

# *Korean Immigrants and Their Legacy in Baltimore*

1883 — 2024



Art by Sein Kim

## **Michelle Lee**

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미주한인재단-워싱턴  
Korean American Foundation  
- Greater Washington



## Art Contest for a Cover Page

*This contest will award prizes for a cover page design for the article entitled Korean Immigrants and Their Legacy in Baltimore 1883 — 2024.*

### Eligibility: Middle and High School Students

*Interested Students should read the paper Korean Immigrants and Their Legacy in Baltimore 1883 — 2024 first to create a cover page image design.*

1st place: Sein Kim, 8th Grade / Dunloggin Middle School in Ellicott City, Maryland



As I was reading the paper, I was reminded of the Esther Park monument that I had previously visited. So I placed the image of the couple in the center. I drew the woman playing the janggu on the left, reminding me of my younger sister, who is a member of the Lee Hee-kyung dance troupe. This week, as I imagined my younger brother wearing those clothes and going to the janggu dance, I felt proud that my family was also an important part of this immigrant history.

2nd place: Alice Shin, 11th Grade / Battlefield High School in Haymarket, Virginia



Reading this paper, I was grateful and deeply moved by the fact that there are people who are working to revive the history of Korean Americans which I was unaware of, and the history of immigration to Baltimore, which is gradually being forgotten. Even though the traces of Korean immigrant history remaining in Baltimore are minor, the process of preserving it and passing it on to the next generation has made me realize the importance and value of history again.

3rd place: Yenee Kim, 9th Grade / Albert Einstein High School in Kensington, Maryland



As a second generation Korean American, I am proud to call myself Korean in a country known for its diversity. However, it is until I read through each experience of the stronghearted Korean immigrants of the Baltimore area when I realized who it was that built this platform for the second/third generation Korean Americans to be able to thrive and experience these feelings of pride. I was especially impressed by the fact that Korean immigrants worked such difficult jobs while overcoming the language barrier, which inspired my artwork.

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## ***Korean Immigrants and Their Legacy in Baltimore***

### ***1883 – 2024***

#### ***1. Introduction***

This paper is a summary of the experiences of select individual Korean immigrants who came to Baltimore during the period 1883–2024 with a focus on the more recent period beginning c. 1970. We would like to preserve the unique stories of Koreans who immigrated to and lived in Baltimore before these stories are forgotten. Baltimore was once a popular destination of new Maryland immigrants beginning in the 1970s. Many Korean immigrants started businesses that typically included small grocery stores, laundries, carryout, auto repair shops, clothing stores and gas stations. Operating small businesses such as these allowed Koreans to make a living without advanced communication skills in the English language, without experience working in the U.S., and without degrees from U.S. institutions that larger businesses often required. To gain a firsthand understanding of the Korean immigrant experience in Baltimore, the Baik family and Ki Duck David Han were interviewed.

The Korean immigrant community in Baltimore City grew rapidly from the 1970s until the 1990s, after which urban flight led many Koreans to settle in surrounding counties, particularly Howard County. A cluster of Korean establishments still exist in the lower part of Charles Village and in the Station North Arts and Entertainment District.<sup>[a]</sup>

As of this writing (2024 November), most of the Korean people originally residing in Baltimore City are no longer living there. Within the city, however, a Korean cultural heritage was established and remains today. Baltimore’s “K-town,” or Little Koreatown is bounded by the Station North Arts District in north central Baltimore. Examples of the Korean cultural footprints in Baltimore City are discussed through cultural activities in the Station North Art District such as the Walking Tour-Historic Koreatown Landmarks and Korean Food (2024, 2023, 2019), three Bmore Seoul to Soul events in 2015, a Pop-up Koreatown event in 2016, and annual cultural events (Asia North) since 2019.

#### ***Korean Immigration to America***

After the first diplomatic mission called Bobingsa<sup>[b]</sup> established relations between the United States and the Joseon Kingdom (which became the Korean Empire in 1897) in 1883, a small group of Koreans (students and politicians) came to the United States. During this time, American Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries were able to convert many Koreans to Christianity, and also provided avenues for the Koreans to immigrate to America—almost half of the first group of Korean



[Korean Immigrants working at a sugar plantation in Hawaii, c. 1910.](#)

immigrants were Christians. Min Gyusu<sup>[c]</sup>, one of diplomat Min Yongik's<sup>[d]</sup> relative's unmarried daughters, and Esther Pak<sup>[e]</sup> were supported by Methodist missionaries as the first Koreans to reside in Baltimore.

The primary immigration of Koreans can be largely divided into three periods called waves. The first significant wave of immigration started in 1903, when the boat RMS Gaelic carrying the first 102 Korean immigrants arrived in Hawaii to work on pineapple and sugar plantations. By 1905, more than 7,000 Koreans (637 women, 465 children) traveled to Hawaii to escape famine and political instability in Korea. Later, Korean female immigrants moved to Hawaii and California as picture brides.

The second wave occurred between 1950 and 1964. After Korea was liberated from Japanese occupation in 1945, Korea was divided in 1948 into the South and the communist North. During the Korean War (1950-1953), about 15,000 Koreans moved to America. The McCarran and Walter Act of 1952 nullified the 1924 Asian immigration ban and made Asians eligible for citizenship. After the war, Korean wives of American soldiers, war orphans adopted by American families, and others migrated to the U.S. Most



Korean War orphans immigrating to the U.S.

of the war brides were initially required to live on military bases. The war orphans were mainly of mixed race having American servicemen as fathers. The others, mainly students, professionals, and academics, successfully integrated into American society.

The third wave followed the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act passed by the U.S. Congress and signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on October 3, 1965. Conditions in Korea and the 1965 Act caused massive numbers of Koreans to immigrate in the 1960s through the early 1980s.



The 1965 Immigration Act signed into Law by President Lyndon B. Johnson at Ellis Island. Photo by Yoichi Okamoto.

We hope this paper provides insight into the efforts of Korean immigrants in creating their homes, language, and overcoming cultural and language barriers they faced. In doing so, we hope that future generations will be proud Americans who will honor the strength and courage of earlier Korean Americans who have built a home within the greater American civilization. [1]

## 2. The First Koreans in Baltimore (1883 – 1900)

### Min Gyusu

The title of this section, Min Gyusu, means unmarried women of the Min family. In Korea, an unmarried woman or a married woman without children was not named in public records. The United States and the Kingdom of Joseon (Korea) engaged in their first official diplomatic interaction on May 22, 1882, when representatives of the two states signed a treaty of amity and commerce at Chemulpo, Korea.



Min Yongik, Joseon minister plenipotentiary.



Members of the Bobingsa mission before departure in 1883.



The first official Korean delegation to the United States, 1883. The fourth person from left in the first row is Min Youngik.

In 1883, the first 11-member Joseon government delegation of the Bobingsa was dispatched to the United States after the Treaty of Amity was signed in 1882. Some members of the royal Min family of Korea were among the delegation, including Min Yongik, who served as the head of the Bobingsa delegation. The founder of Goucher College, Rev. John Franklin Goucher, happened to be on the train carrying the delegation to New York City. As a result of discussions, one woman unnamed member (Gyusu) of the Min family, who was a maternal relative of the royal family, enrolled at Goucher College in 1885, which was a woman's college at the time. She became the first Korean to settle in the Baltimore area.

### ***Esther Pak and Yousan Pak***

In 1894, Esther Kim Pak (Korean maiden name Kim Jeomdong, age 19 at the time) and her husband Yousan Pak came to the United States to study medicine with the missionary doctor Rosetta Hall and her son Sherwood Hall <sup>[f]</sup>. Rosetta was pregnant with her deceased husband's daughter Edith Hall <sup>[g]</sup> at the time.

