



Simon Lee's GWU Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award Acceptance Speech

W Hotel, 9/27/2012

Thank you, President Knapp, Dean Dolling, President Core, and the George Washington University Alumni Association. I am so grateful to each of you for this prestigious award.

With this award, I finally caught up with my daughter Julie, who received the Recent Alumni Achievement Award in 2008. Julie, thanks for setting such a good example and inspiring me to do more for the Alumni Association. As I always say, you are never too young to teach and never too old to learn.

I cannot begin to tell you how much this award means to me and my family. GW has given so much to us... and being able to give back as alumni is an honor.

When I immigrated to the United States in 1979, one of my dreams was to attend GW. In 1980, I was only able to attend one class for one semester toward my Master's degree because I didn't have enough money or time... But I never gave up on my dream of a GW education. At the age of 55, I returned to GW — this time with two of my children in the same class to pursue my Master's degree. It was fun learning side-by-side and doing homework assignments with my children. In May of 2005, not only did my dream of a GW education come true, but four members of the Lee family — my daughters Julie and Michelle, my son Philip, and I — received degrees on the same commencement day. Julie, Philip, and I earned Master of Science degrees... and Michelle earned her Bachelor's in Business. It made headlines in all the news media, and was a special day for the Lee family.

Since my education at GW has played a large role in making me an entrepreneur and helping me grow STG into the company that it is today, I choose to spend time, money, and energy helping GW. I truly believe that by investing in GW, I am investing in the future of our society.

I am thankful to be able to support philanthropic initiatives such as the SEAS Building fund, and the establishment of the student exchange program between GW and Korea University to encourage cross-cultural learning. In June 2011, the GW U.S. Korean Alumni Association was founded and I am now the first President of the Association. In this role, I am building strong connections with the GW Korea Alumni Association in Korea, which is the largest GW Alumni Association overseas. I hope soon to facilitate a multi-million dollar donation from Korean companies to help build an Energy R & D Center on the Virginia campus.

I will close by saying... thank you for this award and all you do for the University. I can only hope that the examples set by today's Award recipients inspire other alumni to do what they can for this great institution. I assure you that my work with the university and alumni association is not complete. I will continue to reach out to my friends and family and ask them to send their children to GW and encourage others to give back to GW. The Lee Family is a GW family and I will do everything in my power to promote GW University and the Alumni Association for the rest of my life.

Thank you again