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Culture on display at BI's first Korean Heritage Night

By [Joshua Kornfeld](#) • May 13, 2025 1:30 am



A group performance from Pacific Fusion Taekwondo national champions and gold medalists at BI's Korean Heritage Night May 8.

Over 300 people packed into the Woodward Middle School gymnasium May 8 to experience the first Korean Heritage Night on Bainbridge Island.

The event was a collaboration between Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Arts & Humanities Bainbridge, nonprofit SolJoy Peaceful Warriors, and local performers.

"This is the first time in 168 years that Kitsap County has had a Korean Heritage Night," organizer and SolJoy founder/CEO Anna Choi said.

SolJoy Peaceful Warriors is a nonprofit dedicated to somatic mindfulness and wellness training for underserved leaders. Choi said the goal of the peace performance was to celebrate Korean culture and raise money to support trainings through SolJoy. The nonprofit set a goal of raising \$10,000 and raised \$3,754 as of May 12.

The event featured several local performance groups, including Morning Star Korean Cultural Center drummers and dancers, Pacific Fusion Taekwondo national champions and gold medalists, Sakai Culture Club students and Bainbridge Dance Center hip hop students.

“Tonight, we boldly celebrate Korean heritage in honor of Asian, American Native, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. And also we were honoring Mental Health Awareness Month. Right now, more than ever, people’s mental health is at risk with all the sudden changes that are happening, whether it’s from our current administration, from (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) cutbacks or hostilities that many underrepresented communities face,” Choi said.

Choi said her inspiration for the event was in part to improve representation of Korean culture on BI and provide healing and opportunities for mindfulness training for underrepresented leaders.

“We wanted full participation from the entire community of all cultures to celebrate Korean heritage. And it became very apparent in the journey of creating this how many people of all cultures love Korean heritage,” Choi said.

Choi is already looking at possible future community events.

“ We want this to keep building momentum, not just year to year, but in between,” she said.

Guyeon Josslin, a member of the Sakai Culture club, performed DahnMuDo Qigong, a Korean healing martial art rooted in the Tao, with SolJoy.

“Before, I didn’t feel like my culture was really recognized. And sometimes I felt people kind of looked down on me a little because they don’t know much about it. And now I feel like that’s kind of been released,” she said.

Local artist Bella Kim of Gig Harbor, whose work Arirang 2.0 was previously displayed at BIMA, served as central scenery for the show. Arirang is a famous Korean folk song.

Kim used recycled packaged plastic, which she collected herself and with help from friends. She estimated it took around five months to be able to put the piece together.

“It’s really important to learn about all these cultures. There’s a lot of cultures that aren’t recognized quite as much because they’re not as famous in the U.S., but I think it’s really important to recognize it and spend some time learning about it,” Josslin said.

Korean Heritage Night is part of a month-long Asian Arts and Heritage Festival held throughout May. Stephanie Reese, AHB boardmember, founded the festival in 2024. The AHB has over 20 cultural events scheduled throughout May. To learn more about upcoming events, visit bainbridgecurrents.com/asian-arts-and-heritage-festival



Arirang 2.0 created by local artist Bella Kim was on display at the event.

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