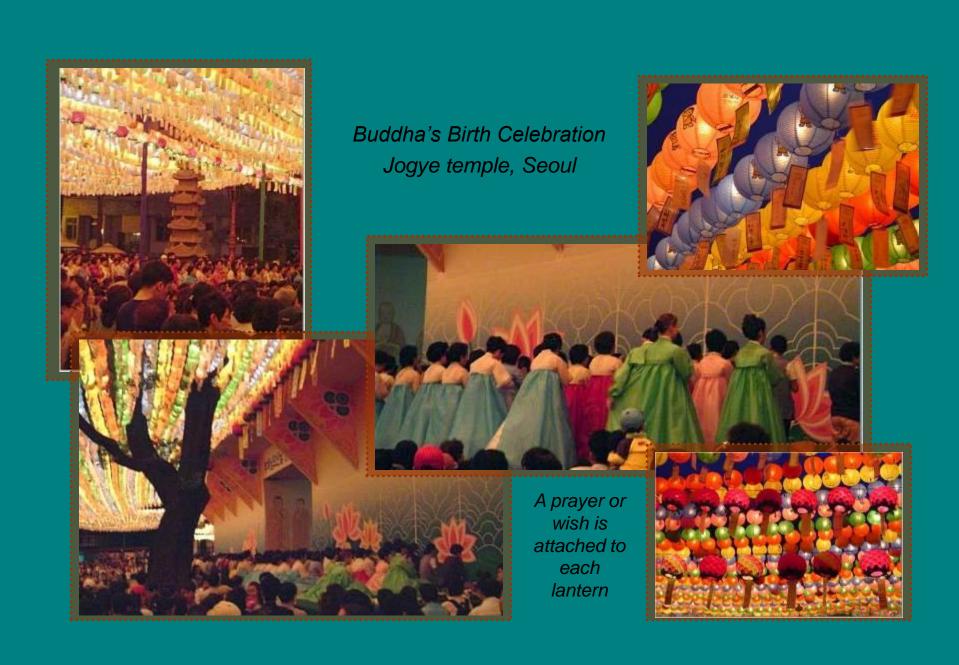
- Jogye Jong, the largest traditional denomination
- Won Bulgyo, a Korean indigenous
   denomination founded about 100 years ago

### Buddhism



- Introduced in Three Kingdoms, ca. 372 in Goguryeo
- Served as state religion in Silla, Unified Silla, and Goryeo dynasties (ca. 528-1392)
- About 40% of population are Buddhist

(Note: surveys on Korean religious membership are unreliable. Numbers in this presentation are approximations based on various studies.)



### Senior Welfare Center of Seoul





By walking on the stones in bare feet, participants at the center can improve their circulation and health. This is like natural accupressure.

•Organized by the Jogye Jong Order of Buddhism, the largest Buddhist denomination in Korea, with facilities and funding from Seoul City government.



Paper lantern at the Senior Center, Representing the 8 spoked wheel of Buddha Dharma



Elders in a 'cheerleading' class for exercise

#### The Lion Mask Dance

The mask dance is an example of a spiritually based practice at the agency.





Pictured to the left are two musicians accompanying the lion dance. To the right, 2 performers dress as the lion, who skillfully dance and provide comic relief to the crowd of elders. The lion sometimes represents Manjusri (*Munsubosal*), the Bodhisattva of Wisdom, who chastises misbehaving monks.

#### Roots in Tapgol Park



Elders socializing at Tapgol Park

- The agency was created in 2001 as an extension of the lunch program and social gathering of male elders at nearby Tapgol Park, which memorializes Korean independence. For this reason, most participants are men.
- •Services are free to all elders over 60.

The center serves approximately 2,500 meals everyday except for eight days of the year when the center is closed.





Most participants at the center are male because it is located near a park where senior men enjoy to gather.



- •All elders are welcome regardless of spiritual orientation. Buddhist beliefs are not imposed.
- •Participants include Christian (50%), Buddhist (20%), and other religious/nonreligious; majority male (80%). (Many other elder centers have majority female participants.)

#### **Services Include:**

- Job Coaching
  - Counseling
- •Hygienic Care •Free lunches

  - Volunteer training
  - Various courses on geriatric health, mental health, and family life issues
  - •Cultural and artistic activities, such as calligraphy



### Marli Adams, MSW Student

"The Seoul Senior Center was packed from wall to wall with seniors who had bright smiles on their faces. They understand the importance of staying in community. In the US, however, we are so individualistic that older adults may shut themselves up in their homes and become isolated... Since my focus has been on improving the quality of life for older adults, I plan to compile a resource that includes ideas and programming that would better serve East Asian adult immigrants in America."



Liz Snyder (left) and Aundrea Bontrager (right) with the Buddhist nun director (middle) of the Senior Welfare Center of Seoul



Memorial near the main Entrance.

The large calligraphy is to honor a participant of the center who donated organs at death. Organ donation is not common in South Korea. However, the center is encouraging organ donation.

# Wonkwang Welfare Center for the Disabled & Yurin Wonkwang Welfare Center



Above: Meeting with agency staff

**Right:** Elders participating in song at this Won Buddhist sponsored agency







Exercise and meditation class (left); the director presents KU students each with a gift of a bell (right)

### Christy Hansen, MSW Student

"One thing I noticed about many of the agencies was that they provided a variety of services to a wide population, including seniors, children, people with disabilities, and others. For example, the Won Buddhist agency had a home-like setting where children and elders could interact. This is an important idea that could be utilized more widely in the United States. It seems that in American society, elderly and children are compartmentalized and served in agencies separately."

