



The Asian and American United to Redress Japanese War Crimes rally in front of the White House during Japanese Emperor Akihito's visit. WCCW demands President Bill Clinton raise the "comfort women" issue with Emperor Akihito. June 1994. Photo by Doochan Hahm



WCCW organized a rally to demand an official apology from the Japanese government when Prime minister Shinzo Abe visited the U.S. , Congress to give a speech at the joint session, April 29, 2015.



Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc.
워싱턴 지역 정신대 문제 대책 위원회

www.comfort-women.org



The 30th Anniversary of Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc.;

Celebrating the Legacy of Comfort Women

Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2023, 11:00 am
Place: Gold Room, Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.

주최 (Hosted by):  Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc.
워싱턴 정신대 문제 대책 위원회
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Program of the Ceremony (11:00 am – 2:00 pm)

Opening Remarks	M.C. Ok Cha Soh Chair, the 30th Anniversary Committee
Welcoming Remarks	Ok Cha Soh Co-Chair of Board, WCCW
Congratulatory Remarks	Sami Lauri President, WCCW
Greetings from Korea (Video)	Honorable Seijoong Kwon Consul General, Embassy of the Republic of Korea
Keynote Speech	Suzanne Scholte President of Defense Forum Foundation Chair of North Korea Freedom Coalition
Awards Ceremony	Honorable Andy Kim U.S. House Rep. of 3rd District of New Jersey
	Honorable Gerry Connolly U.S. House Reps. of 11 th District of Virginia
	Honorable Jan Schakowsky U.S. House Reps. of 9 th District of Illinois
	Lee, Yongsoo "Comfort Women" Victim and Activist
	Honorable Judy Chu U.S. House Reps. of 11 th District of California
	Sami Lauri President, WCCW
	WCCW Special Recognition: Dennis Halpin / Mindy Kotler / Bonnie Oh Yangmo Ku / Margaret Stetz / Eun-Ae Lee
	<i>U.S.A. President's Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award</i> Ok Cha Soh / Jung-Sil Lee
Congressional Forum	Moderator, Jung-Sil Lee Co-Chair of Board, WCCW
	Comfort Women Redress Movement in Post-Victim Era Panelists: Bonnie Oh, Mindy Kotler, Yangmo Ku, Margaret Stetz, Dennis Halpin

~ Lunch ~

Documentary Film Screening	Produced by WCCW/ Written & Directed by Jung-Sil Lee <i>Cry Out: The Comfort Women Redress Movement in the US (1992-2022)</i>
Music Performance	Kee Sun Kwon Soprano Soloist
Greetings from author "Flutter, Flutter, Butterfly" (Video)	Mihee Eun Book Author
Closing Remarks	Jung-Sil Lee Co-Chair of Board, WCCW

Leaders of WCCW



- The First Founding President (1992-2001) **Dongwoo Lee Hahm**
- The Second President (2001-2008) **Ok Cha Soh, Ph.D.**
- The Third President (2008-2009) **Stephen Choi**
- The Fourth President (2009-2014) **Christine Choi**
- The Fifth President (2014-2020) **Jung-Sil Lee, Ph.D.**
- The Sixth President (2020-2022) **Helen Won**
- The Seventh President (2022- present) **Sami Lauri**

WCCW 30th Anniversary Committee members:

Okcha Soh, Christine Choi, Jung-sil Lee, Sami Lauri,
Woo Kim, Edward Jang, Jae Kim, Yoo Young Lee,
Guensol Jung, Yewon Park, Sarah Aiera So, Joshua Kim, Joey Kim,
Rachel Hong, Hyomin Lee

후원단체

재외동포재단, 워싱턴지구 한인 연합회, 메릴랜드한인회, 메릴랜드총한인회, 워싱턴미주한인재단,
한미국가 조찬기도회, 워싱턴여성회, 한미여성재단, DC이화여고 62 동교회, 선한사마리아단체,
고려대학교교우회, KOWIN DC (한민족여성네트워크), 포토맥포럼, 재외한인사회연구소,
미주희망연대, 워싱턴희망나비, 옴니화재
(무순)

후원자명단

이정실, 서옥자, 함은선, 헬렌원, 김광자, 김홍자, 은성자, 이내원, 이은애, 강명희, 강고은, 최은희,
최정선, 박신민, 로사박, 오영희, 신수경, 남명호, 이명자, 강창구, 오민선
(무순)



Soprano **Keesun Kwon** has appeared as a soloist for the Millennium Stage Concert and the Hines-Lee Opera Ensemble at the Kennedy Center. She made her New York debut at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Kwon received her Doctoral degree in Musical Arts from the Catholic University of America, her Bachelor of Music degree from the Peabody Institute of the John's Hopkins University and pursued her Masters of Education from Columbia University in New York. She is an award winner from the Gerda Lissner Foundation and a recipient of the Peabody Career Development Grant. Amongst her notable performances, Ms. Kwon was invited to sing for former South Korean President Jae-in Moon during his official 2017 visit to the United States and at the 21st Annual Holocaust Remembrance Program at Lincoln Theater in Washington DC. She has been praised by the Washington Post and lauded by The Washington Times. She is represented by McFaMi Artist Management.

Welcoming Remarks



Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc.
워싱턴 지역 정신대 문제 대책 위원회



It's my great honor to welcome everyone attending today to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues.

Since its inception, the WCCW has worked tirelessly to educate the world and become a voice for the historical truth of 'Comfort Women', the atrocities committed by the imperial Japanese army during WWII. More than 200 thousand young girls were coerced or abducted by the Japanese military and its associates to battlefields throughout Asia and had to endure shameful sexual abuse.

