Ambassador Andersson is the individual recipient of the Building Bridges Award for 2015. He has a unique viewpoint on the perceptions, prejudices and assumptions that can keep the peoples of the Pacific Rim from fulfilling the full potential of the Pacific Century, especially on the Korean peninsula, and what might be done to overcome them. He has a deep understanding of the United States. His wife, Michelle, is an American from Long Beach and he received his Masters in Political Science from Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. He has also seen North Korea up close, spending two years in Pyongyang and traveling and representing not only his own country there but acting as the protecting power for American, Canadian and Australian citizens in the DPRK. As a representative of neutral Sweden, however, he carried no “baggage,” both in his own mind and in how the North Koreans interacted with him. His insights are special.

The PCI delegation that visited the DPRK last February serendipitously met Ambassador Andersson at the Beijing airport on the way to Pyongyang and were deeply impressed by his knowledge and professionalism and were able to meet with him several times while in the country. The delegation is excited that the full PCI membership will also be able to enjoy the wisdom of Ambassador Karl-Olof Andersson at the PCI annual award dinner.

All of us have heard of the term “think tank.” It was coined decades ago specifically to describe the RAND Corporation; RAND is the original think tank. It is also the first institutional recipient of the Building Bridges Award. RAND’s mission is both simple and incredibly complex; it exists to “help policymakers make decisions that are based on the best available information.” To achieve that goal, RAND’s results must be fueled by the best data, the strongest methods, and the brightest minds. It must undertake research that is rigorous, objective, transparent, and open. RAND is, according to the Los Angeles Times, “arguably the grandest experiment ever undertaken to test the idea that even mankind's most pressing problems can be solved.”

RAND’s early emphasis was related to national security challenges, but it has become increasingly multidisciplinary and broad. RAND is now studying a wide spectrum of topics of core interest to the successful achievement of a Pacific Century by the people of the Pacific Rim: education, health care, energy and the environment, infectious diseases, aging populations, cybersecurity, integrating science and technology, and many more.

PCI is lucky to have RAND nearby in Santa Monica and to be able to have had a long and productive collaboration with it. It is now happy to show its appreciation through the Building Bridges Award.
Chairman’s Thoughts

New Year Thoughts

At Williams College, in the frigid northwest corner of Massachusetts, I am teaching a four-week course called “The Politics of Intelligence.” It explores the problems that intelligence services around the world face, and the politics that often shape the covert activities these services undertake. In that vein we have discussed and debated how and why, in the wake of 9/11, America’s CIA was ordered to become both jail keeper and interrogator of Islamic militants captured in the war on terror. This led to the American use of torture, which was encouraged by elements of the George W. Bush administration, and has been condemned and ended by President Obama.

Our class has also been transfixed by the horrific events taking place in France, which appear to mark the beginning of a difficult and highly dangerous phase in the fight against Islamic fanaticism. In this European struggle, there is no dialogue, no civility, only fear and hatred. The roots of this confrontation are not yet clearly understood, but the Jan. 12 N.Y. Times puts it this way: "A radicalized minority of European Muslims have been angered and inspired by the wars the West has waged on the Arab world, and have sought to bring the costs of these conflicts home."

This is particularly true of France and Algeria. French use of torture in seeking to maintain control of Algeria is still notorious. Alistair Horne, in his magisterial book "A Savage War of Peace," notes that French torture may have won them the battle of Algiers, but cost them Algeria. The Kouachi brothers, who led the attack on the Charlie Hebdo are both of Algerian descent. And Hayat Boumedienne, the missing accomplice of the man who attacked the kosher market in Paris, has the same name as a former president of Algeria.

In my Williams class is a highly intelligent young Korean who has hopes for improved relations between Seoul and Pyongyang. His presence has caused me to tell my students of my six trips to Pyongyang, starting in 2002, and of the politeness with which I have been treated, and the civility of our discussions, even when we have dealt with topics on which we have major disagreements.