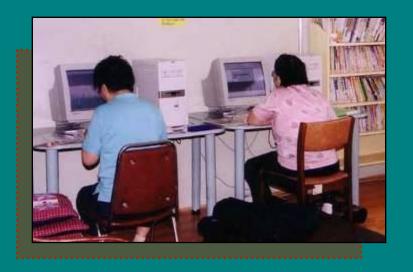
# Yurin Wonkwang Welfare Center: Won Buddhist Ideal of Oneness

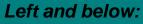


•Selfless Service
To the Public

 Right Enlightenment and Right Conduct



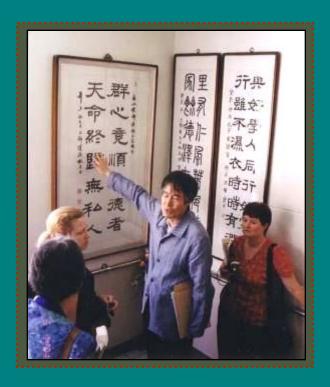




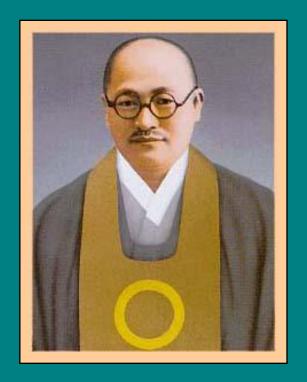
Children and youth using the welfare center's facilities

**Lower right:** Professor Park explaining the calligraphy





## Won Buddhist Low Income Housing Center: Beon Dong 2 Social Welfare Center, Seoul



Founder, Chung-Bin Park



Religious symbol called "Il Won" meaning "One Circle," one's true and pure nature

Won Buddhism was founded by Park Chung-Bin (Sotaesan) in 1916. The religion emphasizes integration of social welfare, education, and meditation in daily life. Adherents aim to return to a clear state of mind, an original mind of oneness.

- •Managed by a Won Buddhist organization, with Seoul City government funding.
- •Serves over 7,000 low-income residents in nearby apartment buildings.
- •Established in 1991.



## The Agency's Main Priority is Youth and Family Support





In order to attain this goal the agency offers play therapy (pictured left is sand tray therapy; pictured right is a play therapy room), cultural trips, counseling, afterschool programs, tutoring, and more...

# Empowering residents



An example of client empowerment is their environmental friendly soap factory. Low income residents are hired as employees and managers of the factory. They are trained to produce and package the soap. The profits from the company help fund other services at the agency.



The Won Buddhist nun and director of the agency offers bimonthly trainings about Won Buddhism for interested people. The goal is for clients to learn practices that can help cultivate their minds. Above, she teaches the KAS students proper meditation.

#### Christian Affiliated Agencies

- Including
  - Protestant
  - Catholic

#### Christianity

- Introduced by Catholic missionaries ca. 1593
- Catholicism and 'Western Learning' grew in 1700s
- Protestantism introduced ca. 1884
- Rapid growth post Korean war
- About 40% of population are Christian
- Upward social mobility common
- Tendency toward theologically conservative and charismatic styles

#### Deoksu Community Service Agency





Christian iconography displayed at Deoksu Community Service Agency

#### **Uijungbu City Social Welfare Center**

- •Operated by a small Protestant Christian church with money from the city government.
- •The pastor director infuses Christian teachings and prayer into services.
- •Clients come from a variety religious or nonreligious backgrounds.

•Provides various services to disabled or disadvantaged youth, the homeless, and the elderly.





Two boys make crafts at the afterschool program.

- •The agency serves elderly with Alzheimer's Related Disorders.
- •Agency workers pick up the elderly from their homes at 7:30 every morning and bring them to the center, before dropping them back off at 7:30 at night.

•Activities for these participants include crafts, drawing and painting, and singing.



•The center provides emergency services for victims of elder abuse.



•The basement walls are comprised of yellow clay. It is used as a meeting room and also a shelter for victims of elder abuse. The special clay is thought to have energy good for one's health.

The pastor director is at left

•Provides 24/7 counseling for the homeless. Two of the four staff members specializing with the homeless were formerly without a home.

•Serves 180 meals/day to financially disadvantaged persons

in the community.

•The center has a daycare for children of working parents.

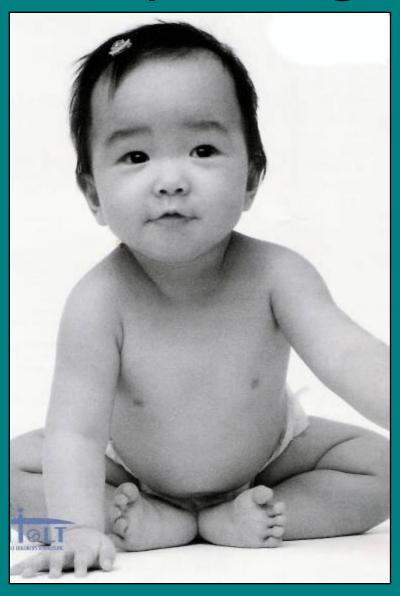




A bamboo garden offers elders natural beauty and place of quiet respite.

"Many of the agencies we visited gave attention to how the physical environment could positively impact overall well-being. For example the pastor had a mural painted, created a small garden space, used healing clay bricks, and included charcoal under flooring to absorb smells in efforts to create a healthy environment." – Brooke Nelson, MSW Student

### **Holt Adoption Agency**



"Our agency visit to Holt helped reestablish my feelings of really wanting to practice social work, especially after seeing the happiness on the couple's faces when they received their adopted son. Getting to witness that moment deeply touched me and made me realize how much I want to help make those connections happen between children and prospective parents."

-- Kerry Carlon, BSW student



The agency was started in 1955 by an American citizen, Mr. Holt.

It is based on Christian principles but does not restrict service by religious affiliation.

Holt Adoption agency provides the following services:

- -Domestic and international adoptions
- -Post-placement services
- -School for people with disabilities
- -Children's health clinic



# Soro Weon (Narrrow Path) Senior Care Center



Located in Yeongam, South Jeolla Province.

Soro Weon blends nonsectarian Christian ideals of loving service with traditional values of harmony with nature, appreciation of art, and extended family style connections.

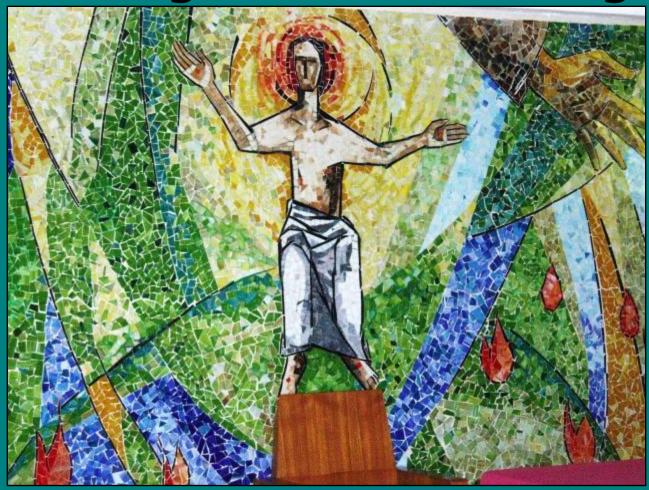
The agency name refers to the 'narrow path' taught by Jesus.



