

News Release

Making UMN Crookston a Home Away from Home

By Cassandra Morthera on Tuesday, January 29, 2019

Jiwon "Peter" Park, an accounting senior from South Korea, has embraced everything the University of Minnesota Crookston has to offer. As soon as Park heard the university's tagline, "Small Campus. Big Degree" he knew this is where he belonged.

As an international student venturing out into the world, Park wanted to go to a small university. Park compared large universities to oceans and small ones to ponds. He went on to mention he would much rather start off his international experience in a pond where he could feel safe and thrive rather than a large ocean where he might easily get lost.

Upon his arrival, Park had an outgoing international student as a role model, which is why he is one to step out of his comfort zone and seek out cultural exchange everywhere he goes. During his first two years at UMN Crookston, Park became involved in the Student Orientation Staff, Crookston Student Association, the Multicultural International Club, he became a Community Adviser, and worked at the front desk for Residential Life. Park looks to challenge himself each and every day.

Two years into his college career, Park had to go back to South Korea to complete his two year mandatory military service. There, he worked in the Fire Direction Center (FDC) calculating the trajectory of weapons. It was no easy task to go through arduous training for two years.

"One of the good things that came out of my military experience was being able to stay motivated to complete my goals even if the journey was tough," says Park as he recalls having to develop great mental strength and determination to see tasks through during his time in the military. This is a skill he now applies to his everyday life.

Upon his return to the UMN Crookston, Park saw many of his friends from years back graduate as he continued his undergraduate career. This fact was hard for him, as he felt out of place at times. Nonetheless, Park expressed his gratitude towards the warmth and kindness of the university's faculty, staff, and students lending him a helping hand as he got re-acquainted to his school life.



Park hopes to someday open an accounting business with his cousin. However, once he graduates he will go wherever his path leads him, whether that means staying in the United States or going back to South Korea. One thing that will remain the same throughout his journey is his determination to achieve his goals and promote cultural awareness wherever he goes.

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