

Bini Lee '21

**Certificate in
Global Leadership**



**WESTTOWN
SCHOOL**

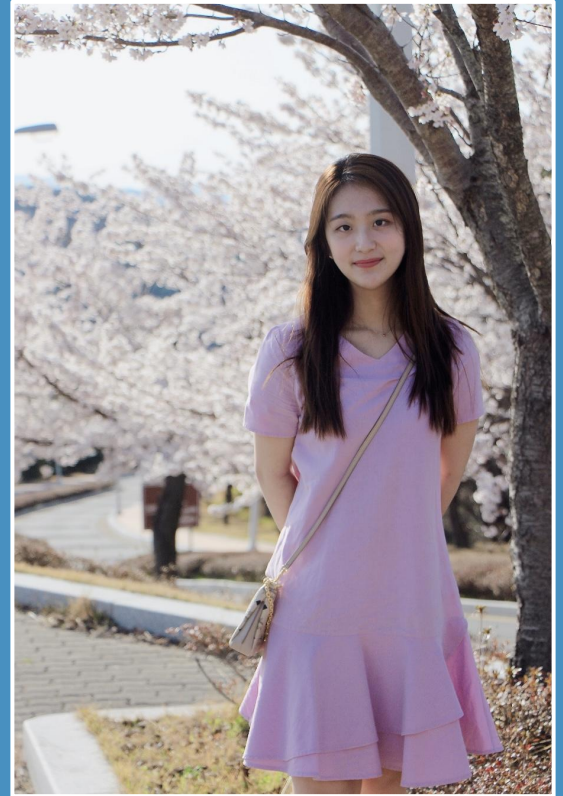
Bini Lee

Senior

Busan, South Korea

Entered Westtown in 2018

Global Leadership



Personal Statement

During my three years at Westtown, I decided that I wanted to learn more about topics that I have not been exposed to, such as different cultures, historical perspectives, and narratives. Through topics that focus on pain of different people from various perspectives ranging from comfort women to Jews in medieval Europe, I was able to connect the dots and focus on issues that people today fail to address. I also wanted to call attention to the need for advocacy and collective responsibility in people, and through various activities, I have tried to address issues and help different communities, such as hospitalized children and the visually impaired. Even through this year's pandemic, I have been able to help communities in need of medical supplies, and I have been able to understand more about how a single individual can help and make a difference in the world. My definition of global leadership has grown over my years at Westtown, and I am grateful that I was able to gain a greater understanding of the world and go out of my way to learn about subjects that I would not have otherwise known.

Course Work Required for the Certificate

Certificate Courses Taken Junior Year

- Spanish 4
- World History 1300-1800 (Adv)
- World History 1800-2000 (Adv)

Certificate Courses Taken Senior Year

- Spanish 5
- Religion, Gender & Sexuality (Adv)

Project Work Required for the Certificate: 1

Website: Black Plague - Persecution of Jews in Strasbourg

- In the first semester of my Junior year, I took World History 1300-1800 (Adv) in which I was required to create a webpage after researching the effects of the Bubonic Plague in a European city.
- I researched about the effects of the black plague in Strasbourg and looked specifically at how Jews were persecuted and often blamed for the numerous deaths and other negative consequences of the epidemic. Jews were also unfairly considered responsible for the economic downfall following the bubonic plague, and many Jews were burned to death or publicly executed.
- Through this project, I was able to understand the social consequences that diseases can bring to particular minorities and how unethical practices against certain minorities, such as Jews, have persisted throughout history.

Project Work Required for the Certificate: 2

Personal Narrative about Atopic Dermatitis

- In the second semester of my senior year, I took Creative Writing (Advanced) class, and I wrote a personal narrative about an autoimmune disease I had. I focused on explaining the psychological and physical pain I have felt due to atopic dermatitis from my perspective.
- It still remains true that there is no real cure to atopic dermatitis, nor do scientists and doctors fully understand the disease. Currently, there are more people with atopic dermatitis today.
- I was able to think about the pain caused by autoimmune diseases, and I was able to conclude that despite many medical advancements, there were some diseases lacking research and left unresolved in the world. Future research is still under way, but my experience as a child with atopic dermatitis helped me make the decision to help hospitalized children through Heart for Heart Club and want to become a doctor.

