

Crean Lutheran High graduate interprets for Trump, South Korean president Moon



U.S. President Donald Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, right, have lunch with U.S. and South Korean troops at Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek, South Korea, Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2017. Sitting between the two presidents is Tae Hyeon Kim, who graduated from Crean Lutheran High School in Irvine in 2013. Trump is on a five-country trip through Asia traveling to Japan, South Korea, China, Vietnam and the Philippines. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

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A Crean Lutheran High graduate served as an interpreter for President Donald Trump and his South Korean counterpart Moon Jae-in during Trump's visit to Asia, a school official said.

Tae Hyeon Kim, who graduated from the Irvine private school in 2013, sat between the two presidents Tuesday, Nov. 7 at Camp Humphreys, where the leaders ate lunch with American and South Korean troops.

Kim is taking a leave of absence from Cornell University to serve in the military for two years, which is mandatory in South Korea for all male citizens between the ages of 18 and 35.

"It didn't really surprise me that he was there (with the presidents) because he was such a great student, but I was just so happy for him," said Sherrie Lah, director of Crean Lutheran's international department.

Kim was among the five members of the Republic of Korea-United States Combined Forces Command selected to attend the Camp Humphreys lunch, Lah said. When Kim arrived there, he found out he'd been assigned to sit between the presidents, Lah said.

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Tomoya Shimura covers Irvine for the Orange County Register. Prior to his stint at the Register, Tomoya had worked as a news reporter and sports writer for the Daily Press in Victorville. He won several awards for his work there, including the best business story from the California Newspaper Publishers Association. Tomoya received his M.S. in sports studies from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He earned his B.A. in liberal arts from International Christian University in Tokyo.

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