



Dr. Jung Soo Park, Director of the Houston Korean Education Center, speaks about the TaLK and EPIK programs at UTSA

On Thursday, September 1, 2011 the East Asia Institute welcomed Dr. Jung Soo Park, Director of the Houston Korean Education Center to introduce Teach and Learn in Korea (TaLK) and English Program In Korea (EPIK). Kenny Vaughn, a former TaLK scholar and a UTSA student, was also present to share his experiences and answer questions.

To begin the talk, Dr. Park spoke about Korea, a country located on a peninsula between Japan and China. Some well-known facts about Korea are as follows:

- Korea plays a large role in the technology and science industries
- Korea has the 15<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world
- Korea is one of Texas' largest trading partners

Korea has a high demand for competent English speakers as it tries to globalize the country's rural areas. The TaLK and EPIK Programs are two great opportunities to teach English overseas. These programs accept people from

# Teaching English in Korea through the TaLK & EPIK Programs



<http://www.talk.go.kr>



<http://www.epik.go.kr>



## Benefits:

- A monthly allowance: 1.5 million KRW (equivalent of \$1,327) for TaLK; \$1.8-2.7 million KRW (equivalent of \$1,600-\$2,400) for EPIK
- A one-time settlement allowance of 300,000 KRW (equivalent of \$365)
- Round-trip airfare
- Personal accommodations/home stay (single furnished house with EPIK)
- Health insurance
- Paid leave [18 days with EPIK]
- Government scholar certificate
- The experiences and joys to immerse in Korean Culture



Both TaLK & EPIK Programs offer amazing teaching opportunities in Korea

various English-speaking countries, such as the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and South Africa.

Unlike other programs, TaLK is considered a scholarship. Therefore, only two years of college need to be completed to be eligible for the program. Participants of the TaLK Program will be paired with a Korean instructor to teach English to elementary school children in rural areas. This is an after-school program, so the workdays are Monday through Friday, approximately fifteen hours a week.

Applicants can apply for

a six-month or a one-year contract. The contracts can be extended twice, up to two years. The first step to applying is filling out the online application, which can be found at <http://www.talk.go.kr/>. Following that, applicants will be interviewed and will need to submit various documents to be screened. Upon passing the screening, they will be notified via email and sent an admission package. They can then accept the scholarship and prepare to leave by obtaining either an E2-2 or F4 visa.

There are many differences between the TaLK and EPIK Program. The most



## Did you know...

- South Korea is Asia's 3<sup>rd</sup> and the world's 15<sup>th</sup> largest economy?
- South Korea is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner for the U.S.?
- South Korea is one of Texas's largest trading partners?
- Korean language is a high priority military intelligence language?
- Korean Language is one of the easiest to learn due to simple and logical script, the absence of tones, and the large number of borrowed English words?

important is that the applicants must have at least a bachelor's degree to be eligible for EPIK.

Participants of EPIK will be teaching in primary and secondary schools during school hours, not after school as in the TaLK Program. They work eight hours a day, Monday through Friday, and will be asked to either assist a Korean teacher with their English class, or to conduct the class together. The scholar will also have to prepare materials for class and assist with activities related to English language.

Applicants can apply through the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Houston or by emailing the EPIK office in Seoul, Korea at [epic@korea.kr](mailto:epic@korea.kr). Similar to the TaLK Program, the applicant will be interviewed and various documents must be submitted. The mandatory documents include the application and required essay, two signed recommendation letters, an FBI criminal background check, a diploma, a transcript, and a copy of the photo page of the passport.

After Dr. Park explained the programs, the floor was opened for a question-and-answer

session. The audience showed genuine interest in both programs and raised many good questions.

George Kramer, UTSA student and former East Asia Institute intern, is currently participating in the TaLK Program. He is stationed in a city called Nonsan located in the Chuchungdonam Province of South Korea. Kramer plans to stay for the maximum allotted time of two years. "I have learned a lot about Korea, its culture and the differences between ours and theirs," says Kramer, "This is a great way to expand knowledge of the world. I would strongly encourage others to participate in the program, especially those that would like to pursue teaching as a career or participate in international business and politics."

Both TaLK and EPIK programs offer amazing opportunities for those that would like to teach and learn abroad in Asia, particularly in Korea.

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