Kim Jeom-dong was the third of four daughters born on March 16, 1877 to her father Kim Hong-taek and her mother Lee who lived in Jeong-dong, Seoul. She was able to open her eyes to western culture relatively early on, as her father was employed to do housework for Henry G. Appenzeller (1858 -1902), an American missionary in Korea at the time. From 1885, Methodist missionaries used the area near Jeong-dong, where they lived, as a base for missions in Korea. They established the Ewha Hakdang school and mission. Mary Fletcher Scranton was the founder and first Principal of the school.

When Kim Jeomdong was 10 years old, she was admitted to Korea's first modern girls' school, Ewha Hakdang <sup>[h]</sup>, as the 4th student. Although her family was poor, her father opened his eyes to Western culture at an early age and had a strong passion for education. Kim Jeongdong was able to learn the Korean Bible and catechism at Ewha Hakdang as



Esther married Pak Yu-san, a 24 year old man, on May 24, 1893.



Dr. Rosetta Hall and Dr. William Hall

well as new studies such as arithmetic and English. When she was 12 years old, on Sunday, January 25, 1891, Kim Jeongdong was baptized by Reverend Franklin Ohlinger (1845 - 1919)<sup>[j]</sup> and was given the new name Esther.

About 130 years ago, Joseon women wore white cotton skirts and jackets, were poor, and did not even have names. Their lives were usually difficult, and they lived without knowing the future that would bring them hope. Strangers who brought the Christian gospel to Joseon women were Methodist female missionaries. One of the missionaries was Rosetta Sherwood Hall (1865-1951)<sup>[j]</sup>, who was called the mother of Pyongyang. Born in 1865 in Liberty, New York, USA, Rosetta graduated from Normal School in 1885 and worked as a teacher for a while, then entered Pennsylvania Women's Medical College the following year and graduated in 1889. After graduation, while working as a medical missionary in the slums of New York, she met William James Hall (1860-1894)<sup>[k]</sup>, who would later become her husband. Finally, in October 1890, she arrived in Joseon (Korea) as a Methodist female medical missionary.

In 1894, Esther and her husband Yousan Pak went to Pyongyang<sup>[j]</sup> with Dr. William J. and Dr. Rosetta S. Hall to support their pioneering missionary work in Korea. Esther Pak helped them as an interpreter and a nursing assistant. When they arrived in Pyongyang, it was a place where Christian persecution was severe. Esther experienced many difficulties and hardships upon her arrival, but she did an excellent job helping Rosetta's missionary work in Pyongyang for women and children. However, life in Pyongyang was not sustainable for the Pak's at that time. They returned to Hanyang<sup>[m]</sup> a month after arriving in Pyongyang.

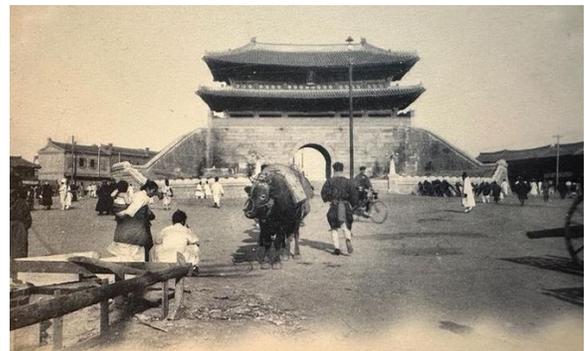
Dr. James Hall, Rosetta's husband, was a man of faith who was dedicated to the ministry entrusted to him. In October 1894, when the Sino-Japanese War was in full swing, he returned to Pyongyang for about a month. Without even having time to take care of himself, he contracted malaria while treating wounded soldiers. Afterwards, he quickly returned to Hanyang, but unfortunately, he was infected with typhus on board the ship. He never recovered, and died on November 24, 1894, with his beloved wife, Rosetta Hall, attending him.

Dr. Rosetta Hall, who was deeply saddened by her husband's death in the line of duty, decided to briefly return to the United States. At this time, Esther Pak expressed her long-held dream of studying medicine in the United States, and Rosetta Hall decided to



Higher mathematics class at Ewa Hakdang Girl's School, Seoul. c. 1908.

Photo: Methodist Church (U.S.)



Hanyang, Capital of Joseon (Korea), c.1908



Grave for Hall Family, added by Chris Nelson.

take her to the United States after receiving permission from the American Methodist Women's Overseas Mission and a promise of some financial support. After burying her husband, Rosetta departed for New York with her infant son Sherwood Hall, a daughter in her womb, Esther, and Esther's husband Yousan Pak in December 1894. Rosetta Hall oversaw the education of Esther Kim Pak, Korea's first female doctor of medicine who received her M.D. degree in 1900 at the Baltimore Woman's Medical College<sup>[n]</sup>.

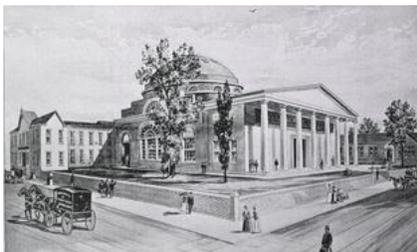
In 1896, Esther Pak applied to and was the youngest person to enter Baltimore Women's Medical College where she studied Western medicine. Her husband, Yousan Pak, married her in 1893. Yousan Pak died of pulmonary tuberculosis just 16 days before his wife graduated from medical school on April 28, 1900. Yousan Pak was buried at Lorraine Park Cemetery<sup>[o]</sup>, west of Baltimore.

Esther Pak was the first Korean woman to major in Western medicine and the first Korean woman to receive a U.S. medical license. She returned to Korea as a doctor in 1900. When Esther Pak arrived in Korea, she worked at Bogunyeogwan<sup>[p]</sup> Hospital, a women's hospital where she first met Rosetta Hall. Over 3,000 patients were treated by Esther Pak in the 10 months after returning to Korea. Tragically, she passed away at the young age of 34 due to pulmonary tuberculosis on April 13, 1910.

During her 10 years of practice as a medical doctor in Korea, she helped and guided Korean women who had not yet existed (in public records by name) to help them discover their own value. Kim Jeomdong became Dr. Esther Pak and as such became an inspiration to the women of Korea. [2] [3] [4]



The Grave Marker of Yousan Pak. A new stone with his wife Esther was installed beside the old marker by Korean contributors in 2018. Photo by Kichan Park on April 21, 2018.



Woman's Medical College of Baltimore, Copyright: The National Library of Medicine.



The late Mrs. Esther Kim Pak, M.D., c. 1900.



In 1887, Mary F. Scranton (1832-1909) and Meta Howard (1862-1930) established Korea's first women-only hospital, 'Bogunyeogwan', for Joseon women who still could not receive medical treatment due to the presence of male patients even when female doctors came.

### **3. The 1950s – 1960s**

After the defeat of Japan, the U.S. military was stationed on the Korean Peninsula and the U.S. military government was established. The migration of Koreans working for U.S. soldiers and diplomatic officials began. These people, who usually came for the purpose of studying abroad during or immediately after the Korean War, were women who had entered into international marriages with international students, doctors, and scholars who had earned degrees.