The crisis in Europe puts the Korean situation in clearer perspective for me. Difficult as the North-South confrontation is, there is at least sporadic civility in exchanges between Seoul and Pyongyang, there is a "hot line" to be used in times of crisis, the same language is spoken by both sides, roots of the schism are political, not religious, and as President Kim Dae-jung used to say to me "We Koreans have a history going back thousands of years, and a division of less than a century cannot have changed us that much."

So, at the beginning of this new year, which will mark the 65th anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War, which has never officially ended, I see a real chance for the Korean people to reach out to each other, across the DMZ, and re-start the reconciliation process, which has only temporarily stalled. President Park Geun-hye's visit to Pyongyang in 2001 was an act of courageous civility, and her motto of "Trustpolitik" still hangs on the walls of the Blue House. Kim Jong-un's offer in his New Year speech to meet with President Park was a very positive gesture, and I was truly encouraged to hear just today (Jan. 12) that President Park has announced her willingness to meet Kim Jong-un without preconditions.

I wish dialogue existed between Washington and Pyongyang, but our "strategic patience" approach leaves a silence in which the mutterings of the war planners, and those favoring regime change in North Korea receive more attention than they deserve.

Kim Jong-un's current offer to suspend nuclear testing in return for cancellation of upcoming ROK-U.S. military training exercises, is a step toward civility, and is a formula that has worked in the past. When I was ambassador in Seoul the massive ROK-U.S. "Team Spirit" training exercise was cancelled for the year 1992. During that year, there were several significant North-South meetings, and an agreement was reached between Seoul and Pyongyang that still remains one of the high-water marks of that relationship.

Washington's initial response to this offer has been negative, but at least has come an anonymous official citing U.S. willingness to conduct dialogue on the issue.

I find that as I write these words I am optimistic about resumption of civil dialogue between the two Koreas in 2015. I feel that Korean leaders in both Seoul and Pyongyang are astute enough to look at the fear and hostility blanketing Europe and realize how much better off they are by having the ability to resume civil North-South dialogue on the peninsula that they will always share. I also feel confident that if significant North-South progress is achieved, it will be strongly supported by Washington. If we all play our cards astutely, I believe that the situation on the Korean peninsula can be radically changed for the better by year's end.

*This Op-ed appeared in the Korea Times on January 18, 2015.*
UCLA Faculty Club Seminar

Prior to attending the PCI Annual Award Dinner, Chairman Gregg will be speaking at the UCLA Faculty Club Seminar on February 25th, 2015. The title of talk is “Problems on the Korean Peninsula, Past, Present and Future.” Starting with the sinking of the American ship General Sherman in the Taedong River in Pyongyang in 1866, Chairman Gregg will sketch high and low points in our relations with Korea. His thesis is that the current US policy of “Strategic Patience” has not worked with North Korea, and that it is now up to the North and South Koreans to reach out to each other, to re-start a dialogue which is the key to long-term stability on the Korean Peninsula.

For more information, please contact Judy Choi at Judy.Choi@PacificCenturyInst.org.

PCI Sponsored Program

The Korea Peace Academy Celebrated Its First Graduation

On December 18, 2014 the Korea Peace Academy celebrated the first graduation at Segyo Institute. 17 participants including scholars and Civic Activists, completed the rigorous program.

The Korea Peace Academy is hosted by the Korea Peace Forum and sponsored by PCI. Its main objectives are to invigorate, recruit and train young scholars and graduate students in the field of peace and unification studies and inter Korean relations. It introduces advanced studies for the future generation of peacemakers and explores and develops an upgraded version of engagement policy on the Korean peninsula.

The duration of the program was March 2014 to December 2014 and it composed of 20 biweekly lectures and seminars, practical and field-focused programs. The program contents included mentoring system with former government officials and senior scholars including the PCI Board Member Professor Chung-in Moon.

The curriculum outlined literature review, multiple dimensional perspective, historical approach, model inter-Korean negotiation, and current updates.

