

The first wave of Korean students arrived at the University of Missouri, Columbia in the 1950's soon after President Harry Truman and President Elmer Ellis (Ellis Library) had worked out arrangements on academic fees. This was a remarkable and visionary step.

The University hired some Korean faculty members in the early 1960's, which helped cement the relationships. The number of Korean students grew during the 1960's. Since then, built on the solid association and academic quality, the relationship between Korea and MU has grown significantly.

To have a social and support base for Korean students and other scholars while in Columbia, the Korean Student Association was formed in the late 1950's. It has remained active ever since as an official organization of the campus community and is recognized by the thousands of alumni in Korea as a valuable organization. The MU community has responded positively by showing great interest in the Korean culture and is supportive of the Association activities.

Today the Korean Student Association is one of the largest and most active international organizations at MU. It currently consists of about 60 undergraduate students, 150 graduate students, and over 70 visiting scholars.

The organization has four major missions; namely to 1) introduce and share Korean culture with the campus and local communities, 2) provide useful information for members, 3) organize activities that promote friendship among members, and 4) provide assistance to new members.

To accomplish the above missions, the Korean Student Association has been engaging in many activities such as International Week, International Bazaar, International Night, Multi-Cultural Fair, International Issues, and monthly meetings. Two years ago, to recognize the desire for peace and harmony for the Korean Peninsula, two trees near Ellis Library were adopted by the Korean Student Association and appropriate plaques were installed. The MU community is grateful for this contribution to our beauty and culture of our campus.

To help reflect the association in achieving academic activities at MU the Korean Student Association decided to sponsor a Poster Day for the very first time in 2003. This is the third Poster Day and again reflects the goals of the association in helping raise awareness of the Korean connection with MU. Clearly the advent of the Asian Affairs Center and its support of Korean activities has been a major asset in expanding the interest in Korea and the Korean scholars on campus.

Participation in the Poster Day promotes fellowship between the Korean community and MU, creates awareness, and demonstrates the comprehensiveness of the scientific and professional contributions made by Koreans. It also provides a forum for interactions with those interested in Korean students and scholars, such as faculty, fellow students and staff. In addition, it is hoped the Poster Day helps illustrate to other members and colleagues the hard work and dedication Koreans give to their studies at MU