According to senior Koreans in the Baltimore area, there were a small number (10 to 20) of Koreans in the 1950s. In November 1945, immediately after liberation, Choi Je-chang arrived in Baltimore with nine other doctors for training at Johns Hopkins Hospital. According to the records of Eun-ho Bang, who immigrated to Baltimore in 1954, it is estimated that about 10 doctors including Dr. InBae Yoon, Dr. Henry H. Kwah, Dr. Hyun Shin, Dr. Baekhyo Shin, international students, interns, and residents lived in the Baltimore area at the time.

#### ***Dr. InBae Yoon (1936 – 2014)***

Dr. InBae Yoon was a Korean American inventor who believed that everyone is inventive. His love of inventing sparked his lifelong commitment to drawing, tinkering, and prototyping his ideas, which resulted in over 200 U.S. patents. Dr. Yoon was born in Korea in 1936 during the Japanese Occupation and grew up through the Korean War. He attended Yonsei University School of Medicine and graduated with his medical degree in 1961. Soon after, Yoon immigrated to Baltimore, Maryland where he conducted his internship and general surgical residency. During his residency, Dr. Yoon switched his training from general surgery to Obstetrics and Gynecology and became fascinated by laparoscopy — a method of surgery performed using a scope placed through a tiny incision in the body. At the time (1960s), this method was considered a new and risky surgery, but Dr. Yoon saw it as a safer technique with the benefits of shorter recovery time and less scarring. He strongly believed that even complicated surgeries could be performed this way. This conviction sparked a lifetime quest to invent new surgical devices.



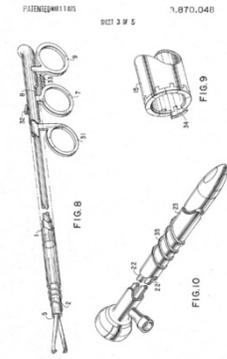
**Dr. InBae Yoon**

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office awarded Dr. Yoon's first patent in 1975 for the applicator device of the Yoon Ring ([US Patent 3,870,048](#)) Dr. Yoon could see further potential for the use of laparoscopy in many other types of surgeries beyond OB/GYN. He spent the next 30 years inventing laparoscopic devices for general surgery, including needles, sutures, clip appliers and trocars (a small tubular port through which keyhole surgery is performed).

Dr. Yoon worked independently until the late 1980s when he began his partnership with Johnson and Johnson's subsidiary Ethicon Endo Surgery. During this time, medical instruments and techniques for laparoscopy and endoscopy expanded widely, fulfilling Dr. Yoon's lifelong dream. Today, as he predicted, minimally invasive techniques are used regularly and are considered the safest option for many surgeries across multiple fields of medicine. After Dr. Yoon passed away in 2014, the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History collected many of his surgical instruments and prototypes, along with his personal/professional papers. [5] [6] [7] [8]



Dr. InBae Yoon performing laparoscopic surgery.  
Photo courtesy of Dr. Yue-Cheng Yang.



Dr. Yoon's first patent was for the Yoon Ring. Courtesy of USPTO, Mar. 11, 1975

### **Dr. Henry Hong Kwah (1927 – 2014)**

Henry Hong Kwah was born and raised in Seoul, South Korea. He attended Seoul National University after graduating from Kyungi High School. Upon graduation from Seoul National University Medical School in 1951, he became a medical officer in the Republic of Korea Army. During the Korean War, he served three years on the front line in a M.A.S.H. unit with the U.S. 1st Marine Division.

Dr. Kwah traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1954 for his medical internship at Deaconess Hospital. He then spent four years completing his postgraduate residency in general surgery at Maryland General Hospital (Baltimore), followed by additional training in cardiovascular and thoracic surgery at the University of Maryland Hospital. Dr. Kwah majored in Cardiology and Thoracic Surgery.

While Dr. Kwah was at the University of Maryland, he was deeply affected by his training and work with the late Dr. R. Adams Cowley, the "Father of Trauma Medicine" and founder of the country's first trauma center at the University of Maryland Medical Center. Since his retirement in 1995, Dr. Kwah had dedicated his lifetime of medical experience to his vision for a shock trauma system in South Korea, where trauma is the third most common cause of death and the leading cause of death for people under forty-five. His lifelong goal was for both Korea and America to benefit from the work on trauma medicine and advances of each other's medical systems. He fulfilled this dream when, in 2010, he was recruited to join the staff of Inje University Haeundae Paik Hospital in Pusan as a consultant in the design of its new, cutting-edge trauma center and later as the Center's Advisory Professor.

For more than thirty years (1965–1995), Dr. Kwah dedicated his career to Harford County, Maryland citizens and the medical community at Harford Memorial and Fallston General Hospital Surgical Clinic, and his private practices in Havre de Grace and Fallston. Dr. Kwah served as President of the Korean American Medical Association in 1988. He also taught at the University of Maryland School of Medicine's Department of Surgery. [9] [10]



Dr. Henry Hong Kwah



Inje University Advisory Professor Kwak Hong (Haeundae Paik Hospital Severe Trauma Center) contributed to the development of emergency medicine in Korea. In recognition of his dedication to the cause, he received a plaque of appreciation from the Korean Society of Emergency Medicine. Credit: Doctors News in Korea on Feb. 22, 2013.

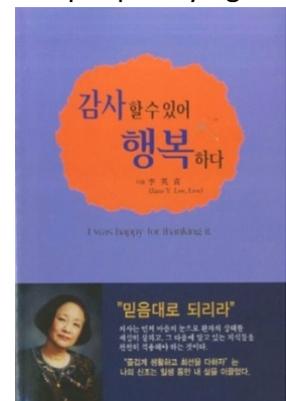
### ***Dr. Jane Younghee Lew (1928 – 2015)***

Dr. Jane Younghee Lew was born in Korea from a very wealthy and educated family. Her father was a lawyer during the Japanese colonial period between 1910–1945. After Korea was liberated from the Japanese, her father was considered pro-Japanese, and was criticized by some of Korean people. Mobs came and broke into their house. Even though her father worked in the Japanese regime, he tried to help Korean people. However, public opinion was at the time critical of people working for the Japanese colonial regime. Her father had to move the family out of the house and hide from the public. This stress eventually contributed to his becoming fatally ill. After his death, it became too dangerous to live in Korea with people trying to harm her own family, as she was treated as the daughter of a traitor.

Dr. Lew graduated from Sookmyung Women's University and Seoul Women's Medical School, the predecessor of Korea University School of Medicine. After graduating, she and her husband, Dr. Henry Hee-rin Lew, moved to America in 1954 to escape persecution in Korea. Dr. Lew completed her internship and residency at hospitals in Cincinnati and Baltimore. She served as President of the Korean Society of Maryland in 1977 to 1979, and 1985 to 1986. During the mid-1970s, when Koreans were immigrating in large numbers, new Korean immigrants experienced many difficulties with communication, since their knowledge of English was typically extremely limited. Individuals in Arirangchon (in Baltimore City), Essex, Dundalk, downtown Baltimore, Lansdowne, etc., tended to live in groups. This helped them to function in the U.S.. Dr. Lew visited fellow Koreans to provide free medical treatment.



**Dr. Younghee Lew**



**Dr. Jane Lew's  
autobiography.**

In June 2011, Dr. Jane Lew published her autobiography in Korean, entitled 'I'm Happy to Be Thankful,' which describes her days while growing up in Korea during the turbulent times from Japanese colonial rule to the Korean War and her life journey after leaving her country. In her career, she served as the President of the Maryland Korean Medical Association and the Treasurer of the Baltimore City Korean Affairs Committee. She founded a Korean Service Center and a Korean Senior Center, which helped senior citizens who used to gather at bus stops to speak with fellow Koreans in Baltimore. She hosted the Maryland Korean Day event for the first time and did her best to promote Korea and the Korean community in the United States. She also served as the President of the Baltimore Multicultural Council, representing 50 local ethnic groups. She was very active, always helped the Korean community, and influenced countless Korean people.