The topics included “Characteristics of North Korean Polity and Research Methodologies, “De Factor Unification and Unification System: Confederation and Federation”, “Northeast Asia Power Transition and U.S.-China Relations” and “Asian Regionalism/Multilateralism.” Guest lecturers included Joon Hyung Kim, Professor at Handong Global University, Nak-cheong Paik, professor at Seoul National University, Suh Hoon, Former Deputy Head of National Intelligences Service, Dong-won Lim and Jong-seok Lee, both former Ministers of Unification.

For more information about the program, please visit http://www.koreapeace.co.kr.
Where Does Abe Take Japan Now?

There will be little rejoicing over this weekend’s Japanese election. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe remains the leader of his party and his country. But very few can imagine him winning a single popularity contest anywhere in the neighbourhood of East Asia. No wonder, the Japanese people are not exactly reacting in wild kanpai-yelling celebrations. This was an election without elation.

Consider that his "blue-blood" genes are embedded in nationalistic DNA: His career-diplomat father was foreign minister (1982-1986) under the transformative prime ministership of Yasuhiro Nakasone and his mother’s father was a deeply controversial prime minister who had served in Hideki Tojo’s wartime cabinet. The worry is that Abe’s roots offer dangerous strands of nationalism, fundamentalist values and militarism.

While clearly the man of the moment, Abe may also be understood as Japan’s leader mainly by default. The opposition is in such a pathetic shambles that the polity has reverted back to little more than a one-party deal. Many Liberal Democratic Party voters took the resigned, pragmatic view that some kind of national leadership was preferable to none at all. Landslides are easier when the opposition is vacuous.

The domestic vacuum could make Abe more consequential abroad as well as at home. The world’s stake in Japan’s future is anything but peripheral. It remains the third-largest economy - ahead of Germany, France and the United Kingdom. If its political system now resembles what Americans, half-jokingly, would call an Edsel (the famous iconic auto failure in US corporate history), economically it can still shine like a Lexus. Everyone accepts that China’s own economic rebirth would have been more difficult without productive and consuming neighbors like Japan, not to mention the Republic of Korea (and of course faraway United States).

For the foreseeable future, Japan remains the US’ default Asian ally, its first go-to option. US opinion polls reaffirm support for that. In fact, the American public views this important society of talented people as the centerpiece of US-Asia security. But that sense of need could weaken if the Abe government becomes known for a policy of aggressive nationalism, which will trigger overwhelming regional pushback, as well as economic policies that backfire by shrinking Japan further.

The idea that the US could ever switch from a policy of containing China to one of seeking to align with China is far-fetched in the extreme. But Japanese re-armament and militarism could do the trick if it unites all of East Asia, with its haunting memories and unresolved wartime bitterness, against Tokyo. This is why Abe would be foolish to choose that route, and wise to dig deeper into his DNA and summon up his distant genetic linkage with another Japanese prime minister: Eisaku Sato (1964 to 1972). The first Asian to accept a Nobel Peace Prize, Sato was cited "for his renunciation of the nuclear option for Japan and his efforts to further regional reconciliation".

The Japanese people themselves, still largely pacifist, deserve better than Tojo II. They deserve a transformative leader who can refocus the economy and reorient foreign relations. They deserve another Sato, not another Tojo (referring to Hideki Tojo, the 40th prime minister of Japan during most of World War II, who was sentenced to death on November 12, 1948 for Japanese war crimes by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East).

Sometimes the US refers to Japan as its "Asian Great Britain" - a very rough analogy at best. But the comparison does remind one of a telling oracular observation by an iconic American secretary of state that offers perspective on Abe’s current challenge. "Great Britain has lost an empire," the late Dean Acheson famously proffered in a 1962 speech at the US military academy at West Point, "but has not yet found a role." Not much that Abe has tried in his first three years as prime minister (including his 2006-7 term) has worked, except the deft engineering of his slam-dunk reelection.

Rooting for Abe to succeed might strike many in East Asia as emotionally problematic. But rooting for Japan to fail is a very risky business in all kinds of consequential ways. That’s one reason why I always root for Japan.