After more than 70 years, there are less than a handful of victims or survivors left. They are in their 90's, and barely maintain their health but still remember the pain they suffered. In every Halmoni's eyes, we can see the agony and anger of facing death without any acknowledgement or apology from the Japanese government. We, as the next generation, should remember the pain and story of each and every Halmoni and continue to be a voice for women and children who are too often victimized by wars throughout the world.

There were many obstacles, and pressure to soften our voices due to better alliance between two countries (Korea/Japan), total denial and harsh criticism from pro-Japanese opinionators, and looking away from people who would rather not deal with the tragic history of our motherland. However, the WCCW has strived to achieve the milestone of US House Resolution-121 passage that stormed the whole world to demand that the Japanese government to officially and unequivocally apologize.

As we look back at the history of the WCCW, could not have been sustained without selfless volunteers serving as presidents, officers and in other roles in support of the issue of 'Comfort Women'. For 30 years, no one ever got paid to carry their conviction to help Halmonies. I wonder, if we had paid staff, would the WCCW last as long as it has?

Therefore, I am eternally grateful for our predecessors and for all the volunteers for believing in the mission of the WCCW, and sincerely hope that this legacy of the WCCW will continue to educate and influence many people with different origins with one conviction...that there shouldn't be any crimes against women and children in conflicts or war.

Today, we have the great opportunity to hear from many scholars who helped to write on the movement in the US on Comfort Women. I hope to refresh my memory by listening to these distinguished panel members and hope you will too!

Again, thank you for attending and witnessing this monumental 30th anniversary event!

I Hope you will continue to support the WCCW.

Sincerely yours,

Sami Lauri
President, WCCW

Welcoming Remarks



Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc.
워싱턴 지역 정신대 문제 대책 위원회



It is my honor and privilege to welcome you all to the 30th anniversary of the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues (WCCW) to celebrate the legacy of Comfort Women. How exhilarating to see that we have already marked this crucial milestone of three decades since its foundation in 1992. Looking back over the past 30 years, it could not have been possible without the dedication of those courageous surviving Comfort Women victims as well as advocates of Comfort Women issues, certain members of the U.S. Congress, educators, scholars, writers, artists, and other supporters from all over the world. Your compassion helps us all to unite for the good cause of Comfort Women issues and achieve our goals.

The foundation was laid by the first term president, DongWoo Lee-Hahm, and coming together was a great beginning, keeping together has demonstrated remarkable progress, and working together has been a crucial success. We all together have embraced the truth, voiced the truth, and become the truth. It is amazing to see how the work of Comfort Women has been orchestrated under a unified vision, creating a beautiful tapestry. The historical stream of WCCW took solid root 30 years ago, and the torch has been carried, closely engaging with the U.S. Congress and people in the fields of education, visual arts, film, and performing arts to impact the transnational redress movement of Comfort Women issues.

It is heartbreaking to realize that in 2023, only a few Comfort Women victims survive in Korea. Although most endured untold and unimaginable grief during their lives, we will become their voices, honoring their legacies of life and courage. May we move forward toward the historical courage for reconciliation that transcends political and socio-cultural boundaries. One of my favorite quotes comes from German Chancellor Willy Brandt at his famous reconciliatory visit to Warsaw during the 1970 memorial to the Warsaw Ghetto, "We see the present through the past and the future through the present." History itself will remember the truth for us. We will continue to speak the truth, to become voices for the voiceless, for the rights of all who are downtrodden (Proverbs 31:1-9).

Thank you, and may God richly bless you on this celebration day.

Okcha Soh, Ph.D
Chair, WCCW 30th Anniversary Committee
Co-chair, WCCW Board of Directors



The 30th Anniversary of Washington Coalition for
Comfort Women Issues, Inc.;
Celebrating the Legacy of Comfort Women



WCCW 30th Anniversary Congressional Forum

Title: Comfort Women Redress Movement in Post-Victim Era

Panel participants: Dennis Halpin, Mindy Kotler, Bonnie Oh, Yangmo Ku, Margaret Stetz

Moderator: Jungsil Lee

When: Feb. 7th, 2023, 11:30 am~12:10 pm

Venue: Gold Room, Rayburn House Office bldg., Capitol Hill, DC

Forum Theme and Discussion Points



Since the foundation of WCCW in 1992, the redress movement in the Washington metropolitan area has expanded, extending activism to other cities and states, such as New York, LA, Chicago, Georgia, Texas, and San Francisco. Former sex slaves, called “comfort women” (Halmeoni) have been suffered not only by their horrendous experience, but by revisionism or denial by the Japanese right wing. They were invited by WCCW from 1992 up to 2019 for almost three decades. Many of them began to experience deteriorating health and were unable to endure a 15-hour flight from Seoul to the East Coast of the US. Recently, there was a scandal involving a leader of the Korean activist organization due to suspicions of embezzlement. There has been much negative press or public reception towards “comfort women” activism and developing skepticism towards the authenticity or good faith of the actors. Moreover, a powerful motivation for the movement has been the Halmeonies, of whom only 3 remain to share their voices (only in South Korea).



On this 30th anniversary of WCCW, this forum intends to discuss what will be the prospective direction (desirably the action items) of activists and particularly next generations to keep and to proceed the legacies of “comfort women” when victims are all passed. We have the book authors of “Comfort Women: A Movement for Justice and Women’s Rights in the United States” (published 2020) who have walked with victims as a scholar or an activist and will listen their thoughts and suggestions.



Q1) Briefly explain what your role has been in the space of this campaign and what positive outcomes have you helped to bring about?

Q2) In your area or interest, what is your exhortation to the next generation as to what should be focused on and why?

Q) Questions and suggestions from the audience.

The Panelists



Jung-Sil Lee, Ph.D. (Forum Organizer and Moderator) is an art historian, curator, and adjunct Professor at George Washington University, Georgetown University, Maryland Institute College of Art, and University of Maryland. Her research interests span from peacebuilding memorials, ritual practice, feminism, decolonization, and grassroots activism for social justice. She co-chaired for the construction of two such memorials, conferences, and curated “comfort women” themed art exhibitions including “Collateral Damage,” “Unveiling the Truth,” and “Truth: Promise for Peace.” For 15 years, she has served as Vice President, President, and Chairman of the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc. She co-edited *Comfort Women: A Movement for Justice and Women’s Rights in the United States* (2020) and published “Unforeseen Controversy: Reconciliation and Re-contextualization of Wartime Atrocities through “Comfort Women” Memorials in the United States” in *Teachable Monuments: Using Public Art to Spark Dialogue and Confront Controversy* (Bloomsbury, 2021).



Denis Halpin served as senior professional staff for Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Henry Hyde in 2006, prepared materials for consideration of H. Res. 759. This was the first “comfort women” resolution to be marked up by a Congressional Committee in September 2006. Lane Evans was the chief Congressional sponsor of H. Res. 759 as well as previous resolutions. Resolution 759 was used as background for H. Res. 121, sponsored by Representative Honda, which passed the House unanimously on July 30, 2007. Halpin also assisted Asia and Pacific Subcommittee staff director Lisa Williams in preparations for the first-ever hearing, convened by Chairman Eni Faleomavaega, with “comfort women” survivors as witnesses in February 2007. Dennis Halpin has long experience on the “comfort women” issue, having first met a “comfort women” survivor while serving in the Peace Corps in South Korea in the early 1970s. He obtained the declassified “MacArthur Report” from the W. Bush Administration in 2006 as background material for Chairman Hyde.



Bonnie Oh, Ph.D., a native of South Korea, is a 67-year resident in and a citizen of the United States. She received all her post-secondary education in the U.S. including Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. She served 38 years in American higher education as a teaching faculty and administrators at four U.S. institutions of higher education, retiring from Georgetown University. She co-convened the first academic conference “The Comfort Women World War II: Legacies and Lessons” (Sep 30, 1996) at Georgetown and co-edited the first academic book on the subject, *Legacies of Comfort Women of WWII* in 2001. She is the co-founder of the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues (WCCW) 30 years ago.



Mindy L. Kotler is founder and director of Asia Policy Point (APP), a membership nonprofit research center in Washington, DC studying the U.S. policy relationship with Japan and Northeast Asia. Her focus is the connection between history and Asian regional security. She writes on the politics and policy implications of Comfort Women, prisoners of war of the Japanese, and historical memory in Asia. She advised Congressman Mike Honda (D-CA) in his drafting and defense of the 2007 Comfort Women resolution (HRes 121). She was also part of a team that garnered an apology from the Japanese Government in 2009 to the American POWs of Japan. Ms. Kotler received her M.A. in International Relations from Yale University and her B.A. in Government and History with High Honors in Chinese History from Smith College.



Margaret Stetz, Ph.D. is the Mae and Robert Carter Professor of Women’s Studies and Professor of Humanities at the University of Delaware. With Bonnie B. C. Oh, she was co-organizer at Georgetown University of the first international academic conference in the U. S. on the “comfort system” and co-editor of *Legacies of the Comfort Women of WWII* (2001). She has published over a dozen essays on this subject in journals and edited collections. Another will appear this year in *New Ways of Solidarity with Korean Comfort Women*, a volume in Palgrave Macmillan’s “Studies on Human Rights in Asia” series.



Yangmo Ku, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Political Science and Associate Director of the Peace and War Center at Norwich University. Prof. Ku’s research focus lies in the politics of memory and reconciliation in East Asia and Europe, North/South Korean politics, and East Asian security. He co-authored a book, titled *Politics in North and South Korea: Political Development, Economy, and Foreign Relations* in 2018. He serves as founding Editor of an academic journal, named the *Journal of Peace and War Studies*, and co-editor of Norwich University’s forum—*Voices on Peace and War*. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from George Washington University and previously taught in the School of International Service at American University.



The 30th Anniversary of Washington Coalition for
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WCCW Film Screening

Title: Cry Out! Comfort Women Redress Movement in the US (1992-2022)

Year: 2023

Duration: 45 min.

Director: Jung-Sil Lee (& Writer)

Production: Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc.

Staff: Editors: Woo Kim & Edward Jang

Photographers: Edward Jang & Jae Kim

Music: Yoo Young Lee, Guensol Jung, Yewon Park

Narration: Sarah Aiera So

Subtitles: Joshua Kim and Joey Kim

Translation: Joshua Kim and Rachel Hong

Operating Officer: Hyomin Lee



Synopsis:

Cry Out! is about the history and activities of “comfort women” redress movement in the US, focusing on Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc. (WCCW) that was founded on Dec. 12, 1992 after the short visit of Hwang Kum-ju. “Comfort women” victim in Nov 1992. This film consists of the archival photos, videos, and interviews who have been dedicated to this movement. This film aims to inspire the next generation as the example of the first successful grassroots movement of Korean American community in the US, and to publicize and to educate efforts for Justice and women’s rights not to repeat the past wrongdoings to humanity. The film is the visual version of the arching co-authored book “Comfort Women: A Movement for Justice and Women’s Rights in the US” published in 2020.



How the organization was founded and how the House Resolution 121 could be passed at the Congress are the highlights of the film, then it shows the ways in which the issues were expanded toward diverse dimensions and perspectives on the issue. The film covers these topics; 1. foundation of WCCW; 2. Grassroots movement and the passage of House Resolutions 121, focused The Hearing on Feb. 2007; 3. “Comfort women” Memorial buildings and such two memorials built by WCCW; 4. Archival and artistic representation and WCCW sponsored exhibitions; 5. Education and internship.

The Comfort Women Redress Movement in the U.S. (1992~2022): Documentary as a Visual History Recording

Jung-Sil Lee, Ph.D.
Writer and Director of the Film
Co-Chair of Board, WCCW



This documentary is about the “Comfort Women Redress Movement” in the United States, more specifically in the Washington Metropolitan Area, over the last thirty years. I have been involved in this movement through the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc. (WCCW) since 2009 and have been struck by the incredible willpower of those dedicated to the cause of the “Comfort Women” victims and survivors. They come from diverse backgrounds, races, and perspectives and include politicians, scholars, activists, artists, students, and most notably, members of WCCW. This movement has created a history worth remembering, especially because women and girls are still being sexually assaulted and exploited today, as a result of their vulnerability in war zones and even in domestic violence. The “Comfort Women” issue extends beyond just the events of 70 years ago.

My passion for documenting this movement started when I was appointed as the president in 2015. With the visit of Japanese Prime Minister Abe to Congress and the big rally in front of the Capitol Hill, as well as the publication of WCCW in the Washington Post, it became clear that a “History War” was brewing between the Japanese right-wing and those in the US who wanted to record the truth. In the midst of controversy surrounding the truth of the “Comfort Women” history, including the recent scandal involving Harvard Professor Mark Ramseyer, I was convinced that the only way to win was to record as much evidence as possible to pass on to future generations. My first task was to write an archiving book, which includes over 100 interviews with elected officials, scholars, activists, and artists, and provides resources and contact information as an appendix for future study and research. The film is a visual version of this book, but our journey was cut short by the pandemic.

The film is divided into three parts. The first part covers the beginning of the movement when Keum-ju Hwang, a brave grandmother, visited the east coast of the US and the Korean Church in Virginia in November 1992, inspiring the founding of the organization in December that same year. The second part covers the passage of House Resolution 121 and the efforts put in by WCCW and its supporters, including a long excerpt from a 3-hour hearing recording from February 2007. The final part covers the recent activities and direction of the movement, including the building of several memorials and increased attention to the history through conferences, roundtables, lectures, and exhibitions, including several exhibitions curated by me.

As we reflect on the 30th anniversary of WCCW, the question remains: what is the next step for the movement? Archiving and educating future generations may not be enough. It is time to shift our paradigm and strive for something greater, deeper, and more powerful. The shape and scope of this new era is unknown, but we must be open to each other and work together to pave the way towards a better future, where no more victims are left in this world. This film is dedicated to the grandmothers who have passed away, those living their last years, and to all those who have dedicated their lives to being the voice of the grandmothers.

The History of Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues (WCCW, Inc) from 1992 to 2023



- 1992
 - November: Grandma Hwang Keum-ju, a former “comfort woman” of Japanese military sexual slavery during WWII testified at the United Methodist Church in Greater Washington that is covered by WTTG-TV (Fox 5).
 - December: Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues Inc. was founded, and Ms. Dongwoo Lee Hahm elected the founding president.
- 1993
 - September: Washington Post publishes (October 1, 1993) a letter by the WCCW to Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa.
 - November: 24 U.S. Members of Congress send a petition to Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa urging his government to investigate the wartime sexual slavery regime known as the “comfort women.”
- 1994
 - February: *Forum on Comfort Women* co-sponsored with Georgetown University Law Center Student Association, Washington, DC.
 - March: Presentation on “comfort women” at the *International Women’s Day Symposium on Women’s Human Rights around the World* sponsored by the University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia.
 - May: Sponsors a forum on “Comfort Women” in Washington, DC with Mr. Kenichi Takagi, Attorney-at-Law, Tokyo, Japan.
 - June: Organizes the *Asian and American United to Redress Japanese War Crimes* rally in front of the White House during Japanese Emperor Akihito’s visit. WCCW demands President Bill Clinton raise the “comfort women” issue with Emperor Akihito.
 - October: Videotapes interviews with 15 surviving “comfort women” in Seoul in order to preserve their testimonies and to produce the documentary *Comfort Women*.
- 1995
 - April/May: First exhibition and the film screening of *Comfort Women* held at the United Methodist Building, near the U.S. Capitol and the Supreme Court.
 - September: WCCW representatives attend the *Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace* convened by the United Nations 4-15 September 1995 in Beijing, China. Exhibition and screening of the *Comfort Women* documentary.
 - November: Exhibition and screening of *Comfort Women* at the Korean American Women UN Seminar held in New York City.
- 1996
 - March/April: Attends the 52nd session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland. Submits petition on behalf of the “comfort women” to the 53 States members of the Commission on Human Rights.
 - April: Invited to discuss the “comfort women” on *The Women Connection*, a television talk show in New York City.
 - June: Provides historical pictures of “comfort women” to *Time* magazine. *Time* later featured a six-page article entitled “Japan: The Furor Over Making Apologies to the Comfort Women.”
 - September: International conference, *The Comfort Women of World War II: Legacy and Lessons*, held at Georgetown University sponsored by WCCW, Georgetown University, and The Korea Society, Washington, DC (30 September to 2 October 1996).
 - October: Arranges meeting with a Korean “comfort woman” and Mr. Eli Rosenbaum, Director of the Office of Special Investigations, U.S. Department of Justice.
 - December: Department announces (December 2, 1996) that 16 Japanese citizens have been placed on the U.S. Government’s “watchlist” of aliens who are ineligible to enter the United States. Those placed on the watchlist either were members of Japanese Imperial Army units that conducted inhumane and frequently fatal experiments on humans or were involved in the operation of the so-called “comfort woman stations,” where hundreds of thousands of women were forced to have sexual relations with Imperial Army officers and enlisted men.
- 1997
 - February: Presents *WCCW* Activities in U.S. at an international symposium in Seoul, South Korea.
 - May: WCCW President Dongwoo Lee Hahm requests at a press conference on Capitol Hill that “comfort women” issues be included among the war crimes to be listed in upcoming Congressional legislation.
 - July: Congressman William O. Lipinski (D-IL) introduces H. Con. Res.126 into the U.S. House of Representatives. The resolution: *Calls upon the Government of Japan to: (1) formally issue an apology for the war crimes committed by the Japanese military during World War II; and (2) pay reparations to the victims.*
 - December: Organizes a book signing for Therese Park, author of *A Gift of the Emperor*.
- 1998
 - June: Organizes the exhibition *Comfort Women of World War II: An Indisputable Tragedy* held in the Rotunda of the Cannon House Office Building on Capitol Hill (June 1-4). Materials from the U.S. National Archives used.
- 1999
 - March/May: Exhibition *Comfort Women* of World War II held at the Free Library of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
 - March: Presents WCCW documentary *Comfort Women* at KASCON XIII (Korean American Students Conference) held at Stanford University. The conference theme was *Empowering The Han* and was co-sponsored by University of California, Berkeley. Grandma Kim Yoon Sim, a former “comfort woman” is the keynote speaker.
- 2000
 - June: Congressman Lane Evans (D-IL) introduces H. Con. Res. 357 (106th Congress) into the U.S. House of Representatives.
 - September: Fifteen former “comfort women” from South Korea, China, the Philippines, and Taiwan file a lawsuit on September 18, 2000 against Japan in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. In *Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan*, the plaintiffs allege that the Japanese military tortured and forced them into sexual slavery. [Citation: 172 F. Supp. 52 (D.D.C. 2001), *aff’d*, 332 F.3d 679 (D.C. Cir. 2003), vacated and remanded, 542 U.S. 901 (2004), *aff’d* on remand, 413 F.3d 45 (D.C. Cir. 2005), *cert. denied*, 546 U.S. 1208 (2006).]
 - September: Organizes *Human Rights Awareness Year 2000 Remembrance: Women of Dignity and Honor* event at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill. Ten surviving “comfort women” from Korea, Taiwan, Philippines, and Indonesia are honored as “Women of Dignity and Honor.”
 - September: Arranges public interviews with *Comfort Women of World War II* at the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC.
- 2001
 - April: U.S. State Department issues (April 27) a Statement of Interest advising the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to dismiss the case, *Hwang Keum-Ju v. Japan*, arguing that it involved a political question that rendered the plaintiffs’ claims nonjusticiable.
 - July: WCCW and Congressman Lane Evans (D-IL) hold a press conference at the U.S. Congress on “comfort women” issues with former “comfort woman” Grandma Kim Soon-Duk. Evans introduces H. Con. Res. 195 (107th Congress).
 - August: U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia holds a hearing on the class action lawsuit, *Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan*, filed by surviving “comfort women.”
 - June-October: WCCW conducts a signature campaign to petition the U.S. Department of State and Department of Justice to allow “comfort women” their day in court
 - September: United Nations Human Rights Committee recommends that Japan should: ensure school textbooks and other teaching materials present history in “a fair balanced manner;” compensate its wartime victims; and submit a report implementing said recommendations by June 30, 2006.
 - October: U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia grants Japan’s motion to dismiss *Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan* on October 4, 2001, holding that Japan is entitled to sovereign immunity under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (FSIA)
 - November: Co-sponsors a forum/exhibit on “comfort women” with Cornell University, Harvard University, Yale University, New York University, Princeton University, and Georgetown University. U.S. college tour *Lessons of Courage: Restoring Honor* at Georgetown University with Hwang Keum-ju, a former “comfort women,” attending from Korea.
 - December: Launches a nationwide petition campaign supporting the appeal of the “comfort women” lawsuit, *Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan*, that is mailed to the U.S. Departments of State and Justice. Participates in the 7th International Conference on Sino-Japanese Relations of WWII, in Crystal city, VA organized by Global alliance for Preserving the Truth of WWII.
- 2002
 - February: Ok Cha Soh presents on “comfort women” at the Regional Study Week, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.
 - March: Dongwoo Lee Hahm attends *The Asian Regional Symposium Demanding Liquidation on Japan’s Past* in Pyongyang, North Korea. Midwest “Comfort Women Tour.” Seminar and exhibition held at the University of Wisconsin, Northwestern University, Ohio State University, and University of Michigan with former “comfort woman” Choi Kap Sun.
 - April: *Sino-Japanese War Memorial* exhibition and panel discussion on *Comfort Women and Labor* hosted by American University and co-sponsored by WCCW.
 - May: Co-sponsored with the Asia/Pacific American Awareness Foundation a symposium in Tampa, Florida on “comfort women.” *Comfort Women Speak* book talk held with former “comfort woman” Grandma Lee Ok Sun.
 - September: Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi visits North Korea for a summit meeting with Kim Jong-Il, leader of North Korea. An urgent appeal is sent to “The Japan-North Korea Summit Meeting” to urge the two leaders to address reparations and an apology for Japan’s colonial rule and war crimes.
 - October: Ok Cha Soh participates in the Asian American study program at University of Maryland, College Park as a panel presenter on “Representation and Reparation of Justice” Rally held in front of Japanese Embassy for the “comfort women” joined by the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF).