At the Korean Ambassador's residence in Washington D.C, 1988, with Dr. Lew on the left. Photo provided by Mrs. Baik.

Mrs. Seong Ok Baik, a Korean immigrant who came to Baltimore, served as chief of staff in 1978 and 1985 at the Korean Society of Maryland after Dr. Lew was elected as President. At that time, Dr. Jane Lew would even drive to Ocean City late at night and was happy to provide free medical treatments. She enjoyed having a 'Younghee Lew Soprano Night' with her beautiful voice,



Dr. Lew and Mrs. Baik at the Korean Festival at the Hopkins Plaza in 1988. Photo provided by Mrs. Baik.

painting with her younger sister who is an artist. Dr. Lew understood that business people are earning and spending more than she could as a medical doctor. Dr. Lew wanted to earn more to be able to donate more money for the community. She purchased the Hyundai Plaza Building (1910 N. Charles, Baltimore) and opened a restaurant "Myeongdong Kalguksu". Her office, restaurant, and an upstairs Karaoke was housed in the building. However, it did not work as well as she hoped. In 2013, the Korean Society of Maryland gave her the 'Proud Korean American Award' for her lifelong contributions to community.

When Dr. Jane Y. Lew passed away in 2015, Mrs. Baik wrote an article (Korea Times, Washington D.C., April 25, 2015) about her memories. In the article, Mrs. Baik wrote that "The many gems of advice she gave me while working with her from the early days of immigration are what I am today as well. It was an opportunity for me to join the organization [Korean Society of Maryland] for a long time." Mrs. Baik also wrote about Dr. Jane Lew's father (lawyer Lee Seung-woo). "During the Japanese colonial era, she [Dr. Lew] enjoyed wealth and fame as the daughter of a Korean lawyer, but in the year of liberation on August 15, 1945, her father was accused of being pro-Japanese. Her father had to move from one



Hyundai Plaza Building, purchased by Dr. Lew. Photo by Ed Gunts (2024).

opium den to another to prevent being killed by accusing Korean people. As a result, he became ill and died.” In memory of Dr. Jane Younghee Lew, Mrs. Baik said that she was a mentor in her life, and that she always treated her with a bright smile. [11] [12] [13] [14] [15]

#### 4. 1970 to Present

During the modern period from 1970, many Koreans came to Baltimore. There are several exceptional people that are worthy of remembering. They are Seong Ok Baik (introduced in the previous section), Junbin Baik, Ki Duck David Han, and Inwook Ben Hur. To gain a better understanding of the Korean immigrant history in Baltimore, interviews were conducted with the Baik family including Seong Ok and Ki Duck David Han. Information was also provided by Mr. Hur.

#### *Junbin and Seongok Baik*

Mr. Junbin Baik was the son of [the painter Yoonmoon Baik \(1906-1979\)](#). Yoonmoon Baik, who is also known by his artist name Hyangdang, was a renowned painter, who painted the portrait of King Soonjong. Hyangdang came from a family of painters. His father owned an herbal medicine shop. Junbin Baik graduated from Dongguk University with a degree in Economics. With his background and education, Mr. Baik was able to work as an officer in Samwhan Corporation, which later became one of the major construction companies in South Korea. He married Seongok in 1968.



Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Baik, August, 2024. The interviewer was Joanna Chang, U. of MD student.



향당종필 백윤문 건곤일척



향당종필 백윤문 응시 癸卯



향당종필 백윤문 분노

[Hyangdang Yoonmoon Baik \(1906-1979\), c. 1946, and 3 of his paintings.](#)

Seongok Baik graduated from Seoul Girls Commercial High School and worked at the Bank of Korea Headquarters in Seoul before her marriage. After the Korean War (1950-1953), Korea was left in a devastating state. It was a poor country, and to pursue their dreams, the Baik family, along with their two children, immigrated to the United States in 1975. Due to the impoverished state of Korea, each immigrant was allowed to take only \$200. After the war, South Korea's economy struggled, and the monetary value dropped, making it difficult for the country to provide sufficient funds or exchange them for American currency when moving to the United States.



Mrs. Baik (right) and co-worker at the Bank of Korea, Seoul, S. Korea, c. 1967.

When they immigrated to the U.S., their life and their social class was not the same as it was in Korea. In a new country with a foreign language, the Baik family had to adjust to a new environment, constantly struggling with the emotional burdens, language barriers, and cultural differences. According to a recent interview with Mrs. Baik in 2024, when she was working at Morgan Millwork Building American workers were spraying air freshener in the elevator after Korean workers used the elevator. She thought that it was discrimination against Korean workers. Later, she complained to the manager, but she learned that Korean workers brought lunch with Kimchi, a popular Korean cabbage based food with a strong garlic smell. That smell lingered in the elevator but was not considered unusual by the Koreans. Mrs. Baik advised the Korean workers not to bring Kimchi for lunch and explained the situation to her manager.

In the experience of the Baik family, the transition from an upper class life in Korea to a lower class life in America led to difficult moments during their journey toward the American dream. The change in their social status was evident as it affected their everyday lives. In Korea, Mr.

Baik was a leader in a respected company, and Mrs. Baik worked at a bank. But in the U.S., their

jobs were drastically different. Focusing specifically on Mrs. Baik, she claimed that she found herself doing manual labor, working as a maid, in a sewing factory, and as a cashier in a grocery store—tasks that felt far removed from her former professional life.



Mr. Junbin Baik and Mrs. Seongok Baik, provided by Mrs. Baik, c. 2002.

The many challenges encountered by Korean immigrant struggles are best understood from the point of view of immigrants such as the Baiks. Mrs. Baik expressed her shame and embarrassment at the shift from her professional life in the United States. The realization that she has voluntarily stepped down from

her economic class, along with the demands of her busy schedule affecting her role as a mother, weighed heavily on her heart. On top of the emotional burdens that followed with the migration, the language barrier can be a significant restriction. It forced individuals to navigate and communicate effectively relying solely on their judgment and the ability to read social cues in their work setting.

When Mrs. Baik immigrated to the United States, she found work at the Morgan Millwork Building on 131 W. North Ave., a sewing factory with a workforce consisting of 20% Koreans, 30% Chinese, and the rest American workers. She had no prior sewing experience



Morgan Millwork Building on 131 W. North Avenue, Baltimore, c. 1970.

before joining the company. Despite her lack of skills, she worked as many hours as she could and took on additional assignments to increase her income, claiming to have worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week. The pay for the labor was low, and as immigrants they had to start with limited financial resources. However, this was their gateway to a more stable and sustainable life.

Overwhelmed by the desire to provide for her family, she often felt fatigued and physically exhausted. This led her to prioritize work over family, creating a significant imbalance in her life, a heavily skewed balance towards her work life. She expressed her guilt [during an interview in 2024] and shame over the lack of love she was able to give her children as they grew up in the United States. Given the responsibility that arises from being a mother, she felt that she could not fulfill her responsibilities and expressed her heartfelt sorrow of neglecting her children.



Mrs. Baik's 50th wedding anniversary (2016, left) and with her 2 grandsons in Korea, 2018.

