

Student Reporter

The 52nd Los Angeles Korean Festival



Justin Kim
Grade 11
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STEM Magnet



The stage, where all the performances are held a few times throughout the day, and many more at night during the 52nd Los Angeles Korean Festival.
[Source: Author, Justin Kim]



The streets of the Korean Festival were filled with people excited to taste traditional Korean food.
[Source: Author, Justin Kim]

From October 16 to October 19 of 2025, in Seoul International Park, the annual Korean Festival, also known as Jang-Tuh, was held. This festival was founded by the Korean-American community to help showcase Korean culture, as many other cultures coexist in LA. The Korean Festival was mainly divided into four categories of festivals. The Festival of Food, Festival of Shopping, Festival of Experience, and Festival of Performances.

Most of the booths are made up of food vendors. They serve traditional Korean street food such as pork skewers, tteokbokki, and ice cream. As a Korean myself, all the foods made my

mouth water, but the high prices and long waiting lines kept me from buying all of the foods and emptying my wallet. I would still recommend trying out at least two vendors, as they are still very tasty.

Another category is performances. At the festival, there is a glamorous stage where you can experience Korean traditional cultural performances, Korean celebrities, and much more. During my visit, I was able to see kids perform Taek-Won-Do and a variety of cultural fan dances. I could see my friends perform K-pop dances on stage as well. I wasn't able to experience it myself, but one of my friends was able to see

DinDin, a well-known Korean rapper. I wish I were able to join in on the experience.

The Festival of Experiences is the third category of the Korean Festival. There are many booths where you can have the experience of wearing the traditional beauty attire called Hanbok. There is also a 100-foot wall that showcases paintings that depict the history of Korea. There's another booth where you create traditional Korean dolls. You can get a taste of the amazing experiences of Korean culture here.

Last but not least, there is shopping. The unique and local products from Korea are brought here to the LA Korean Festival

and are available for purchase from the vendors. There are lots of products, from homemade kimchi and vegetables to Korean beauty products that many Koreans use. I suggest you buy it from the stores after your visit, as it is significantly more expensive at the festival. It is still a good experience, as you can see what products you may want later on.

Overall, the 52nd Los Angeles Korean Festival was a very fun experience for me, as I actually got to work at a vendor with my friends. This festival brings a lot of joy and a cool exposure to Korean culture, and I suggest you bring your friends over to have a fun time next year!

Student Reporter

Celebrating Seniors: Senior Night and Team Dinners



Kaylyn Wee
Grade 10
Ayala High School

October 23rd. This day was Ayala Girls Tennis' last game of the season, which meant it was the night to honor our graduating seniors. Everyone had been waiting for this night to arrive and preparing endlessly to ensure the event was memorable and special. On the night of the event, we worked quickly after a win against another team and made sure to highlight the seniors, ensuring the night was exciting for their friends and families. After Senior Night, we headed to our team dinner, where we made memories with one another and gave speeches. The night was filled with spirit and gratitude.

To prepare for the special night, the juniors created a group chat and a photo album to collect photos that were to be used in the senior posters. By collecting 20 dollars from every girl on the team, we were able to gift each of the 6 seniors with baskets full of snacks, a stuffed animal, and a card that was full of messages from each teammate. Something unique we did this year was sign giant tennis balls that had the seniors' names written on them. Our juniors showed leadership, and the team collaborated to prepare for the senior night, making the night a success.

Before our Senior Night, the team had a game against another high school in our league, and our



Our senior class team members with their giant, signed tennis balls, baskets with snacks, stuffed animals, and a card from everyone on the team.
[Source: Author, Kaylyn Wee]

celebration started with a win, guaranteeing us a spot in the CIFs. As our opposing team packed up and left the court, the team forced the seniors to stay away from the tennis courts so we could set up

our gifts without them noticing. We used practice balls to spell out "Senior Class of 26," and we set up a fold-up table to display the baskets, posters, and their tennis balls. Along with gifts for the

seniors, we also had a variety of flavors for donuts and cupcakes for the friends and families that had come to support their graduating daughters. Then, the team brought out the seniors and gave them their giant, signed tennis balls and their sashes that spelled "SENIOR '26."

