

2025

# KAMHA ANNUAL REPORT

**K**orean  
**A**merican  
**M**ental  
**H**Health  
**A**ssociation

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# Welcome Message From the KAMHA President



Over the past decade, KAMHA has grown into a strong professional community grounded in clinical excellence, cultural humility, and collaboration. As the President of KAMHA, I see this milestone year as a meaningful opportunity to reflect with gratitude and to consider the path ahead. Our impact is reflected not only in the programs and trainings we offer, but also in the work our members carry out every day in therapy rooms, schools, agencies, and communities. By fostering professional learning and connection, we strengthen the quality of care available to Korean Americans and the broader community.

This progress has been possible thanks to the many people who have given their time, care, and commitment to the association. I am especially grateful to our board members for their leadership and service, and to our members, volunteers, and community partners who continue to support and sustain KAMHA's work.

As we look ahead, we are reminded that mental health is shaped not only by individual experiences but also by broader systems, policies, and cultural narratives. As we work with individuals and families, our professional knowledge and perspectives can also contribute to the larger conversations that influence community well-being. Through education, collaboration, and thoughtful engagement, we can help foster greater understanding of and support for the communities we serve. I remain deeply grateful to be part of this community and look forward to continuing this work together as we strengthen KAMHA and the care we provide to those around us.

**Karen Lee, PhD, LCSW, MSPH**

# Welcome Message From the KAMHA Vice President

In 2025, KAMHA celebrated its 10th anniversary, marking a significant milestone as an association of diverse mental health professionals serving the Korean American community. This milestone year deepened awareness of KAMHA's mission and reaffirmed its role as a trusted organization advancing mental health through professional training and collaborative engagement within its professional network.

To commemorate its anniversary, KAMHA honored its founder, Dr. Kim-Goh, Ph.D., LCSW, along with dedicated members and community partners whose commitment over the past decade has played a vital role in advancing mental health within the Korean American community.

Guided by the 2025 theme "Resiliency & Growth," KAMHA delivered focused trainings and professional development opportunities designed to cultivate resilience and a growth mindset among mental health professionals and community members. In addition, KAMHA's Annual Networking Event brought together practitioners serving the Korean American community, strengthening professional connections, fostering collaboration, and building sustainable support networks.

In 2026, under the theme "Health in a Digital World," KAMHA will continue to expand education, training, and networking opportunities to strengthen the professional expertise of its members. As always, we are committed to serving the Korean American community and advocating for mental health by supporting mental health professionals.



**Heather Park, LMFT**

# Company Profile

## KAMHA At a Glance

Who We Are  
Leadership

# Who We Are



## About Us

Korean American Mental Health Association (KAMHA) is a nonprofit organization (501 (c)(3)) composed of professionals in the mental health service fields, dedicated to improving the mental health of Korean Americans in Southern California and beyond.

## Vision

Our vision is to break through barriers and promote access to behavioral health services in the Korean American community.

## Mission

Our mission is to advance the mental well-being of Korean Americans by empowering mental health and human service providers through networking, education, and advocacy.

# Leadership

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## EXECUTIVE BOARD

President	Karen Lee, PhD, LCSW, MSPH
Vice President	Heather Park, LMFT
Secretary General	Mija Lee, LPCC, NCC
Treasurer	Inae Yoo, LMFT
Clerk	Ga-Young Choi, PhD, MSW

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Education Committee	Juye Ji, PhD, MSW
External Relations Committee	Sylvia Kwon, LMFT
Communication Committee	Grace Yi, PhD, MSW

# Leadership

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## FOUNDER

Mikyong Kim-Goh, PhD, LCSW

## 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Young H. Choi

David Ha

Edward Kim

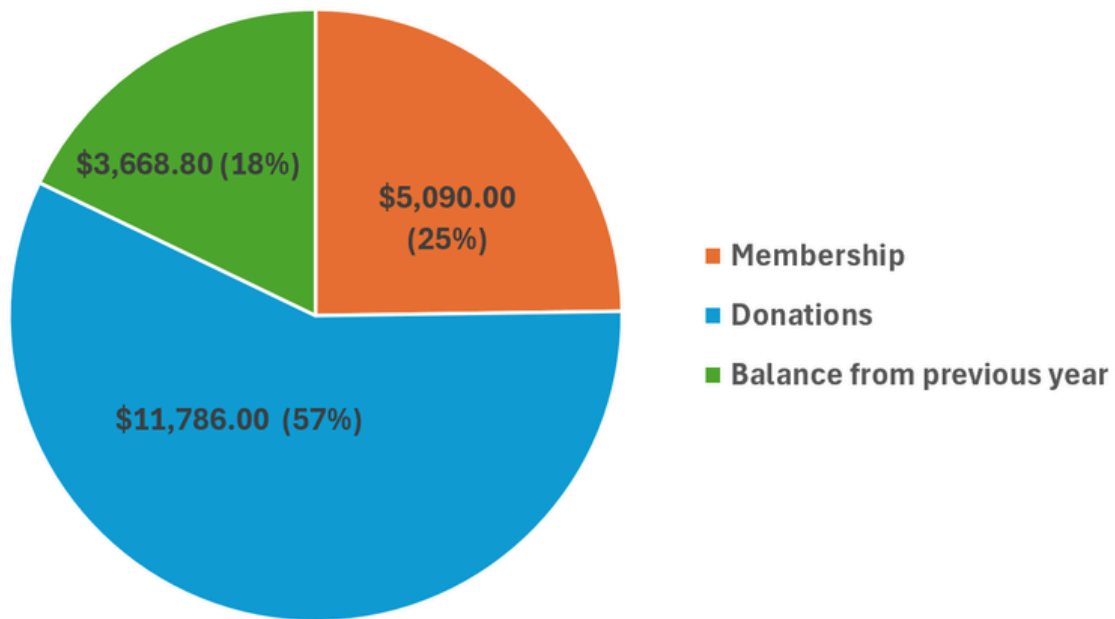
Eui-Jean Kim

Su M Kim

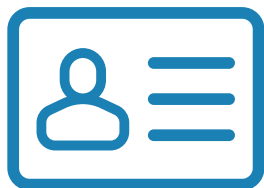
# 2025 FISCAL REPORT



# REVENUE

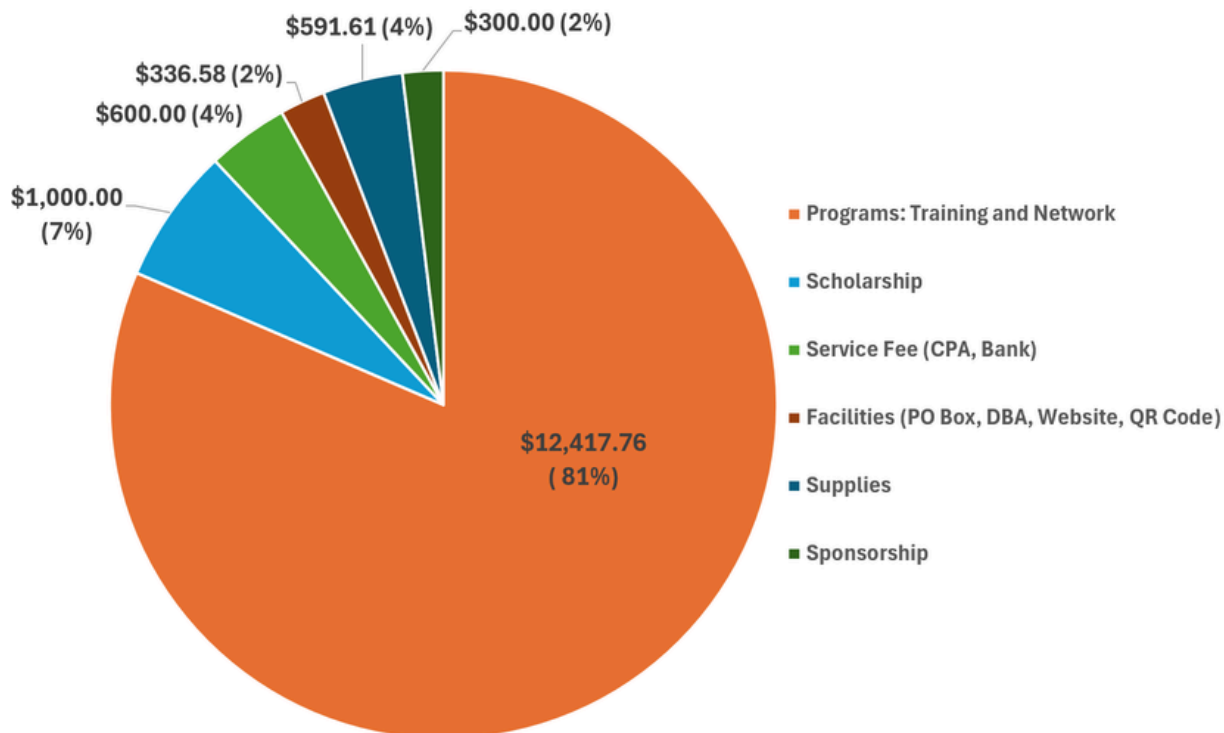


Donations were the primary source of revenue in 2025, totaling nearly \$12,000 and representing 57% of overall revenue.



Membership was the second-largest source of revenue in 2025, generating over \$5,000 and accounting for 25% of total revenue.

# EXPENSES



The largest expense category in 2025 was training and networking programs for KAMHA and community members. These expenses totaled nearly \$12,420 and comprised 81% of total expenses.



Scholarships were the second-largest expense, totaling \$1,000 and accounting for 7% of total expenses.

# KAMHA 2025 Highlights



# A QUICK VIEW

## SPRING

### March 8 | Professional Training

- Title: Reclaim & Rise: Navigating racialized trauma and resilience in Korean American mental health
- Jessica Kim, LCSW

### April 19 | Leadership Strategic Planning Meeting

- Consulted with Dr. Myungjung Kwon, a Professor of Public Administration at California State University, Fullerton, to discuss strengthening KAMHA's organizational structure and governance as a nonprofit

### April 26 | Annual Professional Networking

- Title: Building Our Story: My Journey and Our Pursuit to the Profession of Mental Health, facilitated by Dr. Ga-Young Choi

## SUMMER

### June 28 | Summer Assembly & Book Discussion

- Summer Assembly and Book Discussion with KAMHA members.
- Book: "The Anxious Generation" Discussion led by Dr. Juye Ji

## FALL

### September 27 | KAMHA 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

- Legacy Award, Community Leadership Awards, and KAMHA Scholarships were presented.

### November 15 | NAMIWalks Orange County

- Promoting and advocating for mental health in all communities

## WINTER

### December 6 | Winter Assembly & End of Year Party

- KAMHA members, professionals in the mental health fields, and supporters came together to celebrate our annual achievements.

# Event Highlights



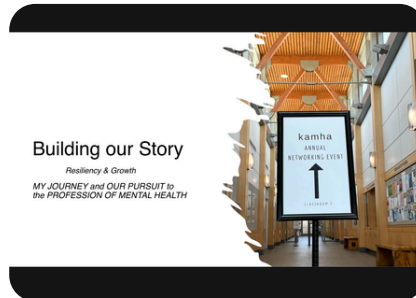
## Professional Training

In March, KAMHA invited Jessica Kim, LCSW, an expert in Korean American mental health, with specialization in trauma.



## 10th Year Anniversasy

On September 27, KAMHA and community members gathered to celebrate our 10-year anniversary.



## Annual Networking

On April 26, we held our networking meeting to support mental health professionals in building connections.



## NAMIWalks in OC

Following last year's participation, KAMHA joined the NAMIWalks in OC on November 15 to advocate for mental health and community support.



## Summer Assembly & Book Discussion

On June 28, the Education Committee, led by Chair Dr. Juye Ji, facilitated a discussion of *Anxious Generation*, authored by Jonathan Haidt.



## End of Year Party

On December 6, KAMHA members gathered together to celebrate our hard work throughout the year and to network with one another.



# KAMHA's 10<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary



On September 27, 2025, KAMHA celebrated its 10th anniversary with a joyful gathering held in Fullerton Community Center. Nearly 100 guests attended the event, creating a warm and energetic atmosphere that reflected both KAMHA's growth over the past decade and the community's shared commitment to Korean American mental health and well-being.

The celebration brought together a wide range of supporters and partners. Attendees included KAMHA members, mental health professionals serving not only Southern California but also visiting from other states, and students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in mental health-related fields. Community leaders and collaborating organizations were also present, including local social services agencies and faith communities.  
(continued on next page)

# KAMHA's 10<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary

This gathering was both a celebration of the past decade and a hopeful step forward, grounded in partnership, service, and a shared vision for mental health in the Korean American community. A key highlight of the evening was the award presentation that recognized individuals whose leadership and service have strengthened KAMHA's mission to enhance and advocate for mental health in the Korean American community.



