

Justin Kim  
Taewoong Kim Scholarship Progress Report

SNUCMAA's support has had a significant impact on my studies as well as extracurricular activities. In preparing me for my career, the scholarship was able to cover an academic conference that I have wanted to attend ever since my freshman year. Ygnite 2022 was an in-person conference held in Atlanta, Georgia, organized by the Korean American Scientists and Engineers Association (KSEA). I was able to put forth the scholarship funds in paying the conference attendance fee, flight ticket, and for expenses that have occurred from my attendance. As an executive board member of the KSEA chapter at the University of Southern California (USC), I was able to attend as a representative of my school but also take the opportunity to make personal connections with industry professionals ranging from pharmacists to robotics engineers.

These professionals were able to give me advice on opportunities I can take advantage of, in addition to sharing regrets they had as undergraduates and what they would have done differently. Especially the statement "you only attend college as an undergraduate once" and that the financial expenditures aren't comparable to that of the experiences I gain. On that note, this scholarship has been crucial in me taking the human anatomy course offered at my institution, unique in that it is very limited in terms of enrollment and availability. This course being notorious with the number of books, supplements, and lab equipment necessary, has been a burden for me due to the expenses that occur. However, the funds of the scholarship were able to fully cover these necessities and has granted me an experience that I will never regret.

Attending the academic conference was also a great motivation in me recognizing that I want to take part in research during my undergraduate years at USC. After attending the poster presentation given by my peers, I recognized that participating in research would be a great opportunity for me to gain hands-on experience in my interests. Beginning with the Chem-E-Car competition hosted by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Being held every year, a competition where students take part in designing and constructing a car powered by a chemical energy source. Although I lack the background of chemical engineering, it would be a great opportunity to explore this field in addition to connecting with other students on campus.

The remaining funds of the scholarship has helped me to pay off some of the tuition that has been accumulating interest from me having past due balances. Again, I am very grateful for this award. Aside from the amount of the scholarship, the award itself has been a great motivation and has helped me develop a purpose of advancing in my education. It functioned as a means of acknowledgment in my studies and also reaffirmed that I am on the right track. In the future, I wish to provide this experience to students that come from similar backgrounds as me,

that be through monetary means or through mentor-mentee relationships helping them recognize the values of pursuing education.