After pictures and some tears, laughter would continue at our team dinner at Olive Garden. At the restaurant, we had a choice of pasta, unlimited soup or salad, and breadsticks, and the team spent time chatting about this season. The underclassmen also had speeches for the seniors and our head coach. As this was the seniors' last season game, we all made an effort to have fun and cherish the moment, making sure we showed the most gratitude to our senior class for their guidance and love they poured out to the team.

Overall, Senior Night turned out amazing, was a great way to end the season, and gave the team some fun before CIFs. From the preparation to the night of the event, the team was able to become closer and express our thankfulness to our seniors who impacted the team so positively. Although the night was emotional, it was exciting, and it inspired the team to keep our energy and leadership for CIF and the next season. It was a night that will be in our hearts forever.

Student Reporter

At the 19th Korea Daily College Fair



Paul Lee
Grade 11
Crescenta Valley High School

The 19th Korea Daily College Fair was an eye-opening experience that showed me what opportunities I had before I went to college. Hosted at a large church and sponsored by McDonald's, the fair was completely free for everyone to attend, which made it possible for families such as mine to go. I think this generosity specifically stood out to me because it showed how much effort was put into making this opportunity accessible to everyone. As a high school junior who had very little understanding of how college applications worked, I was happy to learn more about what it takes to get into a good school. From the moment I entered the fair, everyone was super instructive and helpful, which made the experience better than I had expected.

Before attending, my knowledge about colleges such as UC schools was very limited. I had heard of schools like UCLA, UC Irvine, and UC Berkeley, but I didn't know much about what separated each school from one another and what programs different

schools offered. The fair changed that perception for me completely, because booth after booth, I spoke with representatives from those schools who effectively explained the admission requirements, academic programs, and student life to me in an engaging way. They offered advice about writing personal statements and staying organized as well. I even learned about the importance of balancing academics with extracurricular activities, helping me realize that I shouldn't invest too heavily in just one of them. This information also allowed me to think about how to build my college application. In my opinion, the representatives weren't just there to promote their schools, but rather, they genuinely wanted to help students like me succeed. I believe that if they weren't willing to answer questions or be kind while doing it, my engagement would have been much worse.

Another thing that stood out to me during the college fair was the number of scholarship opportunities presented during the event. Many organizations



The Korea Daily College Fair was sponsored by McDonald's, allowing it to be free to all who attended.
[Source: Author, Paul Lee]

offered financial support programs that encouraged students to pursue education without fear of high costs. Hearing about these options gave me hope about not worrying heavily about how to pay for my tuition. Furthermore, throughout the event, two raffles were held for large prizes to win. Although personally I didn't win anything, the event having this fun aspect allowed everyone to

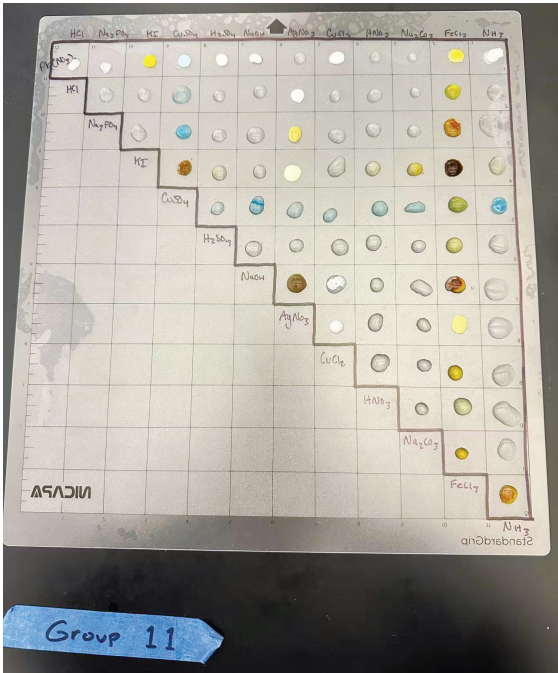
have a great time in anticipation. Overall, I left the event with lots of information and plans for the future. The 19th Korea Daily College Fair was a meaningful experience that gave me insights into what to do this year and next, and I believe it will be useful for all students in the Los Angeles Area. Preparing for college doesn't need to be overwhelming; it can be enjoyable as well.

