

제1회한국어말하기대 San Antonio's Inaugural Korean Speech Contest



UTSA's East Asia Institute hosted San Antonio's Inaugural Korean Speech Contest on April 4, 2015 with generous grants from the Korea Foundation, Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Houston, and Houston Korean Education Center.

Korean was not offered as a language course at UTSA until three years ago and it was offered as a non-credit course with very generous support from Houston Korean Education Center. Beginning in fall 2014, Korean was finally offered as a credit course on campus. This growth is due to the popularity of students wanting to learn about the Korean language and culture.

Many students from the San Antonio area including the ones from UTSA as well as those from the University of Incarnate Word, Korean American Cultural Center of San Antonio and the Greater Dallas Korean School participated in the contest.

Before the start of the competition, many of the contestants had time to look over their notes and practiced aloud. The majority of the competitors looked anxious, but they were all determined to give it their best.

The judges of the contest were Jin-An Castillo, Eunhye Grace Kim, and Hyewon Andie Kim. Castillo is an

ESL instructor of Northwest Vista College. Grace Kim is the principal of San Antonio Korean Community School. Furthermore, Andie Kim is a Korean language Instructor and is co-director of the Korean American Cultural Center of San Antonio.

During the contest, the intermediate/advanced students took the podium first, then followed by the beginner students. Each student had to come up with a three-minute speech. Some wrote about their time living in Korea and others wrote about why they started learning Korean. Some students wrote about Korean pop culture, such as K-pop, and others wrote about their dreams and wishes concerning Korea. The participants were judged based on their presentation, content, and language.

One by one the students came up and gave their speech. At first, there were nervous, but after a short while, they were confident in their speeches. Each judge listened and watched closely at the participants checking to see if they fit the criteria very well. Friends and family attended too to support their loved one and the participants.

After all the contestants concluded their speeches, the judges held a private meeting to decide on the winners. At the same time, former TALK scholar

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(From left) Briget Rios, Serenity Morales, Jennifer Stevens, Bella Palacios, Jasmine Morales, Assel Krymkulova, and Paulina Martinez

Denisse Perez gave a presentation about the TALK program and her time in Korea teaching English to grade school students. TALK recruits college students from English speaking countries to go to Korea and teach English in an after school program to young students. Other than teaching, scholars also have time to travel to other Korean cities to learn more about its history and culture.

After the presentation, the judges announced the winners. In the intermediate/advanced level Assel Krymkulova of UTSA won 1st place with her speech entitled "How I Started Learning Korean" while Paulina Martinez of Dallas won 2nd place. For the beginner level, Serenity Morales of UTSA won 1st place with her speech entitled "Who I Am", Jennifer Stevens of UTSA won 2nd place, Bella Palacios of UIW won 3rd place, Jasmine Morales of UIW won 4th place, and Briget Rios of UTSA won 5th place. Except for Krymkulova and Martine all of the other contestants are students of Dr. Deukhee Gong, lecturer of Korea at both UTSA and UIW.

All of the participants received a Korean Speech Contest shirt and certificate for their participation. The winners who

placed also received gift cards of various amounts and a winner's certificate.

After the award ceremony everyone was welcomed to refreshments provided by UTSA's Department of Modern Languages and Literatures.

Judges spoke to the winners while the participants congratulated each other. "All the speeches were so well written that everyone did a good job delivering them." said Castillo, "It was so hard to pick the winners."

Krymkulova mentioned "There should be more contests where students can practice their Korean. I am glad Korean culture and language is becoming popular here at UTSA."

All the participants had a satisfying look on their face knowing that they gave it their all. Please look forward to next year's Korean Speech Contest!

The UTSA East Asia Institute's mission is to promote appreciation and understanding of East Asian societies and cultures both on campus and in the community through research, outreach, networking, education, student/faculty exchange, and business development and cooperation. The East Asia Institute organizes seminars, workshops, lectures, conferences, film festivals, visual art exhibitions as well as bringing in performing art groups from China, Japan, Korea, and other Asian nations.



(Form left) Judges Eunhye Grace Kim, Hyewon Andie Kim, and Jin-An Castillo



T-shirts with Korean words on them were given out to all contestants



Refreshments courtesy of Dept. of Modern Languages and Literatures

Special thanks to