"I also really enjoyed visiting the Christian based retirement/nursing home in the rural area. The woman who built and runs the home has given so much to assisting the aging population in living healthy, peaceful, and meaningful lives. I really liked her philosophy of care: the importance of bringing nature into the living area is such a wonderful idea and I feel this would be very helpful to American agencies."

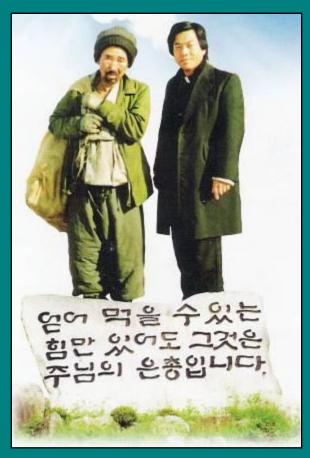
-- Amy Ruse, MSW Student

Kkottongne "Flower Village"



This Catholic agency, located in South Chungcheong Province, was started in 1976.

## "Happiness is to love and it creates a loving community." -- an agency slogan



Father Oh began Kkottongne after meeting Grandpa Choi, a homeless man who was caring for other homeless people in the area.

### Kkottongne offers the following programs:

- 1. Housing for the Homeless
- 2. Care Home for the Elderly
- 3. Care Home for People with Severe Mental Illness
- 4. Care Home for People with Disabilities
- 5. Ingok Mercy Hospital
- 6. Training Institute of Love for volunteers & staff
- 7. Social Welfare College



Amanda with two children waiting for adoption.



The Kkottngne House of Angels cares for abandoned infants and seeks appropriate adoption placements in Korea.

Employees and clients are seen as practitioners of love.

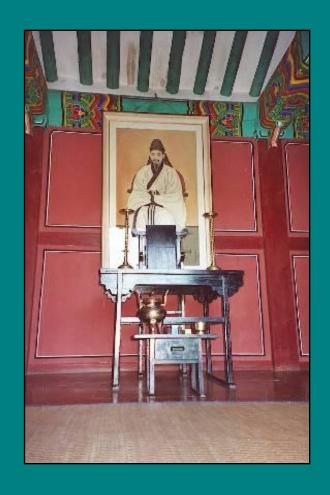
#### Confucianism Inspired Services

• Although there are no Confucian social service agencies, per se, there are approaches to service inspired by Confucian ethics, such as filial piety

#### NeoConfucianism

- Confucianism introduced early in Three Kingdoms (ca. 100 BCE to 668 CE)
- NeoConfucianism
   (seonglihak) was state
   religion during Joseon
   dynasty (1392-1910)
- Few formal adherents now but major influence on ethos

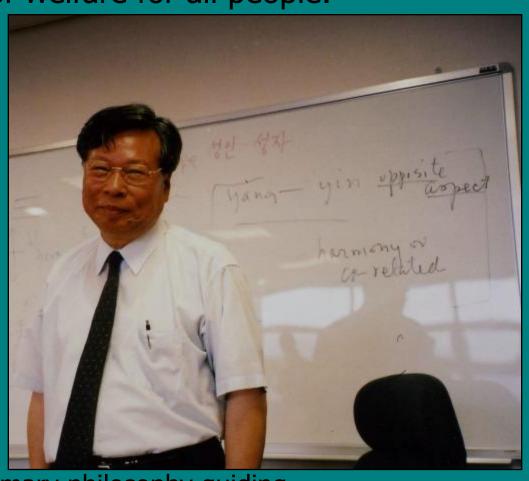
Photo: Scholar Yi Yulgok's portrait and memorial shrine





Taedong Institute for Chinese Confucian Classics Study. The Dean at the time was Prof. Yi Dong-Jun.

Prof. Yi explained how the virtue of benevolence and the principle of harmony between complementary opposites can be applied to a vision of welfare for all people.



Neo-Confucianism was the primary philosophy guiding government based social welfare during the previous Joseon Dynasty (1392 – 1910). It still provides a pervasive social ethics.

"There was a child running far away from his grandfather into the street. Aundrea picked him up to protect him. Ed said that act represented the Confucian way. Mencius believed that people were basically good because if a child was crawling towards a well, all people would instinctively want to go save the child instead of letting it fall to its doom."

-Lindsey Eppley, BSW Student

Traditional Confucian Study Hall at the Original Sungkyunkwan Academy in Seoul.



The Chinese characters on the front read: 'Clear Principle Hall.'

# Hallym University's Center for Aging, Health and Humanities, Chuncheon City



This center is not religiously affiliated; but it reflects the Confucian virtue of filial piety.

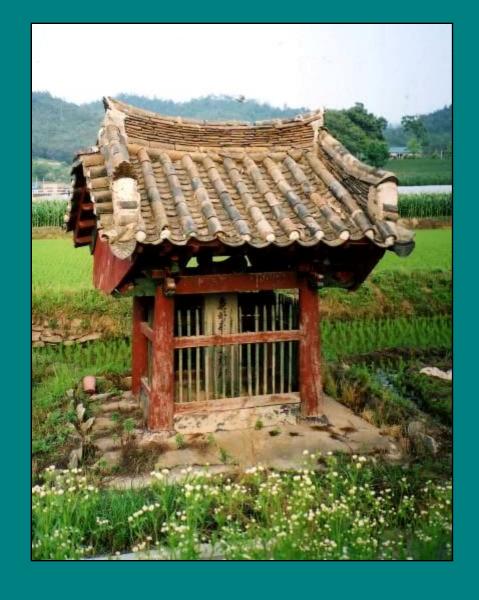
The University, located in Gangweon Province, includes a Lifetime Experimental Room at their research center that allows students to experience the physical and mental conditions that may develop for the elderly.