Mrs. Baik served as an assistant for Dr. Jane Younghee Lew while Dr. Lew was serving as President of the Korean Society of Maryland. She was inspired by Dr. Lew's passion for community service when she was working for her. Mrs. Baik founded and was the 7th, 17th, and 18th



Korean Way (route 40 west of U.S. 29) dedication on December 20, 2016. Photo by Heekyung Bae. Mrs. Baik is wearing a traditional Korean dress.



Governor Larry Hogan awarded a commendation to Seongok Baik as a Korean community leader on August 8, 2018. Credit: Changyul Lee

President of the Korean Womens Golf Association of Maryland. She served as the 34th and 35th President of the Korean Society of Maryland (2016-2019). She worked to designate a portion of Route 40 through Ellicott City as the "Korean Way" and was honored for her service to the community by Governor Hogan of Maryland in 2018. She was featured as one of the list of the

Year 2020 for the profiled "Year of the Howard County Women".

As President of the Korean Society of Maryland, Mrs. Baik was responsible for organizing annual Korean Festivals that could have as many as 40,000 attendees. The festivals celebrated Korean culture and featured food, entertainment, and culturally based activities for all ages. Attendees could try on traditional Korean clothing, engage in children's art contests, and enjoy a variety of Korean traditional games.

Mr. Junbin Baik served the community until 1988 as Chairman of the Korean Community Center Building Management Committee, Korean Volunteer Center Director, Citizens' Association Director, Director of Korean Language School, 12th President of the Korean Baltimore Businessmen's Association, Baltimore Business Association Election Commissioner, a Baltimore Business Association Scholarship Committee Member, and Vice President of the Korean American Federation of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He was elected as the 17th President of the Korean Society of Maryland (1988 – 1989). He was also selected as a Chairperson of Mayor Kurt Schmoke's Committee on Korean Affairs in 1988.



Ceremony at the 40th Korean Festival at Centennial Park in Ellicott City on Sep. 16, 2017. Photo by Heekyung Bae.

Mr. Baik also worked to help Maryland Governor William Donald Schaeffer pass the Maryland Korean driver's license test into law, which has provided benefits to Korean residents in Maryland by allowing them to take the Korean driver's license test to this day. While Mr. Baik was the 17th President of Korean Society of Maryland, he and other Korean business associates bought a building on 27 E. North Avenue, Baltimore, MD in 1985 for use as their office. They sold the building in 2008 and purchased a new location for the Korean Society of Maryland's office condo suite 206 at 9256 Bendix Rd. in Columbia, MD (October 2008 – present). During Mrs. Baik's tenure, she paid off the mortgage. [16] [17] [18].



Junbin Baik (right) with Mayor Kurt Schmoke at City Hall, 1988.



Mr. Baik and Maryland Governor Schaeffer shake hands in 1988.



Korean Festival at Hopkins Plaza in Baltimore City organized by Mr. Baik and the Korean Society of Maryland in 1988.

### ***Ki Duck David Han***

David Han, born on August 1, 1955, in Seoul, South Korea, is a first-generation immigrant who came to the United States in 1972. He immigrated with his family Tal Han (father), Kye Han (mother), and 3 children in search of educational opportunities and the American dream. The early life of Mr. Han in South Korea and his later relocation to Baltimore shaped his journey as both an entrepreneur and a community advocate.

Arriving in Baltimore at age 17, David and his family were facing some of the common challenges that most immigrants usually face: language problems, sociocultural adjustment issues, and issues of job security. His primary challenges included the learning of the English language, finding low-cost housing, and settling into a new community. He has described his life Korea as a comfortable middle class life. After his arrival in the U.S., however, one of his most important issues was mastering English. During his time as a student at Woodlawn High School, native speakers tended to treat him as a mentally impaired person, since he had difficulty expressing his thoughts in English. At Woodlawn, while playing football, competitors within the school would frequently tackle him with an extra degree of roughness. His treatment by students actually motivated him to study hard and do well in school.

The school system in Baltimore did offer him and his siblings special English sessions during summer vacation which was a major help. He and his family met people from a congregation of the Jehovah's Witnesses organization during this time. They were very welcoming to the family and genuinely cared for them as they transitioned to American life. They became steadfast friends. Notwithstanding these challenges, David's determination and keenness for education saw him through these early hurdles. He



David Han's parents and his siblings lived in Seoul in 1972. David Han is behind at left. His treatment by students actually



David Han (left) and his family, 1995.  
Provided by David Han.

graduated from Woodlawn in 1975. He won a minority scholarship into the University of Maryland Baltimore County and later graduated with a degree in Accounting from the University of Baltimore in 1979. Later in his life, he was also able to obtain a Master of Bibliology degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2015.



Mr. Han and Triple C employees inside the warehouse, 2000.  
Credit: Triple C.

After graduation, he decided to establish Triple C Wholesalers, Inc. at Gay Street and North Ave. in Baltimore City, a supplier to serve the many Mom and Pop Korean grocery stores existing in Baltimore City at the time. He was able to do this by purchasing a building at that corner in the City. He was able to operate the business for 15 years at this location before having to move out of the city in order to expand his warehouse. During his 15 years, he frequently visited his customers as a sales representative and driver's assistant. There were about 328 grocery stores owned by Koreans in the city according to the Asian –American News on January 1, 1986, he considered the owners to be his friends. He got to know them well, so he would frequently lunch with them, join with them in a Korean savings club called 'Gyemoim'<sup>[9]</sup>. They would also attend the same church and would often discuss problems encountered by his store owning customers such as gun violence. The biggest threat to his business and his customers was crime by primarily African American people in Baltimore City. He was robbed several times during his deliveries to the local stores he served. Some of the employees of his supply business would also steal from the business.

During this time when there was tension between the Korean convenience store owners and the African American population in Baltimore, David Han addressed these challenges by initiating programs that would foster dialogue and intercultural understanding. He met with African American pastors of churches and other leaders of the black community and organized cultural exchange visits to South Korea to develop understanding and respect for each other. He also promoted a visit to Baltimore area black churches by Pastor Yoo Chunjong from Kwanglim Church, a large church in Seoul, South Korea. These efforts made a big difference in the relationship between the Korean and African American community in Baltimore. When problems did arise, the two communities would pray together for solutions. His involvement in other activities in the community, such as sponsorship of the Baltimore Inner City Mission and logistics arrangements for it, reflected how committed he was to bridge gaps in societies and ensure the welfare of



New location of the KSM condo office building in Columbia, Maryland.

the underprivileged.

He also served as the 29th President of the Korean Society of Maryland (2006–2008). Relocation of the Korean Society of Maryland office from Baltimore City to Howard County was a major and costly task. He had to give up a major part of the building value to allow the sale to proceed. His contribution was a large part of funding required for the relocation that was also supported by other Korean business owners. During his term, local TV news stations frequently came to him for any Korean related incidents for news coverage. He was able to provide the perspective of the Korean Community to news stories. When a Korean Naval Ship came to the Baltimore Inner Harbor, he and other Korean community members sponsored a major celebration with Korean cadets in Martin West.

Survival and eventually growth of his business was difficult in the early days. He was so busy that he did not have the time to be homesick for his native Korea. Friends from church proved to be a crucial support group. During the first 6 months of his wholesale business, he had to sleep in the warehouse since he could not afford security. He frequently had to borrow money from his customers to survive. Eventually, when he needed more capacity, as related above, he decided to sell the warehouse and move to Baltimore County in 2008. Currently, he still serves many small stores in Baltimore. Almost all of the Korean owners have moved out of the city due to retirement and a general movement of Koreans to the suburbs. The Korean owners have been replaced by owners of Indian, Pakistani, and Arab descent.