This op-ed was written by PCI Board Member Professor Tom Plate on December 20, 2014. It appeared in the Nation Multimedia (Bangkok), the China Daily (Beijing), the Khaleej Times (Dubai), the South China Morning Post (Hong Kong), the Korea Times (Seoul), the China Daily Asia (China), and the LMU Asia Media (Los Angeles).
The longevity of Kim Jong-un’s regime in North Korea has been subject to widespread speculation by outside observers. Several factors led some to predict an early downfall for the regime: young and immature leadership, a potential factional struggle, a stagnant economy and a hostile external environment. But this prediction has not yet been realised. The Kim Jong-un regime is alive and well. It has been surviving, if not thriving, with stable political leadership and a gradual economic recovery.

The purge and execution of Kim Jong-un’s uncle, Jang Sung-thaek, then the second in charge, sent shockwaves through the world in 2013. Some pundits saw it as a prelude to a new power struggle that would foster the coming collapse of Kim’s regime. But since then, the opposite seems to have occurred. Kim Jong-un is in firm control of the Workers’ Party of Korea (WPK), the military, and the state. With Jang’s removal, he is not only reigning, but also ruling the daily operation of the North Korean system. Consolidation of power through new personal and institutional arrangements has further strengthened his grip over national governance.

Kim Jong-un’s father, Kim Jong-il, ruled the country rather arbitrarily with his own personal charisma, emphasising Songun (military-first politics) ideology — while downplaying the party-centred governance system. In contrast, Kim Jong-un has completely restored the primacy of the WPK over the military and the state. This move has been evidenced by the takeover of the military by civilian party officials: first by Choe Ryong-hae and later by Hwang Pyong-so, appointed as head of the General Political Bureau of People’s Army that oversees the entire military. Kim has also created a troika system composed of his loyalists that assists his rule. The troika includes party secretary Choe Ryong-hae, Vice Marshal Hwang Pyong-so, and Prime Minister Pak Pong-ju. Choe manages the WPK, Hwang is in charge of the military and Pak runs the cabinet. North Korea under Kim Jong-un’s leadership is likely to be stable for the time being, because, at least so far, there are no opposition blocs. Political rivals or popular dissenting groups have not yet emerged.

The North Korean economy has also performed better since Kim Jong-un’s inauguration. According to the Bank of Korea (the central bank of South Korea), North Korea’s growth rate recorded 0.8 per cent in 2011, 1.3 per cent in 2012, and 1.1 per cent in 2013. Given its chronic negative growth rates before 2011, such records are quite impressive. And outsiders who travelled to North Korea have commonly acknowledged that the overall living conditions of its people, including food and other consumer goods, have significantly improved. This can be attributed partly to an increase in exports of coal, minerals, and fishery products to China; growth in foreign earnings through manpower exports to China, Russia, and the Middle East; and a relatively good harvest over the past three years.

Equally crucial are economic reform measures. On 28 June 2012, Pyongyang introduced an incentive driven new economic management system known as the ‘June 28 measure’. The measure stipulates that those who produce more are entitled to have more. For example, a collective farm is now subdivided into several farm households each of which is composed of three or four families. Those farm households retain about 30 per cent of the crops they harvest, while 70 per cent goes to the government. The produce that is retained by farm households can now be traded in 380 farmers’ markets throughout the country. This represents a substantial change. (In the past, the government took the entire harvest and rationed portions to farmers through a public distribution system). A similar incentive system is now being applied to state firms. In this way, a more competitive market system is slowly being adopted.

Kim also instructed the cabinet to exercise unified leadership in economic management, and, at the same time, banned intervention by the party and the military — which was a major source of policy discord and confusion. In addition, the North Korean government has designated 19 special economic development zones in addition to five state-level special economic zones (such as Rajin-Sonbong and Kaesung). Such institutional reforms have played a positive role in boosting the nation’s otherwise stagnant economy.