The Lifetime Experimental Room offers various elder experiences in order to encourage empathy and to develop user friendly facilities for elderly:

- •Wheel Chair Access
- •Mobility Testing
- •Hearing Test
- •Vision and Color Test
- •Utensil Test
- •Kitchen Chair Test







A Family's Shrine to Demonstrate Filial Piety, an Important Confucian Virtue. (South Jeolla Province)

Filial Piety means respecting and caring for parents, elders, and family members. In a larger sense, it means respecting heaven and earth as our parents and respecting all people and all things as our siblings.

"Seeing Hwi-Ja and Ed bow in respect and honor (when they reunited with Hwi-Ja's mother) was a very moving experience, but it also made me miss and be thankful for my family and their interactions."

-- Stephanie Hanson, BSW student

The value of filial piety is evident in Korean social welfare systems... The government provides numerous benefits for elders, including free meals, free subway rides, and funding for community centers. In addition, elders can budge in line, sit in special areas on the subway, and are given much respect by younger Koreans... There are hundreds if not thousands of welfare centers that work with Korean elders and are not limited to elders with disabilities.

-- Andrea Pfeiffer, MSW Student

Mural of Confucius at Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul



Conference on Confucianism and social welfare at Byeongjeongsan Seowan, a Confucian learning institute from the Joseon Dynasty

# Shamanistic Grass-Roots Helping

 Although there are no shamanistic professional social work agencies, shamanism provides many grass-roots community based services

# Shamanism (musok)

- Oldest indigenous religiously based system of healing and helping; linked to grass-roots culture (*minsok*)
- Allied with royal families during Three Kingdoms Period
- Marginalized during Joseon dynasty and modern capitalization
- Influences charismatic Christianity and 'blessing style' (bok) Buddhism
- Widespread use at times of crisis and perplexity

## Shamanism as a Grass Roots Helping System

Shamanism is an indigenous grass-roots healing and helping system. It is the oldest religiously based helping system in Korea.

It is based on harmony between humans, nature, and spirits.

Shamanic rituals help to resolve pent up agony and to protect cosmic harmony for individuals, families, and communities.



Mountain Spirit; painting on rock at Shamanic ritual site in Seoul.

# Shamanism and Buddhism are intermingled.

Statues located at same Shamanic ritual site as previous.



A spirit general (center) with Buddha to the right.



Amidha Buddha, Protector of the Western Heavenly Paradise

### Types of Helping Practices



- •Shaman Pak helps clients through prayers for blessings, divination, rituals for feeling and resolving family crises, and through personal donations and advocacy for disadvantaged people.
- •Shamans mediate communication between spirits and human client(s) through song, dance, trance, and cathartic practices.

Shaman Pak honors Dangun (above), the culture hero founder and ancestor of Korea, whose parents represented qualities of heaven and earth in harmony.





Shamans enter into a trance during which the spirits speak and work through them. The different clothing signifies that different spirits are inhabiting the shaman. (Seoul)

### Aubrey Fraker, BSW Student

"The visit to the shaman (Ms. Pak) was the most insightful spiritual experience because she contained so much knowledge about her belief system and was able to express her thoughts in an effective and moving manner. Her ability to tell fortunes was amazing. I was reluctant in the beginning because I was afraid of what she might say, but I was impressed by her skill and articulateness."

# Shamanic Spirit Marriage



"Throughout the trip I was fascinated by the intricate, intermingling spiritual traditions that have influenced Korea over time. I was particularly moved while watching the shaman perform the spirit marriage on the beach. In this ritual, the Koreans' connection with nature and sense of community was so evident, and they welcomed us into their community celebration in such an open and generous way..." --Lindsay Paulette, MSW Student

This ritual was designed to marry the spirits of two tragically deceased young people, so that they could rest well in the afterlife.

### Elaborate preparations..

**Below:** Offerings left for the spirits

**Right:** Table decorated to honor the spirits of the couple and helpful Bodhisattvas









Contacting the spirits...

The shaman uses bamboo to contact the spirits



## The community was invited to join the Buddhist monks and shaman in a celebration dance to send the spirits back to paradise



#### And then life moves on...

Left: The community stretches the white cloth, symbolizing the path for spirits to return to the Western Paradise of Amidha Buddha

**Below:** The shaman rips the cloth, and disconnects from the spirits





"Shamanism is the traditional indigenous religion of Koreans, but it is not practiced as much as it used to be. I found this religion similar to my own traditional religion of the Dineh (Navajo)... They both provide a sense of spirituality... and both are threatened by the new age we live in..."

-- Amanda Blackhorse, BSW Student

# Other Cultural and Historical Experiences











Gosa ceremony performed by group to set good intentions before the journey across the country. Food used for ceremony (left); Professor Park (right) reads calligraphy he created for the occasion.

### We were honored to have such kind and generous hosts...

**Below:** Stephanie Ellis and a few of our Korean hosts





### The trip will always be remembered...



**Left:** Lindsay Paulette & Sherrie Watkins-Alvey at Olympic Park, Seoul

Below: Professors Park & Canda share a laugh at dinner



We learned, explored...

### ...and made some friends along the way





**Above:** Meeting a Korean celebrity

**Upper right:** Meeting Korean naval officers

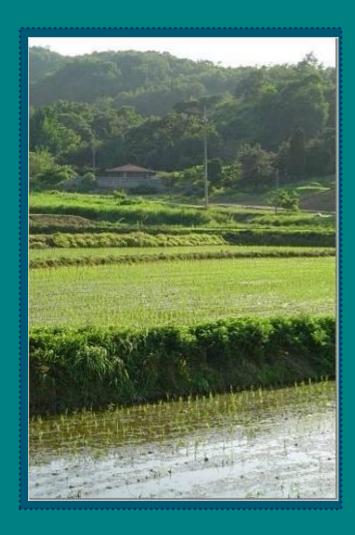
Lower right: Ed & Hwi-Ja Canda's relatives

### Finding a deep connection with nature...



Above: Mountains near Seoul

Right: Countryside



### Demilitarized Zone between N & S Korea





Top: In order to visit the DMZ tourists must pass through security.