Project Work Required for the Certificate: 3

The effect of finasteride on the fecundity of female and male *Drosophila melanogaster*

- In my senior year, I took Scientific Research (Advanced) and researched about the effect of finasteride, which is a drug widely used by men to treat androgenetic alopecia.
- Although alopecia affects both men and women, US FDA prevents women from using finasteride due to concerns related to birth defects and decline in fertility rates. However, scientists also note that there is a lack of research on the effect of finasteride exposure on women, although there is a lot of research conducted on the relationship between finasteride consumption and men's fertility.
- From my experiment, I was able to note that there could potentially be a significant difference in fecundity rate depending on which gender of flies consumed finasteride. Further research would be beneficial to demonstrate what the results may imply for women.
- The research and experiment process helped me realize how medical research should try to encompass groups of people that are often left out such as women and minorities.

Project Work Required for the Certificate: 4

Social Justice Poem on Comfort Women

- I took Poetry 2 class in the second semester of my junior year, and I was instructed to research a topic that truly mattered to me.
- I was interested in learning about comfort women as well as how they have suffered under Japanese imperialism, and I was able to write a social justice poem commemorating them.
- Learning about their traumatic experiences through research was one impactful moment in which I realized how much I didn't know about the painful history of my own people. The fact that such history has been silenced by the Japanese government pushed me to raise my voice in the international community.
- This process helped me think about how I should help and speak up about historical inaccuracies and narratives that are often overlooked by the modern society.

Off-Campus Immersion

Internship at the Embassy of Mexico in Seoul, South Korea

In 2019, I worked as a high school intern at the Embassy of Mexico in Seoul, South Korea under Mr. Bruno Figueroa, the Ambassador. I translated visa interviews in Korean, Spanish, and English; organized important files; and learned more information about the diplomatic relationship between South Korea and Mexico.

Junior Counselor at Diplomatic International Forum Of Seoul (DIFOS)

As part of an independent project, I gave a presentation about UN Sustainable Development Goals and how they connected to international diplomacy. I also explained how the topic was relevant to youths in the contemporary world. Having a leadership role at a forum and greeting diplomats from various countries was a fun experience.

Extracurricular On-Campus Opportunity

- Club Head of Model United Nations Club
- Founded Heart for Heart Club (social outreach club)
- Sent Letters to Hospitalized Children in St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Microlended through kiva to entrepreneurs in developing countries

Capstone Project

MUN Club - UNspoken Issue Presentation about Comfort Women (Done Virtually)

Recent Controversy

- John Mark Ramseyer (professor at Harvard Law School) published a scholarly article titled "Contracting for Sex in the Pacific War"
 - He found no evidence that the comfort women were actually contracted for sex.
 - There was a lack of citations in his scholarly article, which was published in a peer-reviewed journal.
 - He actually admitted later that it was a mistake on his part, although he did not apologize.
- He essentially argues that these comfort women who were raped were prostitutes, despite facing rebuttal from Harvard students and many other people.



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Critical Problems

1. The Japanese government does not accept their atrocities (like Germany did) nor apologize sincerely to the comfort women.
2. They do not educate their children about the comfort women. → They think both of these are okay.
3. LDP has censored the media so that the civilians do not know about such problems.
4. Once the comfort women die, Abe and his aides plan on reconstructing the military with intention to attack. (currently Japan is only allowed to defend).
5. These issues aggravate diplomatic and economic relationships between countries (e.g. Korea-Japan diplomatic tensions) → leading to trade embargos, keeping us in the past.
6. **HUMAN RIGHTS + WOMEN'S RIGHTS!******

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“Everyone has an untold story
hidden behind closed doors, try to
understand that people are not
always as they first seem.”

- Unknown

Bringing it All together

- There are so many stories in history that we do not know about, and I was able to learn so much more about the world other than the history of rich, cis-gender white men. There are so many ways to be educated about a diverse range of topics that are often overlooked.
- With more compassion, research, and education about untold narratives, I believe that people will be able to suffer less from pain and trauma, regardless of whether it is physical, psychological, or emotional. The deep dive also heightened my interest in physical and mental health issues.
- The first few steps to being a global leader is to keep an open mind and look for narratives that people may often not know about. Despite not having a clear idea of what I wanted to do or how I could help, I knew that awareness is the first step to understanding events that many may not know about.
- My off-campus immersion experience mainly taught me that I was more capable of using my knowledge in real-life settings as I used my language skills and cultural awareness in the Embassy of Mexico. I also realized how educating others about topics that really matter is also an important skill that many students forget.
- I hope that my message about learning about overlooked issues and using our abilities to help others will allow us to be more knowledgeable and compassionate global citizens with a greater sense of collective responsibility .

Certificate Process

Key Advisors: T. Dan
Burger-Lenahan, T. Monica
Ruiz

Certificate Oversight: T.
Monica Ruiz

Project Timeline:

