



Dear GASI Conference Attendees:

On behalf of our Board of Directors, our Executive Committee, and the Conference Planning Committee, I extend a most sincere welcome to you all. I especially appreciate the presence of so many of you who have traveled from many parts of the world to join in our interdisciplinary scholarly exchange here in Seoul for the 32nd Annual Conference of the Global Awareness Society International (GASI). It has been some years since GASI met in Asia, and we are glad to come together this year at an exciting location more convenient to our many GASI participants from the nations of Asia, veteran scholars and first-time attendees alike. Moreover, it is gratifying to meet here in Korea, where some of GASI's outstanding founders and long-time supporters have their origins. We thank the Korean people for the warm welcome we have enjoyed.

We're here to participate in a very special conference. GASI is the only organization I know that simultaneously is:

- International, for an intentional emphasis on creating new knowledge by bringing together, in mutual respect, perspectives from diverse cultures and nations across the world;
- Interdisciplinary, for the explicit purpose of achieving the broadened intellectual understanding generated by listening to each other across scholarly divides;
- Non-hierarchical, in its welcome to participants from every kind of postsecondary learning institution;
- Student-welcoming, with a significant and longstanding commitment to providing financial support for attendance by undergraduate and graduate students of scholarly promise;
- Research-sharing, with both a *Proceedings* publication of the best conference scholarship and the more formal *Journal of Global Awareness*.

Many organizations do some of these things. GASI does it all. As a participant in this year's conference, you are helping us to build this holistic and sustainable model for expansive scholarly engagement, so thank you! Please spread the word about GASI to your colleagues and students so that our good model continues to grow and thrive.

Seoul is a very appropriate location where we convene to consider our theme of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Seoul, and the Republic of Korea, represent 21st-century changes and challenges as the city and nation exemplify the most advanced technological developments and the globalization of culture, as Korean manufactured goods like cars and consumer electronics, Korean popular music, Korean film, and Korean art cross every cultural boundary and many national borders.

Korea shows what we as a world share, and that includes the challenges of peace and development summarized in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. There's no place better to consider the challenges of sustainability. And here in Seoul, we are highly fortunate to have our distinguished keynote speaker, Dr. Eun Mee Kim, President of Ewha Womans University, to start our conversation. As noted in more detail later in this program, Dr. Eun Mee Kim was appointed by the UN Secretary General as one of only fifteen independent scientists worldwide to help produce the Global Sustainable

Development Report in 2019, an honor that follows her service on many aspects of development, especially in the area of global health and gender equality here in Korea. We are honored by the welcome she has given us on behalf of Ewha Womans University, and we anticipate with excitement her scholarly keynote address on our opening morning.

I would like to thank our gracious hosts here in Seoul, starting with the Global Awareness Society of Korea (GASK) under the leadership of Dr. Oh Sook Young, President of GASK. The Global Awareness Society of Korea has generously provided conference attendees with the refreshments we will enjoy between sessions and our lunches, as well as the special gifts we all received at the registration desk. Dr. Oh initiated the invitation to hold our 32nd annual conference at Ewha Womans University. For the past year, she has corresponded with the GASI Executive Director on a nearly daily basis to handle all the nitty-gritty details of the conference. Arrangements for conference rooms, meals, the post-conference cultural tour, housing for participants, and registration materials, have all fallen on her shoulders, and she has been vital in making this conference operational.

I also would like to thank the Ewha Womans University Department of Sociology, a co-host of the conference, especially Department Chair Dr. Minzee Kim. GASI's connection with the Department of Sociology goes back to 1959, when Dr. Chang Shub Roh returned to Korea after graduate work in the United States at Louisiana State University. When GASI was founded in 1991, an enthusiastic group of Dr. Roh's former Department of Sociology students founded GASK, whose members have traveled the globe with GASI. This year we are grateful for the help Dr. Kim and her department have offered in hosting us. In providing letters for participants needing special visas, Dr. Kim has opened access to the conference for many participants and has thus been a crucial part of its success.

I also want to thank some of my GASI colleagues, especially Dr. James Pomfret, Professor Emeritus of Bloomsburg University, our acting Executive Director; and Dr. Eunice V. Akoto of Henderson State University, Vice-President, President-Elect, and Conference Program Co-Chair. Dr. Pomfret and Dr.

Akoto have been the two driving forces whose many hours of work and whose skill at meeting every organizational need have been most responsible for this year's conference—it simply couldn't happen without them. Special thanks also go to Dr. Sarah Moore of the University of North Texas, Student Scholarship and Faculty Grants Committee Chair; Dr. Rejoice Addae of Arkansas State University- Jonesboro, immediate past President; and GASI's eminent Board of Directors and Executive Committee listed in this program.

Finally, I am excited to report that the conference is bringing about 95 presenters, including about a dozen scholarship-supported students from several nations and about 10 faculty grant awardees, to Seoul. These presenters come from about 40 institutions in nine countries from around the world. Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas are all represented, all here to share our research on aspects of sustainability and to make new knowledge that matters for the future of the world.

And so, I invite you to get to know not only new ideas in the plenary talks, the panels, and the concurrent sessions of the conference, but to get to know each other—the

students, professors, and researchers with whom we will work together—to quote the GASI mission—to achieve “peace, harmony, and cooperation among the diverse people of our globe.”

Collegially yours,

Bill

William B. Lalicker, Ph.D.

President of GASI, 2022-2024; Conference Program Co-Chair, 2024

Sincere appreciation to our Conference Co-hosts:

Dr. Oh Sook Young, President, Global Awareness Society of Korea

Dr. Minzee Kim, Associate Professor,
Department of Sociology, Ewha Womans University



Ewha Womans University (courtesy google images)



*Proceedings of the Global Awareness Society International 32nd Annual
Conference May 2024, Seoul, Republic of Korea at Ewha Womans
University*