Korean Festival during Mr. Han's tenure as the 29th President of The Korean Society of Maryland.

The formation and proper running of Triple C Wholesalers, which he started in 1981, is David Han's biggest success. He has been very influential with regard to his business acumen and community-oriented approach. Some of the prestigious awards for his contributions include the Maryland Governor's Citation, Baltimore City Mayor's Citation, and the Korean War Veterans' Citation. He also received the award [Candy Hall of Fame Class of 2019](#) by the National Candy Sales Association (NCSA), for which

NCSA selects only 10 people worldwide. [He was elected as the 15th Congress Chairman of the Korean Christian Business Men's Connection of North America in 2023.](#) These recognitions define his business acumen as well as initiatives towards the betterment of the Korean-American community through inter-community understanding and educational programs at the local level.

[19] [20] [21]



David Han at an NCSA event, 2019.



David Han at an event, 2023. Credit: KCBMC.

David Han's son Philip Han says that "I didn't think it was cool to eat Korean food, because none of my friends at school were eating it. I'd bring McDonald's into these Korean restaurants in Station North where we were eating as a family. My mom, her name is 'Ok' represents the last of a generation of Korean cooks, where cooking was taught and passed down from family to family." These days, Philip Han very much appreciates the foods of his heritage. Philip Han wanted to go into the restaurant business. He opened 'Dooby's' on 802 N. Charles St. in Baltimore, which is a Korean fusion café. This was his first restaurant business, launched in 2013. Philip Han didn't think Baltimore was ready for kimchi fried rice or pork burns when the café first opened. Introducing Korean cuisine to the wider world through Dooby's has been a joy for Philip Han. [22]



Philip Han and his mother Ok Han, photo by Christopher Myers.

### ***Inwook Ben Hur***

Mr. Hur was born on March 13, 1952, in Buk-myeon, Cheonan, South Chungcheong Province, Korea, as the youngest of four children. He came to Chicago in 1981, then in the following year he moved to Baltimore. He studied to obtain a master's degree in lifelong education at Coppin State University Graduate School in Baltimore, Maryland. He later received an honorary doctorate in humanities from Eastern Theological Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia.



2508 Maryland Ave., Charles Village, Baltimore

He operated the advertisement and printing service business company 'Kor-In-More, Inc.' between 1985 – 2004 in Baltimore City. He resided at 2508 Maryland Ave. in the Baltimore City area known as Charles Village. He served a member at large as a Board member in the Charles Village Community Benefit District (CVDBD) organization <sup>[r]</sup>.

He worked as a Special Projects Coordinator, Administrative Office, 8th Circuit Court, Maryland, U.S. (Baltimore City) from 2004 until he retired in 2017. He also served on the police advisory committee and served for 10 years (1994 – 2004) as the Baltimore Community Relations Commissioner appointed by the 47th Mayor of Baltimore Kurt Schmoke, as the 30th President of the Korean Society of Maryland (2008 – 2010), and as the 6th President of the Korean American Foundation – Greater Washington (2012 – 2014). He is a founder of the American Saemaueul Movement. He received the U.S. Presidential Service Award (Gold) in 2015 and the Korean Presidential Award as one of 35 awardees at the 10th World Korean Day Award for his contribution to overseas Koreans on October 5, 2016.



Mr. Hur and his family, 2014



Mr. Hur and Mr. Conaway in 2011, provided by Mr. Hur.

Mr. Hur ran for Vice Mayor of Baltimore in Frank M. Conaway's Mayor race in 2011. Frank M Conaway Jr.<sup>[q]</sup> had a close relationship with the Korean community for over 10 years. He allowed 16 Koreans to work at the Baltimore City Circuit Court, so that each department had Koreans working there that could help Korean American citizens when needed.

Mr. Hur has two sons and one daughter. His eldest son, Benjamin, who also served as President of the Asia Pacific Bar Association, is currently a general counsel at Apple, and his younger son and daughter are federal civil servants. He authored the books *Troublemaker Dad* (2016) and *Jesuit Dad* (2020) and co-authored *The Korean History in the Baltimore Area 1883 – 2004*. He retired at the age of 65 in 2017, and then organized and taught at the Senior Mission Society School to many seniors who wished to gain vitality and vision in their lives.



Mr. Hur published the book *Jesuit Dad* in 2020.

Mr. Hur confessed, "I was a poor international student, worked in the media, and retired as a civil servant in Baltimore City. Even though I don't have any money saved, my children are all grown up and doing their part in mainstream American society, so now I want to spend the rest of my life in ministry for myself and God." [23] [24] [25] [26]

### 5. Korean Cultural Heritage in Baltimore

Before 1969, roughly 200 Koreans were residing in Baltimore. As the immigration door opened, many Koreans began to arrive in the Baltimore area for employment through Jewish immigration broker Dolly Cohen. In the 1980s, according to the population census, the Korean population in Baltimore City was estimated at 1,775. The Korean immigrant community in the city reached its peak from the 1970s until the 1990s. As Koreans became established in Baltimore, they began to accumulate wealth. This allowed them to begin moving to the suburbs of Baltimore in search of a good living environment for their children, such as Ellicott City in Howard County, Timonium in Baltimore County, and Glen Burnie in Anne Arundel County. Despite the gradual exodus of Koreans from the city, Korean cultural heritage has remained. The Station North Arts District in north central Baltimore is still home to several popular Korean restaurants. This neighborhood is known as Baltimore's Koreatown. Landmarks in this area include Korean

#### Station North Arts District Signs



Photo by Perrelli Fine Art & Design

restaurants such as Joung Kak and Be-one, Nam Kang, The Crown and Kong Pocha (old Nakwon), the large mural of the face of the first owner of the Seoul Rice cake shop, the Korean Senior Day Care Center, and Lovely Lane Church.

Station North was the first area in Baltimore to receive the State designations as an Arts & Entertainment district in 2002. Later changed to [the Station North Arts District](#) (SNAD). spanning the neighborhoods of Charles North, Greenmount West, and Barclay, Station North is a diverse collection of artist live-work spaces, galleries, row homes, and business, all just steps away from Penn Station, Mount Vernon, Charles Village, the Maryland Institute College of Art, the University of Baltimore, and Johns Hopkins University. The SNAD is exemplified by a thriving and diverse arts ecosystem, driven by a vibrant, multidisciplinary and evolving creative community. There are now 22 Arts & Entertainment Districts in Maryland, and similar programs in dozens of states. Station North continues to serve as a national model for Arts & Entertainment Districts. Station North Arts District is a proud part of the Central Baltimore Partnership organization. [27]

### ***Korean Cultural Community Activities in the Station North Arts District***

[The Maryland Institute College of Art](#) (MICA) has been active in the community using art to explore local talent and teach art. Aletheia Shin '15 (Community Arts MFA) designed and facilitated the Onngi (earthenware) Project. The Onngi Project connects Korean immigrants to the world they live in now, while also raising awareness of the longstanding, yet untold presence of the Korean Community in Baltimore. Shin's work on [the Onngi Project](#) with Korean seniors at the Greenmount Senior Center led to the creation of Pop-Up Korea Town in 2016, a three-day Pop-up exhibition event in Station North in which community seniors' Onngi vessels were showcased.