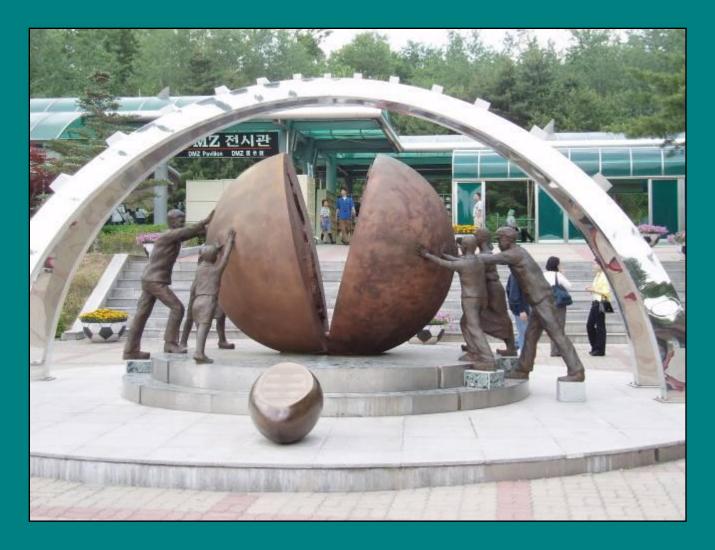
Left: A photo at the DMZ museum showing the agony of those separated from their families since 1953.

### The Two Koreas: Hope for Reunification



We visited a bridge-dividing N. and S. Korea- decorated with notes, flags, and other symbols representing the agony of separation and the hope for opening the border.



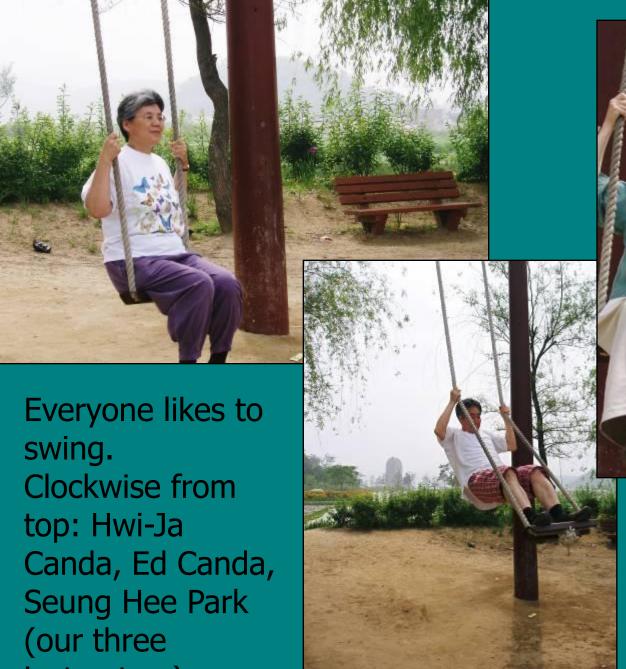


A sculpture at the DMZ representing the peace and unity the Korean people hope to restore to their country.



Gungnamji pond and pavilion were originally constructed by a Baekje king, near Buyeo, South Chungcheong Province.





instructors)

Baekje Dynasty (18 BCE – 660 CE) tomb mounds in Buyeo.



Left: Reconstructed tomb for Baekje royalty repatriated from China.



A statue of Maitreya Bodhisattva at Daejo temple, South Chungcheong Province.



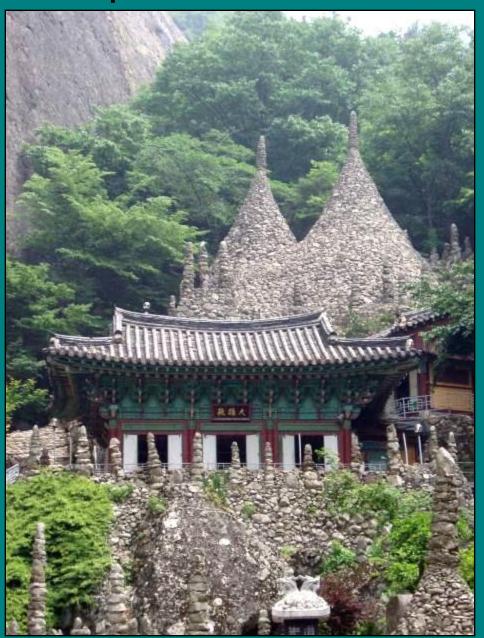
## Maisan (Horse's Ears Mountain)



North Jeolla Province

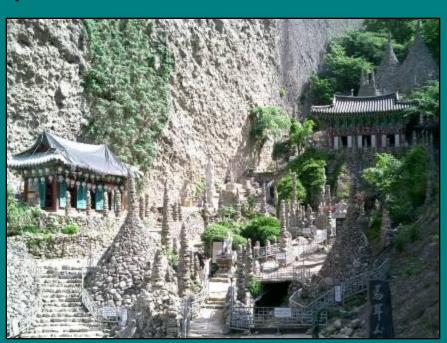
## Tapsa, Pagoda Temple at Maisan

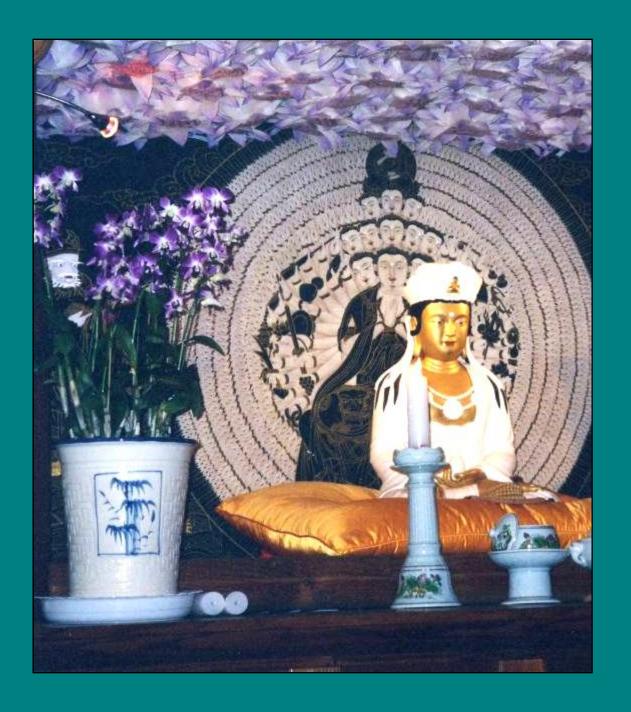
The stone towers were built by a Buddhist hermit under guidance of the Mountain Spirit, mostly in the early 1900s during the Japanese occupation. 108 were constructed to represent the hope for relief of human suffering. Only balance (no mortar) was used.



