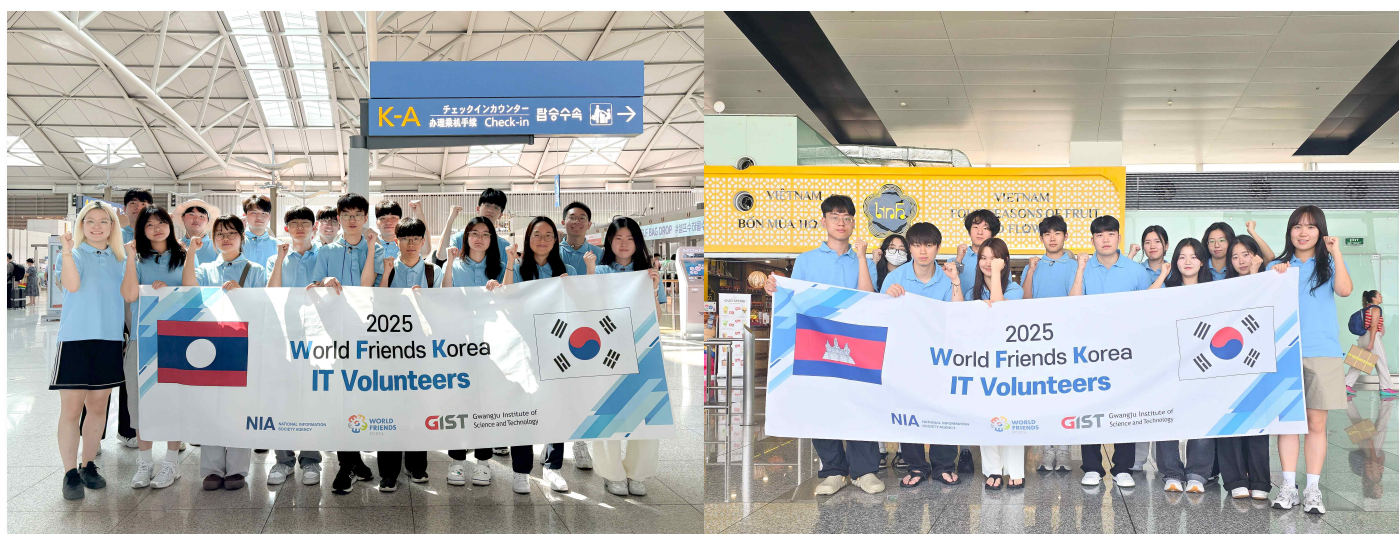


# "From AI and Coding to K-Pop, Korean Youth Deliver Hope" GIST sends IT volunteers to Laos and Cambodia

- 28 GIST undergraduate students were dispatched as part of the World Friends Korea (WFK) IT volunteer group, providing three weeks of IT, Korean language, and Korean culture education to local students. A total of 172 students have been dispatched since 2014.
- The GIST Development Foundation also donated 5 million won worth of supplies to local educational institutions. Seung-wan Seo, a volunteer, said, "It was a valuable time, and we learned more than we shared."



▲ The 2025 World Friends Korea (WFK) IT Volunteer Group poses for a commemorative photo at the airport before departure. (From left) Laos Volunteer Group and Cambodia Volunteer Group

The Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology (GIST, President Kichul Lim) announced that 28 undergraduate students selected as members of the World Friends Korea (WFK) IT volunteer group were dispatched to Laos and Cambodia during summer vacation to engage in social contribution activities through information technology education and cultural exchange. They returned home in early August.

This volunteer group dispatch was designed to leverage GIST's IT expertise and the capabilities of young talent to contribute to bridging the education gap in developing countries and provide students with opportunities to experience the responsibility and values of sharing as global citizens.

A total of 16 students were divided into four teams and dispatched to Laos for three weeks, from Monday, July 14 to Friday, August 1, in the capital city of Vientiane and the Vang Vieng region. They returned home on the morning of Sunday, August 3.

The volunteer group provided education on ▲ IT (3D graphic design, AI, website creation project, MS Office, coding), ▲ Korean culture (K-POP, cooking, traditional games, etc.), and ▲ Korean language to about 100 local middle and high school students and civil servants at the ▲ Vientiane Capital Skills Development Center and ▲ Vangvieng Ethnic School in Vientiane, the capital of Laos.