Korean seniors at the Greenmount Senior Center participated in the Onngi Project, photo by Aletheia Shin

Aletheia Shin joined up with Michelle Lee in 2015, a senior accountant in MICA's finance office and Ben Stone, Executive Director of the Station North Arts and Entertainment District, Inc., to create "[The Bmore Seoul to Soul](#)" series of activities, a combination of Korean and African American song and dance performances meant to bridge cultural gaps in the diverse community in Baltimore. In the aftermath of the Baltimore Uprising on April 27, 2015, relationships between Korean Americans and African Americans had soured, with many Korean shop owners having experienced damage to their businesses as a result of the rioting. The rioting was sparked by the April 19, 2015 death of Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old black man who died of a spinal cord injury while in police custody. The police personnel involved in his arrest and transport were later acquitted of all charges.



Posters designed by Kimi Hanauer

In 2016, Pop-Up Koreatown began as a collaboration between local Korean and Korean American artists and Korean business owners in Station North. Pop-Up Koreatown created space and dialogue about the history, culture, identity and race in the context of the Korean diaspora (Koreans living outside Korea) through the presence of the Korean community woven into the social fabric of Station North. Pop Up Koreatown was directed by artist Aletheia Shin, with many collaborating artists from MICA. Pop-Up Koreatown was a part of [Artscape](#)'s "In the Neighborhood" program in 2016, supported by the [Awesome Foundation](#) and the Launching Artist in Baltimore Award, Maryland Institute College of Art. Local businesses participated by allowing the use of their wall and floor space to display works of art and paint wall murals that involved Korean folk art.



Graphics by Aletheia Shin, Photo by Paul Kim



Graphics by Aletheia Shin, photo by Paul Kim

The artist GAIA '11 (MICA) has also been intrigued by the relationship between Korean Americans and others. He is most interested in the interactions between African Americans, Korean Americans, and the artist community, which he says is predominantly white. One way he has explored that dynamic is by working with Korean Americans on murals painted on the walls of Korean-American stores.

Mina Cheon '99 (Hoffberger MFA, MICA), a faculty member at MICA, along with Gabriel Kroiz, chair and associate professor of Undergraduate Design for Morgan State University's School of Architecture and Planning, co-own a studio building at 100 W. 22nd Street called K-Town Studios located in Baltimore's 'Little Korea.' K-Town Studios gives local artists a space to produce art and design projects that are showcased from Baltimore to Korea.



'Frontiers' Open Walls Baltimore 2, painted by GAIA, photo by GAIA

MICA's Korean International Student Association (KISA) was awarded a MICA Hoi Grant to present the MICA Korean Film Festival Seek Series 2016, 2017, and 2018. The Korean Film Festival featured MICA KISA and MICA Faculty art exhibitions, Korean movies, short films, Korean movie music performances and Korean Traditional performances. SEEK is an acronym for See Korean [Movies]. These Korean Film Festivals were organized to motivate MICA Korean Students and community members to engage in community cultural activities.

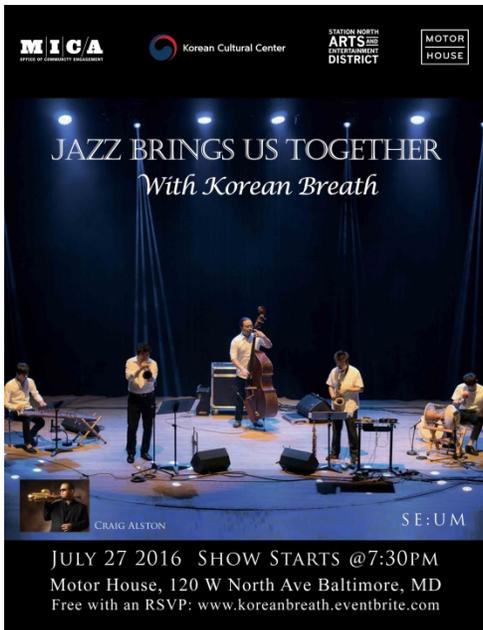


K-Studio building, photo by Will Holman

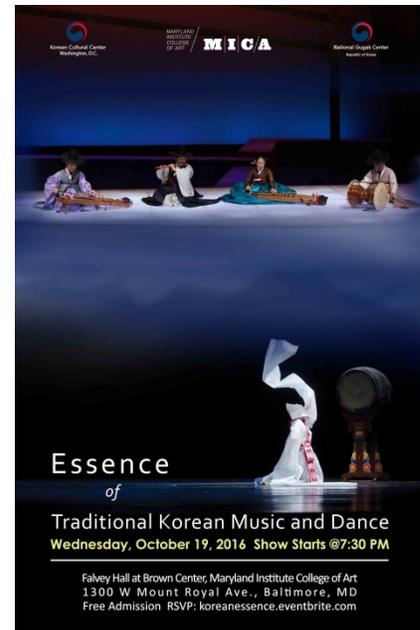


SEEK movie festivals held at the Maryland Institute College of Art for students and the local community. Poster designs by Jenny Jung and Jeena Kim.

Maryland Institute College of Art also supports the community activity in Station North Arts District, including many Korean performances at MICA and Station North Arts District. Events have featured a fusion of Western jazz, Korean jazz, and traditional Korean music Gugak, Korean Traditional Hanbok (clothing) workshops, and a Hanbok seminar collaboration with The Hanbok Advancement Center in Seoul. Many Baltimore residents enjoyed performances by Korean [National Gugak Center](#)'s folk music master artists in [Falvey Hall at Brown Center](#) and the World Music Group [SE:UM](#) with collaborating Baltimore musicians such as saxophonist Craig Alston and his Ensemble at [Motor House](#) on North Ave. in Baltimore. Audiences had unique experiences of traditional Korean music and contemporary jazz featuring top Korean and American Baltimore artists.



The group SE:UM (Korea) and Baltimore musicians performed at the Motor House on North Avenue in Baltimore.



Korean National Gugak master artists performed in Falvey Hall at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), hosted by MICA President Sammy Hoi, in 2016.



Hanbok Seminar Feb 9 -11, 2018 at MICA Lazarus Center.  
Photo by Brandon Campbell.



Summer Hanbok Course at MICA, student exhibition at Brown Center, June 2019. Credit: Brandon Campbell

The Korean Cultural Center in Washington, D.C. continued its regional outreach through a free series of milestone films at Parkway Theatre (5 W North Ave, Baltimore, MD 21201), in partnership with the Maryland Film Festival. Jed Dietz (former Executive Director, Parkway Theater and Maryland Film Festival) and Jangsoo Suh (Korean Cultural Center, Korean Embassy) agreed to have K-Movie screening at the Parkway after several meetings in 2017. Beginning in April 2018, the Parkway Theater started to present Korean movies once a month as an ongoing Korean Movie screening program. The series ended due to the Covid Pandemic. The movie Masquerade (광해: 왕이 된 남자) was screened as the last K-Movie at the Parkway theater in February, 2020. Nearly twenty K-Movies were screened at the theater, including “New World”, “JSA” and “A Taxi Driver”. [28] [29] [30]



The SNF Parkway Theatre is located at the corner of North and Charles Street. This theater, which first opened its doors on Oct. 13, 2015, has undergone several renovations, rebrandings, and rebirths over the decades. Photo by Maggie Jones



Korean Movie Nights at the Parkway Theater, offering free screenings of Korean films to the Greater Baltimore community. Photo by Michelle Lee



New World was featured as the first K-Cinema movie at the Parkway Theater on April 12, 2018. Photo by Michelle Lee

Joanna Pecore, Director of [the Asian Arts & Culture Center at Towson University](#), and Jack Danna, Director of Revitalization of [the Central Baltimore Partnership](#) and Station North Arts District, have been co-producing 'The Asia North' since 2019. This event serves to celebrate Baltimore's Charles North–Station North neighborhood's constantly evolving identities as a Koreatown, art district, and creative hub. [The Baltimore Changwon Sister City Committee](#), established in 2017 as a member of [the Baltimore Sister Cities organization](#), and [the Korean American Foundation-Greater Washington](#) have been participating as partners for the Korean cultural activities included in the events including the Koreatown Food and Landmarks walking tour. During the walking tour, participants could see Korean landmarks and cultural remnants while walking through Koreatown. [31] [32] [33]



Asia North event on May 31, 2024. Photo by Mollye Miller



Korean Jangu-chum by Heekyung Lee Dance Studio students performed at the 2023 Asia North opening. Photo by Oliver Maddox.