"When I stepped into this valley, I was completely overwhelmed with what I was seeing. It seemed completely incomprehensible to me how one man could build all of these pagodas. I stood in awe for a very long time, and as I was observing everything, I felt myself becoming empowered... I thought that if he could do this, why couldn't I do exactly what I wanted. I remember thinking about my possible future accomplishments. I have begun to investigate the Peace Corps or living in a big booming city."

-- Stephanie Hanson, BSW Student



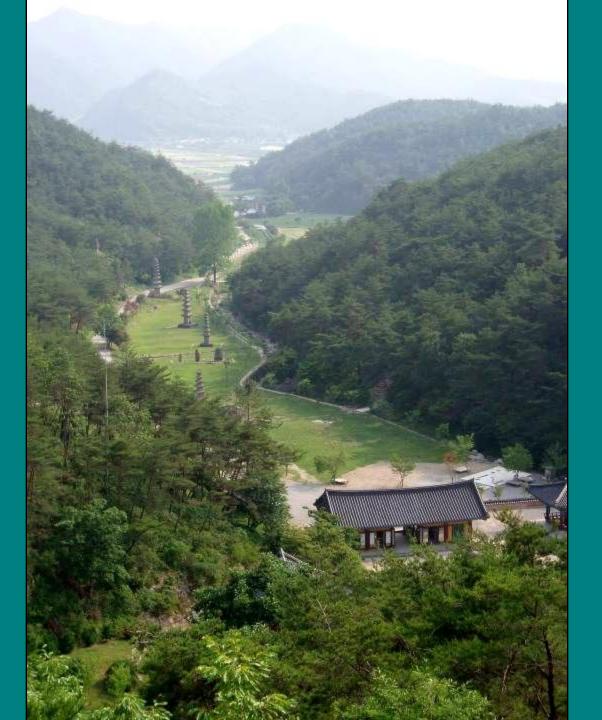


Gwanseum
Bosal (Kwan Yin),
who has
a calm mind,
many faces,
and one thousand
eyes
and hands.—

This is a Buddhist symbol of compassion toward all.

(Located at a temple in South Chungcheong Province.)



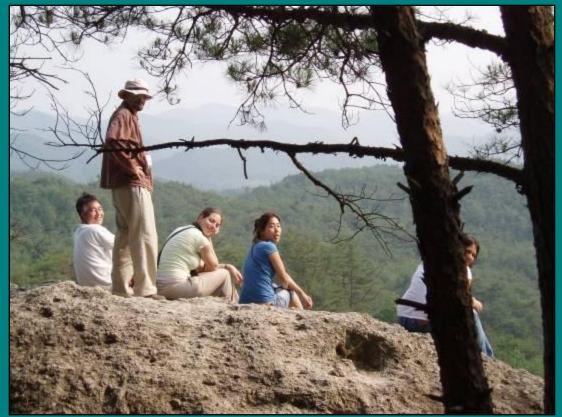


Unjusa Temple, Hwasun-eup, South Jeolla Province "A life changing experience that has helped me since coming home occurred at Unjusa when we were all sitting on separate stones and Ed was teaching us how to meditate and relax... Once I finally gave in to the practice my mind began to relax and I began to concentrate on things that really mattered. The process of meditation allowed me to recognize and appreciate the beauty and depth of what I was experiencing. I have used this technique since I have been home in stressful situations and it has helped me calm, focus, and see the big picture."

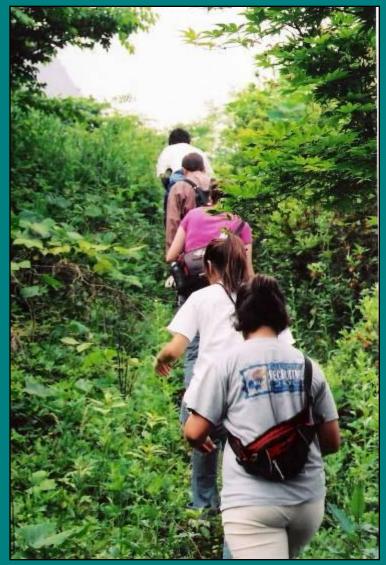
-- Stephanie Hanson, BSW student

"The Korean people are struggling with how this industrialized world is overpowering the traditional teachings and belief systems... When a society grows as rapidly as in Seoul, of course other social problems will arise. Younger people are less inclined to learn about their traditional ways and parents are less inclined to teach about them. In rural areas, I heard that the younger generation is moving to the cities to work so the elders are left to tend farms and take care of themselves."

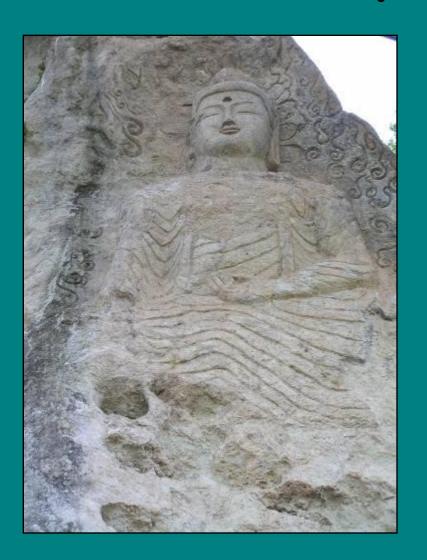
-- Amanda Blackhorse, BSW Student



Great views are best achieved with lots of walking, usually uphill and downhill.