▲ The 2025 World Friends Korea IT Volunteer Group is teaching local students at their designated institutions (Vang Vieng Ethnic School and Sarsardam High School).

The "Helper's High" team (Team Leader Seong-bin Hwang) and the "LOKO" team (Team Leader Yeong-jun Lim) provided training focused on 3D graphic design, AI, and website creation at the Vientiane Capital Technology Development Center. The "SARAD" team (Team Leader Seung-wan Seo) and the "Laosnap" team (Team Leader Na-yoon Lee) taught MS Office, video editing, and coding at the Vang Vieng Ethnic School.

Student Seung-wa Seon said, "Despite the language barrier, we were able to communicate effectively using image data and various tools, and the enthusiastic responses from the local students were deeply rewarding. It was a valuable experience, and we returned having learned more than we shared."

In Cambodia, 12 students, divided into three teams, provided volunteer teaching services at Sasarsdam High School in Siem Reap for three weeks from Wednesday, July 16th to Tuesday, August 5th. They returned home on the morning of Wednesday, August 6th.

Teams G.I.S.T (led by Seung-hwan Oh), G-Bong-i (led by Chan-beom Park), and Saeng-saeng-i (led by Yeon-ju Kim) provided 92 Sasarsdam High School students with IT classes, including AI, Python, and 3D printer training, as well as Korean culture and Korean language classes, covering topics like K-pop, cooking, and traditional games.

Despite the local internet conditions and high temperatures, Yeon-ju Kim remained enthusiastic about the lessons, stating, "The communication that transcended language and environmental constraints resonated deeply with us all and provided valuable lessons."



▲ The GIST Development Foundation donated learning support supplies to the 2025 World Friends Korea IT Volunteer Group dispatched to Vang Vieng Ethnic School and Sassar Dam High School, posing for a commemorative photo.



GIST is also strengthening its foundation for ongoing collaboration with local institutions through this overseas dispatch. To this end, Vice President for Public Affairs Yonghwa Chung visited Laos and Cambodia for a six-day, four-night trip from Tuesday, July 22nd to Sunday, July 27th.



▲ Vice President for Public Affairs Yonghwa Chung presents a donation document to the principal of Sassar Dam High School in Cambodia.

Vice President Chung visited a local education site in Laos, encouraged the volunteer students, and attended the donation ceremony. He then discussed ways to expand exchanges and cooperation and provide educational support with officials at Sassar Dam High School in Cambodia.

Vice President for Public Affairs Yonghwa Chung said, “I am proud to see GIST students practicing IT knowledge sharing across borders and growing into global talents,” and added, “We will continue to expand GIST’s global leadership through continued international exchange and social contribution activities.”



▲ Local media reports show the GIST World Friends Korea IT Volunteer Group and Vice President for Public Affairs Yonghwa Chung donating learning support items to the director of the Vientiane Capital Technology Development Center in Laos.

Meanwhile, the GIST Development Foundation, in conjunction with the volunteer group's dispatch, donated a total of 5 million won worth of items (including 200 portable fans and school supplies) to educational institutions in Laos and Cambodia, where students are passionate about their studies but face challenging educational environments.

GIST Development Foundation Chairman Hae-myung Kim stated, "We hope this will be of some help to local students who have maintained their passion for learning despite difficult circumstances." He added, "The GIST Development Foundation will continue to assess local needs and actively seek practical support measures to improve the educational environment and foster student growth."

President Kichul Lim stated, "Overseas volunteer work is a valuable opportunity for students to understand diverse cultures, connect with local communities with sincerity, and develop global competencies." He added, "GIST will continue to expand diverse international exchange and volunteer opportunities so that students can practice sharing and fulfill their social responsibilities on the global stage."

Meanwhile, GIST, in collaboration with the National Information Society Agency (NIA), has dispatched World Friends IT volunteers to Vietnam in 2014, Moldova from 2015 to 2019, Panama (online education) in 2020, Bhutan and Vietnam (online education) in 2021, Laos in 2023 and 2024, and Laos and Cambodia this year. The cumulative number of volunteers dispatched thus far has reached 172.