Korean fan dance by Heekyung Lee Dance Studio students, who performed at the 2023 Asia North opening. Photo by Oliver Maddox.



Historic Koreatown food and landmarks event on May 11, 2024. Photos by Michelle Lee

## 6. Conclusions

This project was initiated to preserve the unique stories of Koreans who immigrated and lived in Baltimore in order for these stories to be remembered. Individual Korean immigrants during the period 1883 – 2024 have left their mark in the city of Baltimore. From 1970 to 1990, many Korean immigrants came to Baltimore. Subsequently, Korean-Americans began to migrate and settle in surrounding counties. Most Korean immigrants started with a language barrier and economic hardship; however many Koreans eventually achieved their American dreams and overcame their difficulties. The Korean people originally residing in Baltimore City are no longer living there. However, a Korean cultural heritage was established and remains today. Examples of the Korean cultural footprints through many cultural events and activities in the Station North Arts District may be experienced during various community events. The stories introduced in this paper are but a few of the lives and experiences that we may remember and share with our future generations.

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## Credits



**Author Michelle Lee:** Michelle Lee immigrated from Seoul, South Korea in 1988. She is an alumnus of the Graduate School of Public Administration, Dongguk University and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Graphic Design degree at Duksung Women’s University in Korea. Michelle Lee was a Senior Accountant at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). She was awarded the “Riley Hawkins Community Service to Baltimore Award” in 2018 by MICA president Samuel Hoi. During her tenure at MICA, she organized community events such as Bmore Seoul to Soul in partnership with Station North Arts and Entertainment (SNAE) in 2015, and MICA Korean Film Festivals. She organized [the 2019 Asian American Pacific Heritage Month Baltimore Event](#). She is co-founder of the Baltimore-Changwon Sister City Committee (BCSCC) established in 2017. Michelle Lee served as the 9th president of the Korean American Foundation–Greater Washington (KAF-GW) and currently serves as Director and Treasurer of KAF-GW. She has a passion to bridge the gap between the Korean-American and other community members through cultural events.

**Principle Assistant:** Joanna Chang, University of Maryland

**Assistants:** Rachel Lee, Michelle Kim, Alice Shin, Laura Livingstone, Daniel Im (High School Students)

### Sponsors:

Korean American Foundation-Greater Washington ([kafgw.org](http://kafgw.org))



Central Baltimore partnership ([centralbaltimore.org](http://centralbaltimore.org))



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- [32] MICA 'Commotion' Spring 2016 issued, Article about "The Korean Community"  
[https://issuu.com/micagrad/docs/mica\\_commotion\\_02\\_2016spring](https://issuu.com/micagrad/docs/mica_commotion_02_2016spring)

[33] Korean American Community History/Asian Arts & Cultural Center/Towson University  
<https://www.towson.edu/campus/arts/culture/centers/asianarts/collection-resources/baltimore-asian-community-history/korean-american/>

## Notes

[a] **The Station North Arts and Entertainment District** is an area and official arts and entertainment district in the U.S. city of Baltimore, Maryland. <https://www.stationnorth.org>

[b] **Bobingsa**: In 1883, Joseon sent the first ever special diplomatic mission from Korea to the United States. In Korean the mission is know as Bobingsa.

[c] **Gyusu**: polite form of a maiden of another family

[d] **Min Yongik**: Member and plenipotentiary of the Bobingsa mission (1883).

[e] **Ester Pak** (March 16, 1876 – April 13, 1910) was a Korean physician; she was the first Korean woman to practice Western Medicine in Korea.

[f] **Sherwood Hall M.D.** (1893–1991): Son of missionaries Dr. William James Hall and Dr. Rosetta (Sherwood) Hall. The death of Ester Kim Pak, his mother's first medical graduate, to tuberculosis, inspired the young Hall to follow his family into medicine. He married to Marian Bottomley Hall M.D. (1896–1991).

[g] **Edith Margaret Hall** (1895–1898): Daughter of missionaries Dr. William James Hall and Dr. Rosetta (Sherwood) Hall. She died of dysentery in Korea when she was 3 years old.

[h] **Ewha Haktang** is a Korean secondary education institution established in 1886, and is one of the earliest women's education institution in Korea.

[i] **Rev. Franklin Ohlinger**; In 1887, Rev. Ohlinger and his wife joined the newly opened mission fields of Korea.

[j] **Rosetta Sherwood Hall M.D.** (1865 – 1951) was a medical missionary and educator. She founded the Pyongyang School for the Deaf and Blind. Dr. Hall spent forty-four years in Korea, helping develop educational resources for disabled Koreans and implementing women's medical training

[k] **William James Hall M.D.** (1860 –1894) was a medical and religious missionary in Korea, primarily in Pyongyang during the 1890s. He was a spouse of Rosetta Sherwood Hall.

[l] **Pyongyang** The city has been the capital of Ancient Korea for nearly 3000 years as the center of Taedonggang Civilization and capital of North Korea.

*[m]* **Hanyang** is now known as Seoul, South Korea. Hanyang was the capital of the Joseon Dynasty and a major cultural and political center in Korea.

*[n]* **Woman's Medical College of Baltimore:**

Founded in 1882, closed in 1910 (Location 1895 – ca. 1910: corner of McCulloh and Hoffman Sts., Baltimore). Entrance requirement: Less than a high school education Image from History of Medicine, copyright: The National Library of Medicine believes this item to be in the public domain.

*[o]* **Lorraine Cemetery:** Opened in 1883, 5608 Dogwood Road, Woodlawn, Maryland  
Yousan Pak's plot: Garden of Prayer Section 3, #337

*[p]* **Bogunyeogwan** is Korea's first specialized women's hospital, established in Seoul in 1887. Equipped with an ondol room in a renovated hanok, the hospital treated female patients and provided women's medical education, resulting in many achievements, including the creation of female doctors and the training of professional nurses.

*[q]* **Frank M Conaway Jr.** : In 1999, Conaway unsuccessfully ran for President of the Baltimore City Council, losing to Sheila Dixon in the Democratic primary. In 2006, Conaway successfully ran for the Maryland House of Delegates in District 40. He was sworn in on January 10, 2007, and has been a member of the Judiciary Committee during his entire tenure.

*[r]* **The Charles Village Community Benefits District (CVCBD):** A special taxing district located in a 100 square block area of north Baltimore. It is home to four neighborhoods: Abell, Charles Village, Harwood, and Old Goucher (and parts of two others: Remington and Barclay) and three business associations: North Charles Business Association, Old Goucher Business Alliance and Waverly Main Street. The CVCBD provides supplemental sanitation and safety services, supports community events, recreational activities and the development of amenities such as green spaces, and promotes the district as a good place to live, work and play. Property owners pay a tax surcharge of 12.5 cents per \$100 of assessed property value to help fund CVCBD services.

*[s]* **Gyemoim** is Korean term for people who form financial planning groups to save money for future expenses.