The History of Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues (WCCW, Inc) from 1992 to 2023



- 2002
 - November: Film Screening of Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's *Silence Broken* at George Washington University, Washington, DC. WCCW co-sponsors the Asian Studies Symposium on "comfort women" at Brown University with a former "comfort woman" Grandma Hwang Keum-ju in attendance.
 - December: Appeal from district court decision in Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Protest rally held in front of the court in Washington, DC.
- 2003
 - February: WCCW co-sponsors Boston Campus Tour on "comfort women": seminar and exhibit held at Boston College, Northeastern University, Boston University, MIT, Wellesley College, and Tufts University. Former "comfort woman" Grandma Kim Hwa Sun participates.
 - March: WCCW participates in the Korean American Student Council (KASCON) conference at Cornell University.
 - June: United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit affirms the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia's dismissal of Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan on June 27, 2003.
 - June: Congressman Lane Evans (D-IL) introduces H. Con. Res. 226 (108th Congress): *Expresses the sense of Congress that the Government of Japan should: (1) issue an apology for the sexual enslavement of young women (known as "comfort women") during the colonial occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands during World War II; (2) pay reparations to the victims; (3) educate future generations about this crime against humanity; and (4) publicly refute claims that the subjugation and enslavement of such women never occurred.*
- 2004
 - June: U.S. Supreme Court vacates on June 14 th the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit decision in Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan because the Supreme Court had recently decided another case, Republic of Austria v. Altmann, that reached a different result under FISA. The Supreme Court remands the case back to the D.C. Circuit for further review.
 - September: Georgetown University hosts an art exhibition *Line of Violence* by Andrew Ward and screening the film *Silence Broken* by Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, both focused on the "comfort women."
- 2004 -2005
 - November: Worldwide signature campaign launched to oppose Japan securing a permanent seat on the UN Security Council: "No Apology, No Seat!"
- 2005
 - February: Rep. Lane Evans (D-IL) introduces H. Con. Res. 68 (109 th Congress).
 - March: U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit holds a second argument in Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan. Demonstration conducted in front of the U.S. Federal Court House, Washington, DC with former "comfort woman" Grandma Kang Il Chul participating.
 - March: Press Conference at the U.S. Congress with Congressman Lane Evans (D-IL), former "comfort woman" Grandma Kang Il Chul, and a Chinese NGO representative.
 - May: Ok Cha Soh attends an international conference demanding redress from Japan for the "comfort women" held in Tokyo, Japan.
 - June: U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit on June 28th reaffirms the district court's 2001 dismissal of the complaint in Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan.
 - September: Protest rally and press conference at the United Nations in New York City supporting the worldwide signature campaign against Japan holding a permanent seat on the UN Security Council: "No Apology, No Seat!"
 - October: Petition for a writ of certiorari for review of D.C. Circuit June 28th decision in Hwang Keum-ju v. Japan filed in the Supreme Court.
- 2006
 - February: U.S. Supreme Court on February 21st denies Hwang Keum-ju's petition for a writ of certiorari. V-Day 2006 Spotlight: *Justice to "Comfort Women"*. Symposium and press conference held on Capitol Hill with Lee Yong Soo from Korea.
 - April: Congressman Lane Evans (D-IL) introduces a revised H. Con. Res. 68 as H. Res. 759.
 - September: H. Res. 759 passes by unanimous consent through the House Committee on International Relations chaired by Congressman Henry Hyde (R-IL). This is the first time a "comfort women" bill is reported out of committee.
 - December: H. Res. 759 not reported out to House floor for a vote during the Lame Duck session.
- 2007
 - January: Congressman Mike Honda (D-CA) introduces H. Res. 121 House floor urging the Japanese government to acknowledge, apologize and accept the historical responsibility in a clear and unambiguous manner for its Imperial Army's coercion of young women into sexual slavery.
 - February: House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment chaired by Congressman Eni Faleomavaega (D-AS) holds a hearing on *Protecting the Human Rights of Comfort Women*. Surviving victims Lee Yong Soo, Kim Kun-ja, and Jan Ruff O'Herne testify as well as experts Mindy Kotler and Ok Cha Soh.
 - June: Right-wing Japanese politicians, academics, and public intellectuals place a full-page advertisement in the *Washington Post* entitled *The Facts* to discredit the "comfort women" and comparing U.S. occupation practices in Japan to "comfort stations."
 - June: House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Tom Lantos (D-CA) holds a markup of H. Res.121; it was ordered favorably out of Committee by a vote of 39-2.
 - July: H. Res. 121 passed by unanimous consent on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.
- 2009
 - July: Symposium, *War & Women's Human Rights*, held on the second anniversary of the passage of the H. Res. 121 at the Marvin Center, George Washington University, Washington, DC. Co-sponsored by WCCW and the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (The Korean Council).
- 2010
 - July: Letter sent to President Barack Obama asking his help in securing the Japanese Government's official apology and reparation for the "comfort women" during WWII in accordance with U.S. Congress H. Res. 121.
 - August: Protest rally held on the 100th Commemoration of the Japanese Annexation of Korea in front of the Japanese Embassy in Washington, DC. Letter delivered to the Embassy for the Emperor and Empress of Japan to bring to their attention the urgent need to encourage the Japanese government to resolve the "comfort women" issue.
- 2012
 - November: Symposium and art exhibition *Unveiling the Truth: The Sorrow and Hope of "Comfort Women"* to celebrate the 20th anniversary of WCCW, promote public awareness and to educate future generation co-hosted by WCCW and George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia.
 - December: Global Solidarity Action Day for the 1,000th Wednesday Demonstration. Rally held in front of the Japanese Embassy in Washington, DC.
- 2014
 - May: Unveiling ceremony for the Comfort Women Memorial Peace Garden at Fairfax County Government Center in partnership with the Fairfax County Government. The Peace Garden seeks to educate future generations with hope that the atrocities committed against "comfort women" will serve as a reminder and affirmation to the world that such crimes against humanity will not be condoned, tolerated, or forgotten.
 - August: August: "Comfort Women Memorial Day" held on August 14. "Annual International Day of Solidarity and remembrance for the "comfort women." WCCW and Southeast Asian leaders prepare a letter to Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo that is hand delivered to Ambassador Kenichiro Sasae in Washington, DC.
 - November: Seminar and exhibition *The Sorrow and Hope of "Comfort Women"* held at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, co-hosted with the WCCW.
- 2015
 - February: WCCW forum held in Vienna, Virginia. Former WCCW co-chair Moon H. Rhee gives a presentation on how the public learned about the "comfort women" and how the WCCW was founded.
 - February: Maryland State Senator Susan C. Lee (D) sponsors Senate Joint Resolution SJR0003 *Honoring the Surviving Human Trafficking Victims of Asia and the Pacific Islands During World War II*. WCCW President Jung-Sil Lee testifies for the "comfort women" at the February 11th State Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee hearing on SJR 0003.
 - April: Sponsors full-page "Open Letter to the Peoples of United States and Japan" in the *Washington Post* about the "comfort women" on the day Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo speaks to a joint meeting of Congress.
 - April: Organizes a protest rally with 12 other civic organizations of over 700 people on the U.S. Capitol grounds as Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo spoke at the joint meeting of Congress.
 - May: Organizes a panel discussion on *Wartime Atrocity against Women: The Comfort Women Case* for the Annual Kowinner World Convention. Jung-Sil Lee is organizer and moderator.
 - May: First Anniversary of the *Comfort Women Memorial Peace Garden* at the Fairfax County Government Center. Showcases musical titled *Comfort Women: New Musical*.