But despite these reforms, it will be impossible for North Korea to revitalise its national economy and to improve its people’s living standards without the injection of external assistance and foreign capital. As long as Kim Jong-un adheres to the simultaneous pursuit of two overarching political goals (the ‘byungjin’ line) — economic development and nuclear weapons — it will be nearly impossible to attract foreign capital and assistance. Apart from the nuclear issue, its human rights violations and cyber hacking will further jeopardise its external relations.

Unless the North Korean leader takes decisive measures towards denuclearisation, improving of human rights and good cyber behaviour, it will be quite difficult for North Korea to break the vicious circle of external sanctions and economic hardship. Pyongyang’s rigid stance and a hostile external environment are likely to make 2015 another year of isolation and hardship.

This op-ed written by PCI Board Member Professor Chung-in Moon appeared in the Australian National University’s East Asia Forum on January 27, 2015.
Project Bridge 2014-2015

**Los Angeles**

**Youth Ambassadors:**
- Benjamin Amaya  
  ESAT High School
- Paula Dowdell  
  San Pedro High School
- Rachel Harvey  
  Crescenta Valley High School
- Raquel Rodriguez  
  SOAR High School
- Jason Tang  
  Abraham Lincoln High School
- Quentin Thomas  
  Golden Valley High School
- Mason Tiratira  
  Torrance High School
- Katie Xing  
  Downtown Magnets HS

**Group Leaders:**
- Veeda Fernandes
- Angie Pak

**Lecturers:**
- Caroline Kim
- Tracy Luong

**Program Coordinator:**
- Judy Choi, Pacific Century Institute, Inc.

**New York**

**Youth Ambassadors:**
- David Alonso  
  HS of Economics & Finance
- Jevhoy Bailey-Gordon  
  HS for Law, Advocacy, and Community Justice
- Ama Fuwaa  
  Bronx Leadership Academy
- Anisa Marhull  
  NYC Lab School
- Nabila Nawrin  
  Urban Assembly School for Criminal Justice
- Ivan Ramos  
  Landmark High School
- Raven Waters  
  East West School of International Studies
- Jason Wilks  
  Professional Performing Arts HS

**Group Leaders:**
- Keisha Lawrence
- Jason Reynolds

**Program Coordinator:**
- Luz Lanzot, The Korea Society

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**Workshops**

During the course of the academic year, Project Bridge participants meet twice a month for workshops focusing on intercultural issues, as well as aspects of Korean culture, history, and society. The workshops explore topics such as relations among Americans of different backgrounds, multicultural youth leadership issues, and using the arts to communicate identity and culture.

Starting with contemporary American literature on multi-racial identity issues, Project Bridge prepares Youth Ambassadors with greater sensitivity and respect for various socio-cultural differences not only in contemporary American life, but also on the international/global stage. The workshops that explore identity and tolerance of differences in contemporary American life intend to cultivate the Youth Ambassador’s perspectives in appreciating Korean culture and history.

After covering complicated multicultural issues, the workshops move to focus on Korean history, cultures, language, and other contemporary issues. Every interaction between Youth Ambassadors, Group Leaders, and Program Coordinators intends to serve as a learning experience, reinforcing leadership skills and insights about U.S. and Korea.
Los Angeles Youth Ambassadors 2014-2015

Paula Dowdell: “Project Bridge gives me the amazing opportunity to explore Korean culture and customs. I appreciate the leadership aspects of this program and hope to grow as a public leader and cultural ambassador. I look forward to traveling to Korea in April and immersing myself into this new fascinating world. This program is the perfect way to open my eyes and expand my cultural horizon to new ways of thinking.”

Benjamin Amaya: “What I hope to gain from Project Bridge is a brand new experience/culture into my life. I live in a Latino neighborhood and go to a Latino majority school, thus I don't really see much diversity in terms of culture/religion. With this new experience, I will be able to expand my knowledge of both culture/religion of South Korea. Also, with my new project of Korean Government, I will be able to further narrow my career options. I can't wait for this opportunity and I am ready for whatever it throws at me.”