*Pictured are the award recipients and the current KAMHA president. From left to right: Ms. Dongsook Yoo, Ms. Ellen Ahn, Dr. Mikyong Kim-Goh, and Dr. Karen Lee*

The Legacy Award was presented to Dr. Mikyong Kim-Goh, a founder of KAMHA and Emeritus Professor of Social Work at California State University, Fullerton, in recognition of her longstanding passion and advocacy for the Korean community and mental health.

The Community Leadership Awards were presented to Ms. Ellen Ahn, JD, MSW, the Chief Executive Officer of KCS in Orange County, for her contributions to expanding community health clinics and support programs, and Ms. Dongsook Donie Yoo, LCSW, the Director of the Hanmi Family Counseling Center, for her over 30 years of support and leadership in the field. (continued on next page)

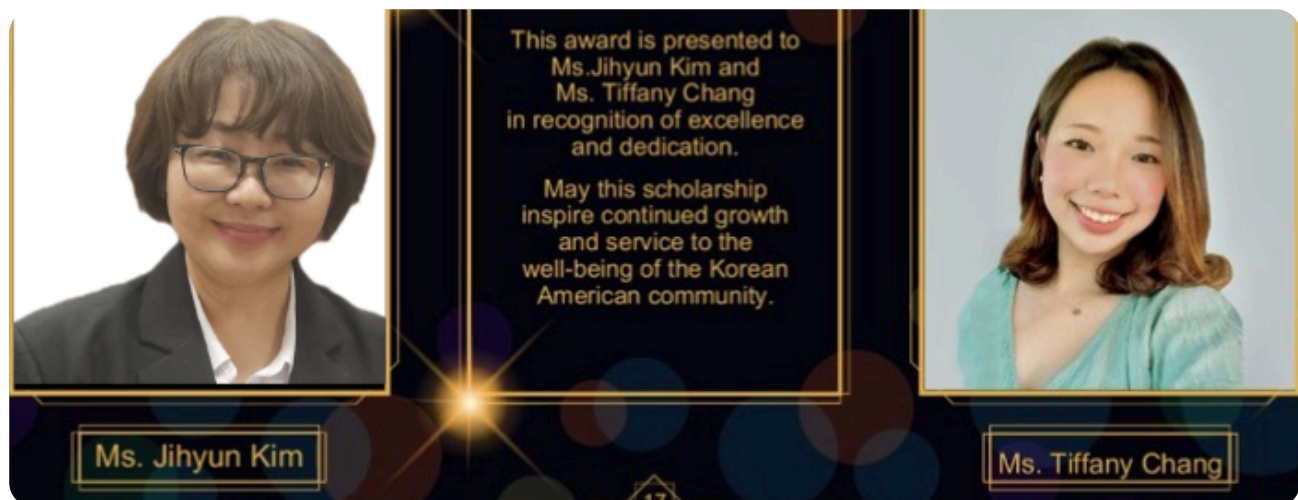


# KAMHA's 10<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary

To mark the 10th anniversary, KAMHA celebrated a significant new chapter: the launch of a scholarship for students who have demonstrated a strong commitment to serving the Korean American community. This initiative highlights our commitment to investing in cultivating the next generation of culturally responsive mental health professionals. We are excited to announce our first scholarship recipients: Ms. Jihyun Kim (California State University, Los Angeles, BASW student) and Ms. Tiffany Chang (California State University, Long Beach, MSW student).

The 10th anniversary celebration was made possible through the time, care, and dedication of many volunteers. Their behind-the-scenes support ensured that the event was welcoming, meaningful, and well-organized.

As KAMHA looks ahead, this 10th-year anniversary gathering served as both a celebration of the past 10 years and a hopeful step forward—grounded in partnership, service, and a shared vision for mental health in the Korean American community.



*Pictured are the 2025 KAMHA scholarship awardees: Ms. Jihyun Kim (left) and Ms. Tiffany Chang (right)*

# KAMHA's 10-Year Legacy

KAMHA was founded by Dr. Mikyong Kim-Goh in 2015 in response to the growing need for culturally responsive mental health support within the Korean American community. Under Dr. Kim-Goh's leadership as President from 2015 to 2017, KAMHA established its mission, built a strong professional network, and began to strengthen community awareness of mental health. Following Dr. Kim-Goh's presidency, Ms. Tani Gho served as KAMHA's second President from 2018 to 2019. Her term coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, a particularly challenging period marked by heightened need, limited resources, and ongoing lack of awareness in the Korean American community. The steady leadership of two presidents during these foundational and difficult years was essential to KAMHA's sustainability and growth. Without their tenacity and commitment, KAMHA would not have reached its 10th year. Since 2020, Dr. Karen Lee has served as president.