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- 2015

 - June: Joint protest with a surviving former “comfort woman” Grandma Kim Bok Dong and The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (The Korean Council) in front of the Japanese Embassy in Washington, DC.
 - September: Jung-Sil Lee is a guest panelist on the CCTV program The Heat to comment on Prime Minister Abe’s visit and the “comfort women” issues.
 - October 15: Jung-Sil contributes to a special edition of the *Washington Times* an op-ed on “The Future of the “Comfort Women’ Movement.”
 - October 30: First WCCW “comfort women” essay, art, and research paper competition.
 - November: One-year memorial ceremony of former U.S. Representative Lane Evans’s passing, who spearheaded the “comfort women” issues at the U.S. Congress.
 - December: Seminar on *The Accurate History Writing* with Mr. Dennis Halpin and Ms. Mindy Kotler at the WCCW’s annual meeting. WCCW issues a Statement in response to a Korea-Japan bilateral agreement on the “comfort women” that is formally known as the “Announcement by Foreign Ministers of Japan and the Republic of Korea at the Joint Press Occasion.”
- 2016

 - January: Film Screening of *Spirits’ Homecoming* at Messiah Presbyterian Church of Washington in Annandale, Virginia with Director Cho Jung-rae.
 - February: WCCW Webinar Pilot Program launched, and crowd funding initiated.
 - March: WCCW holds a press conference at the UN against the December 2015 Korea-Japan bilateral agreement with former “comfort woman” Grandma Lee Yong-soo, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), Korean American Civic Empowerment, and Korean American Forum of California in support of the March 11th statement by a group of United Nations human rights experts who urge the Japanese Government to implement without delay the recommendations made earlier that week on resolving the “comfort women” issues by the UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
 - April: Southern Methodist University Human Rights Program in Dallas, Texas invites former “comfort woman” Grandma Lee Ok Sun, Director of House of Sharing Ahn Shin-kwon and WCCW President Jung-Sil Lee who coordinated the event.
 - May: George Washington University Capstone Conference of the Webinar Project, *History Writing: for Justice and Reconciliation of Comfort Women*. Co-sponsored by WCCW, George Washington University’s Sigur Center for Asian Studies, and the University’s History Department.
 - July: Lecture by Jung-Sil Lee on *How to Teach Comfort Women Issues in a Korean Class* at the National Association for Korean Schools (NAKS) annual conference in Denver, Colorado.
 - September: WCCW organizes the art exhibition *Collateral Damage* at The Anya and Andrew Shiva Gallery at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York.
 - October: WCCW organizes *Collateral Damage: Wartime Atrocity and Trauma* Conference at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York.
 - November: WCCW participates in the Human Rights Film Festival in Calgary, Canada. President Jung-Sil Lee showcases “comfort women” history in the NGO/NPO exhibit at the conference. Jung-Sil Lee is a guest speaker at the film screening of *Apology* to discuss the “comfort women” issue and the activism of WCCW.
- 2017

