

Since receiving the SNUCMAA Dr. and Mrs. Youchan Rhee Scholarship, I have completed my first term at Stanford University. Over this period, I explored the sciences (through courses like Programming Abstractions and Linear Algebra, Multivariable Calculus, and Modern Applications), the humanities (through courses like Stories Everywhere and International Security in a Changing World), and the interdisciplinary blends of both areas (through courses like The Energy Seminar and Coral Reefs of the Western Pacific). These courses have contributed to my growing interest in the connections between direct climate science and policy applications. Learning about the impacts of the climate crisis on national security, for example, has encouraged me to consider pursuing a minor or additional major in Public Policy or International Relations and reaffirmed my goals to employ science-backed solutions to remedy the global climate crisis.

I explored these interests outside of academics, too. Alongside a group of three graduate students in the Stanford Science Policy Group, I wrote a science-based policy memo about potential solutions to the urban heat island effect in Santa Clara County. Researching and writing policy recommendations allowed me to see the ways that science-based solutions, like urban forestry or cool roofs, could not only make substantive impacts in the climate space, but also stimulate economic and social justice that serve communities that are the most in-need. We plan to present the policy memo to local government offices in the coming month. Through another student group – Stanford Data and Mapping for Society – I found additional opportunities to develop academic interests while building leadership and community building skills. Namely, I led a group of undergraduates to consult for government transportation agencies like the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District using data analysis and visualization. At the same time, I hosted online social events that brought together students at Stanford interested in data science, social issues, and policy consulting. I was also elected as the incoming Vice President of Operations.

The SNUCMAA Dr. and Mrs. Youchan Rhee Scholarship provided support on multiple fronts. Receiving the scholarship lifted a financial burden, allowing me to explore my interests without having to worry constantly about working an external job. Moving to campus, especially during a pandemic, also proved a financial obstacle, but the scholarship provided a financial backing to support me in this process. On a more personal note, moving from Los Angeles, a city with a vibrant Korean-American community, to a rather empty campus

that currently houses only a couple of Korean students, proved a struggle for me. At times, I felt disconnected or even rejected by the Korean-American community. However small, having a scholarship representing the Korean-American community helped reaffirm my identity as a Korean-American.

Attached: A photo of me and some of the friends I've made at Stanford!