*Pictured are Dr. Mikyong Kim-Goh (left, founder of KAMHA) and Dr. Karen Lee (right, current president of KAMHA).*



Celebrating our decade of history, we are pleased to share a commemorative speech by Dr. Kim-Goh, a founder of KAMHA. In her remarks, she traces the development of KAMHA from its early beginnings and articulates the philosophy that has shaped our work over the past decade. Her message offers a clear window into KAMHA's history, identity, and enduring commitment to advancing mental health and well-being in the Korean American community. (continued on next page)

# Dr. Mikyong Kim-Goh's Award Speech

*Thank you so much for this wonderful honor. I am truly humbled by this recognition and deeply appreciative of the KAMHA leadership and everyone who worked so hard to plan this 10-year anniversary celebration.*

*The journey of KAMHA began on September 29, 2015, at the Village Conference Room in Santa Ana. At that time, Sylvia Kim, a human rights lawyer and then-Executive Director of MECCA, graciously hosted our very first gathering. Around that period, the Korean population in Orange County was growing rapidly, nearly doubling from 2000 to 2020. Cities like Buena Park and Fullerton were even being recognized as part of a new Koreatown.*

*But this growth also revealed something important—the pressing need for mental health services for Korean immigrants, many of whom faced language barriers and limited access to resources. Against this backdrop, KAMHA was born. Our vision was simple yet vital: to bring Korean American mental health professionals together to promote the well-being of our community through education, networking, and advocacy.*

*At our very first meeting, 17 professionals showed up—social workers, marriage and family therapists, aspiring psychologists, and nonprofit leaders. Many of them are still with us today. Originally we called ourselves KAMHPA, but we chose to drop “Professionals” to make the group more inclusive. That decision has truly shaped who we are.*

*Although I have spent most of my professional career as a university faculty member, at heart I have always been a social worker. Staying connected to the Korean community has been one of my deepest commitments. I have always believed that social work teaching and research must be informed by community voices—and in turn, those voices shape the work we do. For me, KAMHA has been a way to bridge the university, the community, and the mental health profession.*

*Starting an organization is one thing, but sustaining it is another. Like many membership-based organizations, KAMHA has faced ups and downs in membership. We've celebrated seasons of growth, and we've endured times when numbers declined. But through it all, we never lost sight of our purpose—why KAMHA was created and why it must continue. Our resilience comes from the relationships we've built—rooted in trust, respect, and above all, dedication. I have never encountered a more selfless group than our KAMHA officers, who continue to give their time, energy, and expertise so generously.*

*A true turning point came in 2023, when KAMHA achieved nonprofit status. This milestone would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of leaders like Dr. Karen Lee, Heather Park, Inae Yoo, Mija Lee, Dr. Ga-Young Choi, Sylvia Kwon, and Dr. Juye Ji. In our early years, we had great ideas and intentions, but limited resources to carry them out. Today, with our membership nearly tripled, we are able to balance both community education and professional training.*

*I believe the potential of KAMHA is limitless. But as a member-driven organization, its strength relies on all of us—our participation, our sense of ownership, and our collective vision. So today, I invite each of you to find your place within KAMHA, to contribute, and to continue building this community together.*

*Together, I know we can achieve great things.*

*Thank you.*

# Messages from KAMHA Members



## Yisook Baik, LCSW

Hello! I am Yisook Baik, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice in San Diego. Since obtaining my Master's degree in Social Work in New York in 1989, I have spent more than thirty years working in the mental health sector, frequently as one of the only Korean professionals in my workplace. Throughout my career, I have continuously reflected on how best to share my expertise and experience with the Korean community. I have also sought opportunities to connect with colleagues who understand the unique challenges faced by Asian American professionals in this field.