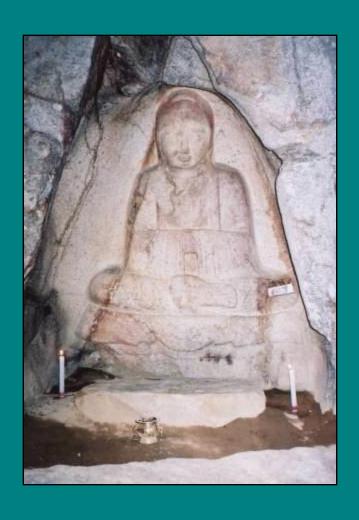
# Hike up Mt. Nam: Silla Dynasty Center of Temples and Sculptures, Gyeongju City, North Gyeongsang Province





We hiked up Namsan and explored various Buddhist carvings (pictured left) and shamanistic sites (pictured above)

### Namsan Region



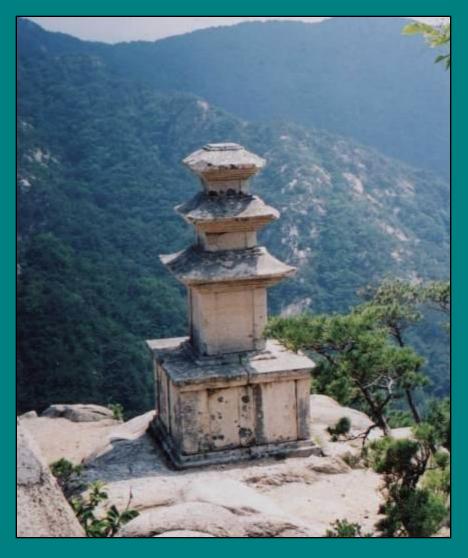


Silla royal tombs

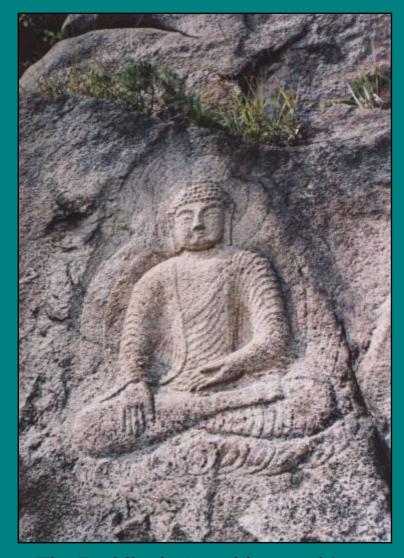
'Grandma' Buddha

"Professor Park explained how we can use our six senses to learn about nature and life in general. He told us that we first look at the mountain with our eyes to see its beauty. Next, we hear all the noises the mountain has to offer; we can hear six or seven noises at the same time if we listen carefully enough. Third, we smell all of the scents of the mountain. Then we can taste the mountain if we put bits of flowers and plants into our mouths. Fifth, we can touch the trees, rocks, and dirt on the mountain with our hands and feet. Finally, he explained that we can feel the mountain with our souls. This is how I believe I truly learned the important lessons of how to look and listen."

-- Amy Ruse, MSW student



Silla period pagoda



The Buddha in 'touching earth' pose, Silla period

#### Tongdo Temple, North Gyeongsang Province



Some principal buildings



Ceremonial percussion



Mountain spirit painting at minor shrine hall

### Christy Hansen, MSW Student

"The space for the temple is very beautiful itself, set up in the mountains, with a stream flowing by, children playing in the stream and families picnicking under the trees. The main temple is one of the most beautiful and spiritual places I have ever spent time in... Meditating there gave me such a sense of peace and tranquility. I just reflected on my relationship with God... I found the ability to focus on breathing, silence, peace, strength and intimacy with my Creator. This has been one of the most shaping experiences since I returned home. I spend time in the field outside our house most evenings, quiet, listening to the cicadas and wind and knowing my Creator."

### Professor Park Seung Hee's Calligraphy





Professor Park created a calligraphic Korean style name for each student. >





Chunhyang Ga Pansori, traditional Korean opera; arranged by Professor Park

### **Korean Food**

I have never been offered such a variety of side dishes before. I felt overwhelmed every time that we had a meal. Several things looked a little unusual, but tasted great. I am really glad that I had that exposure, especially to the gimchi!

--Rachael Opdyke, BSW Student



2003 dinner with Ed and Hwi-Ja's relatives. Kim Kyung Mee, Program Coordinator on right, middle

Walking through any market, you will see food that is so fresh it is leaping out of large plastic tubs and slithering away in a desperate effort to remain uneaten...after the vendors will run and catch it, you will realize they are offering it to you to taste, in its current REALLY FRESH condition. Koreans are amazingly generous people.

--Lauren Sullivan, MSW Student



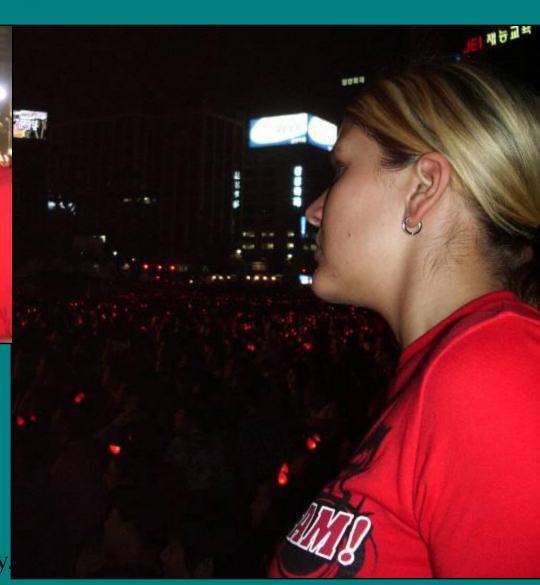
In the fish market



## **World Cup Fever: Nationalism through Sport (2006)**



Throughout the trip, the KAS group joined tens of thousands of Korean fans in cheering on their country in World Cup play. On game day, one could see Koreans of all classes, genders, and ages wearing red in support of their country.



### Some Concluding Thoughts



# Commitment to Cultural Awareness and Competence

- "This experience reaffirmed my desire to work with racially/ethnically diverse populations. I was fascinated with various aspects of Korean culture and how Koreans may behave differently than Americans. For example, the activity of spending time with friends or colleagues... Social appointments would last for hours and we were served elaborate and expensive meals. However, in America, most of my friends and coworkers would not spend nearly as much time or money on me."
- -- Andrea Pfeiffer, MSW Student

"It was amazing to be in Korea and realize we were observing relics from people and spiritual disciplines dating back over 400 years before Christianity... It would seem that the historical religions (such as Buddhism and Confucianism) are kept alive in not only the culture but in social service agencies and delivery... It was also interesting that (some Christian and Buddhist agencies) receive funding from the public sector but are run by the private sector."

