

## Y. Kang

Y. Kang was born in a port city located in the northern tip of the Korean Peninsula called Cheongjin and raised there until she escaped North Korea at age of 19. She was already exposed to information about the outside world through books and other media, and had lived an abundant life thanks to her father who owned a business and her mother who worked as an accountant. She never thought about escaping North Korea until her father went out of business. Kang realized she did not want to live the rest of her life contained in North Korea, so she was finally able to escape North Korea after months of persuading her parents. At the start of her journey, she was scammed by Chinese brokers and was being trafficked from which she escaped again. Afterwards she was caught multiple times on her way to South Korea as she was crossing the Vietnam border. After repeatedly being caught and escaping, she finally made it safely to South Korea. Kang settled in South Korea and studied both business management and international relations. She studied business management because she wanted to do business like her father. However, as she continued her studies, she became deeply interested in political science and foreign relations. She realized how small of a paradigm she had of the world because she was raised in North Korea in her youth, so to grasp a bigger picture and understanding of the world she decided to study international relations. She learned through her studies in college that South Korea and the US were extremely important allies and that North Korea will be extremely important in the case of possible reunification in the future. Drawing on her experience in North Korea, she is currently working as an intern at HRNK with Greg, a North Korean human rights expert. Hence, she plans to continue pursuing a master's degree in America after she completes her internship program. She worked as a lecturer teaching North Korea related issues and reunification education in elementary, middle, high school and colleges for two years in South Korea.