In 2021, I had the privilege of meeting Professor Karen Lee at a networking event, where I was introduced to KAMHA. I was so thrilled to learn that KAMHA existed! This discovery led me to participate in a Narrative Therapy Workshop in 2022 and, subsequently, to engage in the online Book/Study Group in 2023 and 2024, where we explored works such as “The Boy who was raised as a Dog” and “Self-Compassion.” Each session provided invaluable insights and encouragement from colleagues who shared my passion and vision. I was particularly inspired by our facilitators, current faculty members, whose dedication to fostering common humanity, dignity, and kindness left a lasting impression.

In 2025, my professional journey was further enriched as KAMHA colleagues gathered biweekly for the Peer Consultation Study Group. These meetings reminded me of the importance of ongoing education and mutual support among mental health counselors. Every other Tuesday evening, we gather via Zoom for two hours of in-depth discussion on diverse and complex cases, striving to learn from one another and uphold the highest standards of care for our clients.

I wholeheartedly encourage everyone to take part in KAMHA's small group programs. These gatherings provide excellent opportunities for learning, professional growth, self-care, and building strong connections within our community. By joining these initiatives, we can make a meaningful difference in our workplaces, support the Korean community, and have a positive impact on society. I am truly grateful to the officers and volunteers whose dedication throughout 2025 has made these programs possible.



## Anna Kim, MSW

Hi, my name is Anna Kim, and I joined KAMHA in April 2017. At that time, I had just enrolled as an MSW student at the University of Southern California and felt completely clueless. I was desperately in need of wisdom, mentorship, and resources. Thankfully, a friend who was already a member of KAMHA invited me to a meeting. I immediately jumped at the opportunity to learn from seasoned professionals in the field.

Throughout the two years of my graduate program, I tried to absorb as much wisdom as I could from the KAMHA community. I encountered so many experienced and compassionate leaders who were deeply committed to meeting the mental and emotional needs of the Korean American community. Before joining KAMHA, I had often heard that Koreans carried a strong stigma around mental health. I initially assumed there would not be many people within the Korean community who truly prioritized mental and emotional well-being. However, being part of KAMHA opened my eyes. I realized not only how significant the mental health needs were in the Korean community, but also how many dedicated professionals were actively working to address them with heart and integrity.

With the mentorship and resources I received through KAMHA, I successfully graduated with my MSW and earned my Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) credential in School Social Work. My professional work has centered around supporting children and families within school settings and promoting mental and emotional well-being at an early age. In addition, I have published two children's picture books centered around mental and emotional health themes. My first book, *Butterfly Magic*, was written during graduate school, and my second book, *Hope's Crane*, gently addresses grief through the eyes of a young child.

I am also a mother to a Pre-K daughter, which has deepened my passion for early childhood mental and emotional development. As I continue to parent and advocate alongside KAMHA, my vision is to establish a Social Emotional Learning Academy for young children. I believe that supporting children's mental and emotional well-being at an early age creates stronger families and healthier communities.

The mental and emotional health of young children has become more important to me than ever before, and having KAMHA as a steady source of support and collaboration is incredibly meaningful. I look forward to continued learning and growth as KAMHA expands its impact. I remain deeply grateful for this community and the important work it continues to do.

## Jane Lee, AMFT

As I completed my licensure application, I found myself quietly reflecting on the journey that has brought me to this moment. I was reminded of something a professor once said during my very first semester in the MFT program:

*“You have begun a truly lonely journey.”*

At the time, I did not fully grasp the depth of those words. It was only after completing my studies and working in community mental health—experiencing firsthand the emotional demands and isolation that can accompany this profession—that their meaning truly revealed itself. It was during this season of growth and self-discovery that I was introduced to KAMHA.

Simply meeting fellow professionals who shared the same language, cultural background, and calling brought profound comfort and encouragement. Through KAMHA’s workshops, seminars, and peer consultation, what once felt like a solitary path gradually became a shared journey alongside colleagues and mentors. For this sense of belonging, I am deeply grateful to KAMHA for fostering such a supportive community.

The recent KAMHA Annual Networking event offered a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the path that brought me here and to share our stories with one another. Hearing fellow members’ journeys renewed my sense of purpose and deepened my commitment to this profession.

Within KAMHA, members are at many different stages of their professional journey—those just beginning, those finding fulfillment, those experiencing moments of doubt, and those preparing for what lies ahead. What makes this community truly special is knowing we do not walk these seasons alone. This shared space for growth and support is an immeasurable source of strength.

