



Gilman Alumni Representative

Jeehye Lee

South Korea, Fall 2007
Oregon State University



I enrolled in the Portland State University's partnering college Kyungnam University (KU) in South Korea Fall term 2007 research abroad. With support from the Gilman International Scholarship Program, I was able to financially coordinate my oversea education and utilize beneficial resources for my journey. At KU, I took courses related to the Korean language, the culture of North Korea, and environmental sciences. While there I conducted an exploratory study on the impacts on economy and culture due to *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, contamination in Pacific Oysters in Tongyeong. I interviewed shellfish industry members to examine health policies surrounding bacterial outbreaks, which taught me a great deal about cross-cultural barriers in research. This work was later used to produce a thesis documentation of BioResource Research Interdisciplinary Program and International Degree Program at Oregon State University (OSU).

Additionally, my experience abroad allowed me to further ponder my self-identity of 'Korean-American' or 'American-Korean' labeled differently by people from South Korea or the U.S. Questioning and ultimately recognizing my self-identity was necessary for me to grow into a socially-aware young adult. As part of my Gilman Follow-on Project, I presented a self-documentary *You can't go home again?* with footage I filmed while abroad. The presentation invited youth, fellow college students and the general public and conveyed an interesting discussion on international understanding and intercultural communication issues.

My international experience has offered numerous professional development opportunities. I could evaluate my interests in the field of national resources and educational outreach. I am currently working as a biological science technician at the Gold Beach Ranger District in Rouge River Siskiyou National Forest for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service. For a long term goal I hope to become an educator who would demonstrate innovative ideas to promote diversity and sustainable living in my community.



Jee at Changdeokgung Palace, "Palace of Prospering Virtue."



Jee with a KU faculty member.



Pile of oyster shells from her research in Tongyeong.