 - July-Sep. WCCW President Jung-Sil Lee curates the exhibition *Truth: Promises for Peace*, Seoul that is installed in Seoul, Jeonjoo, Daejeon, and Daegu, South Korea that is organized and sponsored by the South Korean Ministry of Gender Equality and Family.
 - July: WCCW hosts an award ceremony on the 10th Anniversary of the Passage of House Resolution 121 at the Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.
 - October: WCCW founding President Dongwoo Lee Hahm and the 5th President Jung-Sil Lee present a co-authored paper *Tracing the Twenty-five Years of the Comfort Women Movement in the U.S.* at the 8th Annual Conference of The Research Center for Korean Community at Queens College, Queens, New York: *The Redress Movement for the Victims of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery: Looking Back at the 27-year Movement.*
- 2017

 - October: Hosts a screening of *Apology* and a panel discussion with its director Ms. Tiffany Hsiung.
 - November: Forum and seminar with WCCW interns, Korean students, and young professionals at the *Global Network for Next Generation for Peace and Human Rights* meeting held at Fairfax County Government Center, Fairfax, Virginia.
 - December: Hosts the WCCW 25th Anniversary Ceremony and Banquet at The Universities at Shady Grove, University of Maryland, Rockville, Maryland. Screening of *Spirits’ Homecoming, II Unfinished Story* with its director Cho Jung-rae.
- 2018

 - January: WCCW Visual Archives Center (VAC) launched. Its main goal is to archive interviews, videos, photos of the past WCCW activities, and the ephemera of the “comfort women” movement in the U.S. The team began filming a documentary on the WCCW history.
 - February: President Jung-Sil Lee presents a paper “Unforeseen Controversy: Reconciliation and Re-contextualization through Comfort Women Memorials in the U.S.” at the College Art Association (CAA) annual conference under the overarching theme *Teachable Monuments: Using Public Art to Spark Dialogue and Address Controversies* held at Los Angeles Convention Center.
 - April: WCCW hosts a lecture and an interview with Ms. Sunim Kang who helped to initiate “comfort women” activism before forming WCCW in 1992.
 - June-August: Fifteen high school interns launch an archiving project. Interns learned about the history and current issues on “comfort women” in a series of lectures and field trips to the National Archives and Records Administration to learn how to research and locate textual and visual primary sources.
 - September: Launched fellow team with graduate students of George Washington University to compile materials related to resolutions of the U.S. House of Representative and other legislatures.
 - November: WCCW co-hosts the International Film Festival *Sexual Violence in Warfare: The Films of Unhealed Wounds* on “comfort women” with the American University School of Communication at the school’s Malsi Doyle and Michael Forman Theater. Showcased nine films from five countries and organized a director’s panel discussion in cooperation with Asia Policy Point.
 - December: High school internship program/archiving project for the 2019 spring term launched.
- 2019

 - January: Youth Intern Bookmaking Project launched with three co-editors and 21 students.
 - February: WCCW President Jung-Sil Lee discusses “Appropriating, Reporting, and Re-Contextualizing of Wartime Sex Crimes by Female Artists” on the panel *Has Anyone Ever Seen an Image of War? Reassessing the Visual Culture of War and Related Disasters, Violence, and Torture in The Modern and Contemporary Moment* at the College Art Association (CAA) annual conference in New York.
 - March: Film Screening of *Silence* directed by Park Soo Nam at George Washington University and the Fairfax County Government Center. Includes panel discussion with Park Maeui, Professor Eunah Lee, and Professor Jungah Kim moderated by WCCW President Jung-Sil Lee.
 - June: Film Screening of *Silence* and WCCW President Jung-Sil Lee was invited as the speaker on Win-TV, Chicago MBC, Chicago.
 - September: Film Screening of *My Name is Kim Bok-Dong* at George Washington University and George Mason University in collaboration with the Korean Studies at George Mason University, Washington Butterfly for Hope, and The Korean Council.
 - October: Unveiling ceremony of *the Statue of Peace* in Annandale, Virginia in collaboration with the Washington Butterfly for Hope and the National Unification Advisory Council.
 - November: Intern book *Comfort Women: New Perspectives* publication ceremony held at Tysons Corners, VA.
- 2020

 - February: WCCW Chairman Jung-Sil Lee and Professor Mike Mochizuki discuss the *Memorialization of Comfort Women* on a panel hosted by George Washington University’s Organization of Asian Studies (OAS).
 - March: WCCW attends the unveiling ceremony for the Connecticut Statue of Peace, which is the 15th “comfort women” memorial in the U.S.
 - June: Publication ceremony for the WCCW sponsored archiving book *Comfort Women: A Movement for Justice and Women’s Rights* co-edited by Jung-Sil Lee and Dennis Halpin on the WCCW’s 28th Annual Meeting and the 6th Anniversary of Comfort Women Memorial Peace Garden in Virginia.
- 2021

 - WCCW launched the visual archive to produce a documentary film “Cry Out: Comfort Women Redress Movement in the US (1992~2022)” and President Helen Won fundraises for the film production.
- 2023

 - WCCW celebrates its 30th Anniversary at the Gold Room of the Rayburn House Office Bldg. organizing congressional forum “Comfort Women Redress Movement in Post-Victim Era” and documentary film screening “Cry Out: Comfort Women Redress Movement in the US (1992~2022)”