As we move forward, I hope we continue to stand together through KAMHA—serving unmet needs in our communities, reaching populations that have long gone unsupported, and creating pathways for future generations of Korean American mental health professionals.



# Jihyun Kim

## BASW Student

I would like to express my deep gratitude to KAMHA for awarding me this scholarship. It was a great honor to receive the first KAMHA scholarship. This scholarship was more than a simple academic achievement. It was meaningful encouragement that recognized my efforts to persevere and do my best even in difficult circumstances. At the same time, it was a precious experience that allowed me to reflect on how much I have grown.



As a Korean immigrant who came to the United States in my twenties, I experienced cultural and language barriers, which allowed me to deeply empathize with the conflicts and difficulties immigrants face. As a single mother raising three children and a low-income worker, I also personally experienced the reality that although social policies exist, limitations in access to information, language barriers, and cultural misunderstandings often prevent people from receiving the help they need. These experiences helped me realize how deeply structural barriers affect socially vulnerable individuals and led me to the determination to help those who are marginalized due to differences in language and culture.

Therefore, I am currently majoring in Social Work at California State University, Los Angeles, where I am learning and growing to become someone who brings hope to others who face struggles similar to mine.

At one time, in the midst of the sudden and painful collapse of my family, I struggled with anxiety, extreme fatigue, and deep emotional pain as I worked tirelessly to support and protect my children. My health gradually declined, my vision and hearing worsened, and eventually, I experienced difficulty breathing and had to go to the emergency room. At that time, I believed that my heart was damaged due to overwork, but medical tests showed no abnormalities. (continued on next page)

The doctor later explained that I was experiencing symptoms of panic disorder and recommended psychological counseling. Through that experience, I came to understand how psychological anxiety and emotional pain can affect the body. While studying psychology and human behavior, I learned that mental health is not a weakness but an essential element for survival and growth. Through education, support from others, and my relationship with God, I was gradually able to restore my self-esteem.

As an intern and student worker at the Los Angeles City College (LACC) City Cares Network, I meet students who experience homelessness, poverty, trauma, and economic hardship. In particular, while supporting immigrant students and vulnerable populations, I introduced mental health workshops at LACC that could provide empathy and encouragement to those facing hardships. Currently, a Korean-speaking instructor from the LA County Department of Mental Health visits the campus each month to conduct mental health workshops in Korean.

Through these workshops, many Korean immigrant students have come to recognize the importance of caring for their mental health. Also, they can communicate more comfortably and feel understood and respected within their cultural identity because the sessions are conducted in Korean. This experience has also deepened my understanding of the needs of our Korean immigrant community and the importance of culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health support.

This scholarship has once again affirmed that my life, in which I have quietly done my best even in hardship, is connected to my calling to serve those who are struggling. It also felt like encouragement for the work I am currently doing. I hope to become a social worker who brings compassion, dignity, and hope to individuals and families who feel marginalized. I sincerely thank KAMHA for believing in students like me, encouraging us, and working toward mental health equity in our society.



# THANK YOU

With Gratitude to Our Contributors



# Special Thanks to Our Donors

(Alphabetical order by last name)

Helen Ahn	Janice Choi	Young H Choi
David Ha	Jeong Im Hong	Juye Ji
Veronica Kim	Youngok Kim	Mikyong Kim-Goh
Sylvia Kwon	Edward Kwon	Sunmin Lee
Mija Lee	Young Lee	Michelle Oh
Chan Park	Eun Kyung Park	
Korean Community Services		



# Special Thanks to Our Volunteers

(Alphabetical order by last name)

## 2025 Community Volunteers

Sujin Cho	Haven Kim	Sunyoung Lee	Suyeon Lee
Hyewon Nam	Jieun Shin	Mi Young Shin	Erin Yi

## 2025 Member Volunteers

Eunice Jeon	Lydia Kim	Cindy Lee	Hyemin Lee
Rachel Lee	Rain Lee	Mijoung Park	

## 2025 Ad Hoc Scholarship Committee

Tani Gho	Rain Lee	Heather Park
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***We extend our sincere gratitude to our members, supporters, and mental health advocates for sharing your time, expertise, and unwavering commitment to KAMHA!***

# KAMHA 2025 Annual Report



Korean American Mental Health Association

**2025 Annual Report Editors**  
Communication Committee  
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Tiffany Chang, Member  
Eunice Jeon, Member



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