A little bit about NKHR

- An NGO focused solely on the human rights issues in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
- Three teams
  - Campaign: advocates to the public and to international organizations like the U.N. about the importance of attention to North Korean human rights violations
  - Education: helps North Korean defectors resettle in South Korea by providing young North Koreans with lessons in math, English, etc.
  - Rescue: rescues North Korean refugees in China and provides a safe path so that they may resettle in South Korea
Work Responsibilities

- Depends on fluency in Korean
  - Other interns, who were fluent in Korean, worked primarily on translation tasks and get more work
- I worked as a part of the Campaign Team
  - Managed the NKHR Facebook page
    - Created posts (pictured to the right) to inform people about important events/ongoings with regards to the work NKHR does
  - Edited translations of defector testimonies
  - Compiled information on Embassies/Consulates in South Korea
  - Tutored North Korean students in English
  - Compiled information on discrimination against women and disabled persons in North Korea for a conference
Added Bonuses!

- Free yummy lunch with the rest of the office!
- Lots and lots of conferences and seminars!
- Visiting Ganghwado (small island near border between N. and S. Korea) to look at North Korea
Most Rewarding Aspect of Work

- Tutoring a North Korean defector in English
  - A small part of the work we did at NKHR but seeing her passion for learning, hearing her stories, and knowing that we were able to do something directly to help the people that we had read and researched about was really heartwarming and fulfilling.
  - The young girl said that she was motivated to learn English after watching and interview that Yeonmi Park, a North Korean defector and activist, had done in English. Her dream was to learn English well enough to be able to tell her story the same way that Yeonmi Park had.
My Impact on NKHR

- Increasing engagement on Facebook
  - Prior to our internship, the office irregularly updated the Facebook page whenever someone had enough time to make a post. They also didn’t use any photo editing applications to make their photos more appealing.
  - We increased the engagement on Facebook by 50%

- Contributed critiques against the Democratic Republic of Korea’s Disabled Persons Act and Criminal Law that will be used by my supervisor at the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in Geneva in October 2017
  - Identified clauses and articles in these legal documents that
    - Discriminated against women or against disabled persons
    - Detailed or showed a lack of sexual education, contraception, or abortion
Impact on Academic/Career Plans

- I chose this IIP placement not for its relation to my career field (medicine) but for a passion that I had for human rights, specifically North Korean human rights.
- However, I realized through this internship that I may prefer to work as a health professional in a small clinic in a rural area rather than a general hospital in a large and developed city.
- Academically, since I take Korean at Princeton, the two months I spent in Korea greatly improved my grasp of the language. I didn’t have to speak Korean much as the office because my supervisor and many coworkers spoke fluent English. However, travelling around Korea made it necessary to use Korean!
Cultural Awareness

◦ The uniformity in Korean culture was the most startling thing
  ◦ People tend to wear the same clothes, have the same haircut, and wear similar makeup styles.
  ◦ People also pay a lot of attention to their appearance; people don’t tend to walk around in workout clothes or pajamas. They look very put together.

◦ People like to take care of you and become affectionate of you quickly
  ◦ This is a really lovely cultural thing and it often comes out when eating or drinking.

◦ Respect for elders is taken very seriously!!!
  ◦ There are seats on the subway that are specifically for elders, disabled persons and pregnant women; DO NOT SIT HERE!
  ◦ Elders may push you out of seats or lecture you for not giving up your seat for them (very rare but can happen).
The Beauty of Seoul