Student Reporter

The Chemistry Behind My Curiosity



Linda Li
Grade 11
Crean Lutheran High School



This is one of my favorite labs in the Honors Chemistry course at Crean Lutheran High School. The colorful patterns remind me to stay curious and appreciate every small detail in my life. [Source: Author, Linda Li]

My first interaction with chemistry was chemical elements to memorize, calculations to perform, and chemical reactions to deal with. The arduous work still lingered in my mind, and I was convinced that science would never be my focus.

I held on to this prejudice when going into my first Honors Chemistry lecture. The first half of the lecture was exactly what I expected: ambiguous concepts of significant figures. As I counted the digits, I wondered why such small details mattered so much. However, as

the lecture came to an end, our teacher performed a few “magic tricks” that left me standing in awe after the bell rang. He placed different substances into flames, and suddenly, the fire turned brilliant shades of red, green, orange, and violet. As I watched the flames dancing, I started to ponder about how invisible atoms create such beautiful colors. For the rest of the week, this question clung to my mind as if it were luring me to discover the answer. Out of desperation, I had to bother my Chemistry teacher. As the final bell rang on Friday afternoon, I rushed to his office and waited anxiously for the solution to this problem. Eventually, my teacher not only addressed my concern perfectly, but also inspired my curiosity about the world of Chemistry. At that point, I finally realized why people fell in love with Chemistry and even chose to make it a part of their future: even the tiniest atom can make a difference.

The rest of my sophomore year was all about exploring Chemistry. I enjoyed the rush of adrenaline that comes from deriving an answer to a problem on my own and from seeing the world through the lens of Chemistry. I started to notice things that I had taken for granted, things that I had

once thought were negligible. For example, every time I opened a Coke and took a sip of it, the fizzy bubbles reminded me of carbon dioxide escaping the can due to the pressure inside. Additionally, every time I chug water after a sweaty basketball game, I think about the hydrogen bonds holding the water molecules together, giving it its unique properties.

As I dig deeper into this newly discovered world, I encountered one of my favorite labs in this course—the double replacement reaction lab. I was instructed to observe how a variety of substances reacted with each other—the droplets blended seamlessly in surprising ways, with some changing their forms, transforming the reaction paper into a canvas of texture and color.

Even now, my curiosity and appreciation for Chemistry have not faded. Much like chemical reactions, my mind undergoes a similar process when the questions collide with imagination, forming unexpected results that continue to shift how I understand the world. It teaches me to appreciate the beauty in even the smallest things that do not seem to matter, rather than making superficial judgments. And this is the chemistry behind my curiosity.

Student Reporter

In Warsaw: Experiencing the 19th Chopin Competition



Halyn Kim
Grade 10
Harvard-Westlake School

To pianists, few events in the world carry as much significance as the International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, Poland. Founded in 1927 and held every five years, the competition is widely regarded as one of the most prestigious piano competitions in the world, devoted entirely to the music and compositions of Chopin. It can be compared to the “Olympics” of music, making it an extremely prestigious event that many musicians attend. This year marked the 19th edition of the competition, drawing the most talented young pianists from across the globe.

I had the opportunity to attend several sessions of the second round, where each contestant performed a 50-minute recital featuring works exclusively by Chopin. This also included two mandatory preludes and a polonaise with an optional category for the third piece. Sitting in the National Philharmonic Hall among musicians, teachers, and music lovers from every corner of the world was an unforgettable experience. The atmosphere was both calm and electric, reflecting the audience’s deep respect and restless anticipation for the performances to come, and the quiet anticipation as each pianist took the stage and the first notes of



The National Philharmonic Hall in Warsaw, where the 19th Chopin Competition’s second round took place. [Source: Author, Halyn Kim]

Chopin’s music were played. What struck me most during this experience was the remarkable individuality of each pianist. Despite performing from the same repertoire by the same composer, every contestant brought a distinct interpretation to the work. Some emphasized

Chopin’s poetic lyricism, while others brought out his virtuosic brilliance. I did not find myself bored despite the repetitiveness, and the level of artistry was extraordinary as I could hear every phrase reflected countless hours of dedication. As a pianist myself, witnessing these performanc-

es was deeply inspiring. Seeing young musicians, with some even being around my age, performing with such mastery and emotional depth offered valuable insight into performance practice and how phrasing choices can completely transform the same piece.