-- Penny Dorado, MSW Student

"I hope that this experience of very great and obvious diversity will prepare me to work...as a social worker. I can also see the importance of looking at the spiritual well-being of a person... If spirituality is a central component to a person's life, it is essential to their dealing with difficulty. It may also explain or support where this client is coming from." - Rebecca Hurd, BSW Student

"Certainly this experience helped to improve my cultural competency skills. I think it was important for me to experience what it is like to go to a country with a different culture, religions, and language. It has helped me to further appreciate the hardships immigrants face when coming to the US."

-- Jamie Cole, MSW Student

"My travels and studies have been focused on Latin America... being exposed to South Korea and Japan was a much needed expansion of my mind and how I view the world... This program inspired me to participate in more active learning immersion throughout the world so I can better prepare myself to work with immigrants from around the world... I feel as though I could better serve Korean immigrants after participation in the KAS program as I have a better understanding of the culture and history... such as the influence of Confucianism, the concept of group and family identity, and resilience after experience of war."

-- Beth Chronister, BSW Student

### Comparative Reflections on Ethics, Religious Diversity, and Social Service

"There seemed to be differences among agencies regarding boundaries between religion and service delivery. Some religiously affiliated agencies did not inject religion while others did to varying degrees. Some have no religious component; others surround participants with religious iconography, doctrinal beliefs, and impose religious practices, regardless of clients' backgrounds. Others use religious principles (like fostering clear mind in a Won Buddhist agency) but do not impose specific beliefs on clients... My ethical concerns about some Korean organizations must come with a recognition that I am not from within Korean culture... I think Korean social workers and service providers should create their own culturally appropriate, mutually agreed upon code of ethics and government regulations to address these delicate considerations." - Brooke Nelson, MSW Student

"Korean approaches to social welfare may align more closely with collectivism (than in the USA), but at the same time I often perceived a strengths approach that seemed geared toward individual empowerment. The Differently Abled Federation was lobbying parliament on behalf of expanded opportunity for those with disabilities; the Korean Women's Development Institute did research...to break down barriers to women's advancement; the students with MRDD who were learning to package noodles in order to start their own business: these were all examples of the strengths perspective in action." – Lauren Sullivan, MSW Student

"It was interesting to find out about the creative ways that the shaman provided both practical and spiritual support for her 'clients.' Because as traditional social welfare practitioners we are often concerned with maintaining our agencies, perpetuating the profession and providing a menu of services, we often fail to look at and acknowledge the unique ways that communities can and do address social problems and strive to heal themselves."

-- Loretta Pyles, Ph.D. Student

"The general approach to social services (at the places we visited) in Korea is very holistic. For example, at the Senior Center in Seoul, we found people involved in things as varied as arts and crafts, cultural activities, haircuts, consumer credit counseling, gyms, and calligraphy, in addition to 'typical' services such as providing for people's basic needs, job training, referrals, health care, etc. At other agencies we encountered yoga, ping pong, foreign language classes, literacy education, a bath on wheels, and even burial services."

-- Zachary Colt, BSW Student

#### **Self-Awareness and Open Mind**

"I think this trip to Korea taught me a lot about myself, my own prejudices, beliefs, and values. It made me aware of how all human beings are interconnected despite our differences and how all persons around the world value the same things that I do such as family, spirituality, and the environment, and that our differences come in the expression of these values."

-- Jaima Barnes, BSW Student

"We were standing alongside a beautiful pond within a palatial compound. It was a beautiful spring day, and the pond was lovely-- willow trees overhanging, brightly colored fish swimming, birds calling from the trees. Prof. Park said, "Look at the reflection in the water. Do you see the sky?" I said yes, I could see it. "You don't know where the water ends and the sky begins. You can't tell if the fish is swimming through the water or the air. Everything is uncertain. Isn't it beautiful?" Prof. Park's awareness of the layers of beauty in the natural world will always stay with me and has helped me to see things I would not have seen before. What a profound gift!"

--Sherrie Watkins-Alvey, MSW Student

The best way to have a good experience on this trip is to keep an open mouth (for all kinds of food) and an open mind (for all the new experiences).

-- Lindsey Eppley, BSW Student

"...I am so glad that the group encouraged me to try new things because those were the most rewarding experiences of my entire trip... I now feel that if I were to meet a Korean client, I would know enough about his or her culture to make the client feel confident about my abilities. I certainly do not know as much as the client would, but it might be empowering if I asked him or her to teach me more."

Rachael Opdyke, BSW Student

### Top 5 Instructor's Lessons Learned

- 1) Selection criteria for participants should include value commitments in addition to standard academic qualifications, e.g.
- Cultural sensitivity and adaptability
- Professional demeanor





- 2) Prepare students in advance thoroughly
- Academically
- Group bonding
- Mutual expectations

- 3) Attend to interpersonal dynamics
- Group identity and mutual support
- Conflict resolution
- Fun
- Don't overcrowd the program
- Don't overstress the students





- 4) Be ready for surprises
- The best laid plans... (are always flexible)
- Educational moments
- Minor and major disasters
- Wonderful serendipity



- 5) Facilitate transformation in students and instructors
- Intensity of cultural immersion learning
- Linked to self-reflection
- Leading to clear implications for integration of insights and follow through later

### Concluding Insights

- Distinctive cultural and spiritual contexts of social welfare in South Korea
- Examining one's own values, beliefs, and practices through contrast
- Tapping diverse spiritual resources and helping approaches to enhance practice
- Mutual learning and collaboration across cultures, countries, and spiritual perspectives
- Toward a world wide view of spiritual diversity in social work

### Thanks to the KU Kansas Asia Scholars Program, especially Professor William Tsutsui!



### For Further Information

• See Ed Canda's website

www.socwel.ku.edu/canda

Especially links for

- Korean Studies
- His c.v. for publications related to East Asian, Asian-American, and international topics
- The Spiritual Diversity and Social Work Resource Center (including the gallery with many Korea related images)