

“The passion for learning knows no borders” GIST IT Volunteer Corps dispatched to Laos concludes mission... Global education sharing continued since 2014

- The World Friends Korea (WFK) IT Volunteer Corps, now in its 12th year, dispatched 16 undergraduate students to Laos again this year to conduct two weeks of practical training in AI, coding, and 3D printing for 93 local trainees
- Also donated IT equipment to educational institutions in Laos... Laying the foundation for learning that continues even after the training



▲ The 2026 World Friends Korea IT Volunteer Corps is taking a commemorative photo before departure.

The Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology (GIST, President Kichul Lim) announced that 16 undergraduate students selected as the ‘World Friends Korea (WFK) IT volunteer group’ returned to Korea on the 5th after completing volunteer work in Laos during summer vacation, including hands-on IT education, donating educational equipment, and operating a Korean culture experience program.

Students planned their own educational programs in cooperation with local educational institutions and shared the knowledge and experience they had accumulated in their respective fields of study with local students.

This volunteer group worked in Vientiane and Vang Vieng, Laos, for about two weeks from Monday, July 20th to Friday, July 31st. 16 GIST undergraduate students were divided into 4 teams and carried out volunteer work for a total of 93 local trainees and students.

The 'Dongdong Team' (Team Leader Yun-ah Lee, 3rd year Department of Chemistry) and the 'Kuamwang Team' (Team Leader Seung-yun Choi, 2nd year Challenge & Exploration Program) supported the enhancement of digital literacy skills by conducting practical IT training—including the use of ▲ generative artificial intelligence (AI), ▲ programming, and ▲ 3D design—for trainees of various age groups receiving vocational education at the Vientiane Capital Skills Development Center.



▲ *The 2026 World Friends Korea IT Volunteer Corps is conducting classes for local trainees and students at their dispatch institutions (Vientiane Capital Skills Development Center and Vang Vieng School for Ethnic Minorities).*

The 'Haebong Team' (Team Leader Ha-yeon Jeong, 2nd year, Department of Life Sciences) and the 'Susu Team' (Team Leader Ye-eun Song, 4th year, Department of Materials Science and Engineering) conducted experience-oriented education at Vangvieng Ethnic School. They ran project-based classes utilizing AI, coding, Arduino-based physical computing, and 3D printing, allowing students to personally produce and present their own results.

In addition, they introduced Korean culture and interacted with local students through various cultural experience programs, including basic Korean, K-POP experiences, and traditional games.

The Vientiane Technology Development Center stated, “Thanks to the GIST volunteers, the trainees gained valuable learning opportunities,” while Vangvieng Ethnic School highly appreciated the students’ active participation and expressed hope for continued educational cooperation with GIST in the future.

GIST donated IT educational equipment, such as laptops, Arduino educational kits, and 3D printers, to local institutions to ensure that practical training could continue even after the volunteer activities.

Meanwhile, the GIST Foundation also contributed to improving the learning environment for local students by donating school supplies worth approximately 5 million won.

Since 2024, the Foundation has been sponsoring learning materials for the GIST Overseas Volunteer Corps, continuing its commitment to sharing through education and contributing to the international community.

Eun-mo Choi, President of the GIST Foundation, stated, “The passion for learning knows no borders,” adding, “I hope this support serves as an opportunity for local students to cultivate new dreams and a better educational environment. We will continue our support to contribute to the international community through education.”



▲ *The 2026 World Friends Korea IT Volunteer Corps, organized by the GIST Foundation, is taking a commemorative photo after donating school supplies to their host organizations. (From left) Vientiane Technology Development Center, Vang Vieng Small Ethnic Group School.*

Seung-yoon Choi, a student participating in the volunteer group (2nd year, Challenge & Exploration Program; Team Leader Am-wang Ku), shared his thoughts, saying, “The process of learning and interacting with local students was meaningful. Although it was a short time, I was able to form precious connections that will remain in my memory for a long time.”

Student Ha-yeon Jeong, (Sophomore, Department of Life Sciences; Haebong Team Leader) said, "The students in Vang Vieng actively took on the challenge of 3D design, which they were encountering for the first time, and created their own unique results." She added, "Watching the students solve problems and complete projects on their own, I realized once again that education is a process that builds confidence."

President Kichul Lim stated, "Through the educational cooperation in Laos, which has continued for four years since 2023, we were able to confirm the local students' high motivation to learn and their passion and willingness to participate in practical IT education." He continued, "We will continue to expand practice-oriented IT education and further develop a sustainable international educational cooperation model that grows together with local educational institutions."

Meanwhile, GIST, in collaboration with the National Information Society Agency (NIA), has operated the World Friends Korea IT Volunteer Corps a total of 12 times, starting with Vietnam in 2014 and extending to Moldova, Panama, Bhutan, Laos, and Cambodia and plans to continue expanding global social contribution activities based on digital technology and contribute to fostering future IT talent and bridging the educational gap in the global community.