Beyond the performances themselves, the experience of being in Warsaw and surrounded by the culture, language, and legacy of Chopin was equally moving. From visiting the Fryderyk Chopin Museum to walking down the streets of the city, the entire trip felt like a journey through history. The Fryderyk Chopin Museum, located in the historic Ostrogski Palace, features manuscripts, letters, and personal belongings that trace the composer’s life from his childhood to his final years in Paris. I was able to experience interactive exhibits that provided insight into Chopin’s compositional process and a little bit of the political context of 19th-century Poland.

Attending such a prestigious and rare event was a deeply inspiring experience as a pianist. Witnessing such mastery and dedication firsthand provided a unique perspective on performance and interpretation, making the trip an invaluable opportunity to engage with Chopin’s music as an art form.

Student Reporter

How the Government Shutdown Affects You



Robin Ryul Kang
Grade 11
Palos Verdes Peninsula High School

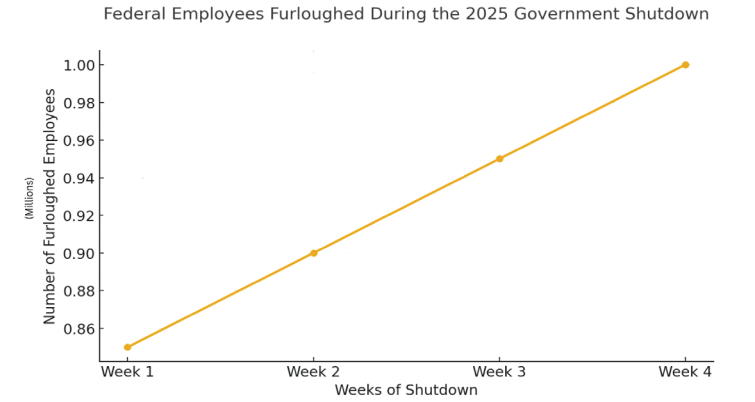
It has been over a month since the United States government shut down on October 1, 2025, which is now the longest government shutdown in our country’s history. Congress is unable to come to an agreement on the budget, which has led to the furlough of nearly 900,000 federal employees and another 2 million employees working without pay. The Department of Education was forced to put approximately 83% of its employees on hold, according to Al Jazeera. While some school districts have been maintaining themselves with forward funding systems, it is unknown when the government will reopen, evoking worries and concerns.

Students who are seeking further education after high school are facing issues, too. From financial aid processing to the interruption of federal educational programs, the government shutdown can create a lot of uncertainty for these individuals. An 11th-grade student named Emily Chen voiced some of her concerns, saying that she’s “Worried about college applications and financial aid. It’s so uncer-

tain, and that makes it difficult to plan for [her] future.” Voices from the teachers cannot be excluded either. Mr. Thompson, one of the high school teachers at Palos Verdes Peninsula High School, had also expressed some of his concerns, stating that he’s “Worried about the resources the school might lose in the future.”

It’s also a difficult time for millions of federal employees with families who are being either laid off or required to work without pay. These paychecks are very important as with them, the families pay rent, afford food, and just live their lives. This shutdown may also be impacting middle-class families because, in the long run, if the shutdown continues for several months, there could be delays in health programs, as well as many other essential services that impact schools and communities. Thankfully, essential services such as Medicare and the TSA will still be open.

To help lessen the impact of the shutdown, students should stay informed, reach out, and advocate for change. In other words, they should keep up with



As the shutdown continues into its fourth week, more agencies are running out of funds, forcing an increasing number of workers to stay home without pay. [Source: Author, Ryul Kang]

the latest news, as it helps them understand how the situation keeps flowing and how it could further affect their personal lives. They shouldn’t hesitate to contact their school’s administration or financial aid office for the latest updates. Lastly, students should consider joining or supporting initiatives that work towards supporting others.

As the shutdown continues, its impact is reaching far beyond just the news and is now intruding on our personal lives. Class-

rooms and family dinner tables are starting to see the changes, and it won’t be long before it’s even more noticeable. Students might experience delays with financial aid and college applications, while families are left dealing with bills, childcare issues, and a cloud of uncertainty about what’s ahead in the future. However, we can mitigate the consequences by staying informed, planning for the future, and supporting each other as we navigate through these weeks.