Rachel Harvey: “I want to learn about the world and how I can make it a better place. I hope to become more aware of the world, and how I can improve the lives of others. I am excited to make a difference. I also look forward to increasing my understanding of others, and using that to enhance my life and knowledge.”

Raquel Rodriguez: “I am excited to learn about another culture outside of my own because of my interest of maybe majoring in international relations. Project Bridge will also give me the opportunity to meet other people my age and I hope that I am able to have great friends coming out of this program. Being a Youth Ambassador, I am excited about traveling to South Korea to personally learn about Korean culture because knowing more about other cultures widens my perspective. I know for a fact that from this incredible program I will gain unforgettable memories.”

Jason Tang: “What I hope to gain from Project Bridge is not only the experience Korea has to offer but the knowledge that is included in this very experience. Through the various workshops involving Korean heritage and culture, I hope it can help me further realize the amount of extensive specificities waiting to be absorbed in Korea. I hope to be able to fully understand the history of Korea as well as its present and future, and how it has been applied and affected throughout the different nations in the world. I believe that together with my fellow Youth Ambassadors and Group Leaders, we can achieve these goals and grow both as a team and also as an individual. I look forward to our trip to South Korea.”

Quentin Thomas: “Being able to be a part of a great program such as Project Bridge has been an amazing experience for me. Through this program, I have completely changed my outlook on both politics and history, and I can truly say that the change has been for the better. I hope to improve my leadership skills and gain a further understanding of not only Korean culture, but form an understanding of other cultures as well. Out of everything that we will experience, I am most excited about visiting the Buddhist temple, as I have always been fascinated with Buddhism and wish to experience it first hand.”

Mason Tiratira: “To be a part of Project Bridge is a great opportunity. A lot of hate and tension still circulates throughout the world today, and being able to learn about these issues and discuss how they can be resolved provides great satisfaction. Project Bridge will help me gain the necessary knowledge and skills I need to be able to decrease the ever present issues of hate. As a Youth Ambassador I am, quite obviously, most excited for our trip to South Korea. This entire program has been and will be great for some memories as well as my growth as a person.”

Katie Xing: “Being a part of Project Bridge has allowed me to engage in conversations about racial conflicts, understand ways to “bridge” gaps between cultures in our society, and learn about Korean culture. The journey has been very exciting. I learned so much more about Korean culture, language, and history through all the extensive workshops. As I was learning about Korean culture and history, I also gained a new perspective in about how Korean culture connected with the world around me. As a Youth Ambassador I want to gain as much knowledge I can in order to make a positive impact in my community and share the knowledge with others. I am very grateful to have met the other amazing youth ambassadors and group leaders. I look forward to gaining a new cultural understanding of Korea and gaining experience to continue working towards building bridges between cultures when I attend college. Thank you Project Bridge!”

Los Angeles New Group Leader and Lecturer

Veeda Fernandes: “My name is Veeda Fernandes and I work as special education teacher at Widney High in the beautiful West Adams section of Los Angeles. I have worked for LAUSD since 1999. I took a five day course last summer called Korean Academy for Educators at USC. It was a very informative course and I learned a lot about the history, art, culture, and language of Korea. I look forward to going to Korea with the Youth Ambassadors this year to see some of things I learned in the USC course!

Tracy Luong: “As a former youth ambassador in 2006, Project Bridge has left a deep impression in my life. I took the idea of “bridging the gaps” in our society to heart and it has permeated my aspirations for educating others and providing compassionate care in the healthcare industry. I am excited to work with this years Youth Ambassadors, share my experiences I took away from the program and get them involved as leaders in the community.”
Study Tour

The purpose of the tour is to enable the students to see Korea and meet Koreans in their own societal context. The trip also enables the students to explore the spectrum of cultural homogeneity and heterogeneity, as Korea remains one of the most ethnically homogenous of the world’s nations. Thus, the tour enhances the intercultural objectives of the program as a whole. Furthermore, by bringing two groups of participants from disparate areas of the U.S. together during the tour, Project Bridge extends the exploration of the meaning of diversity—both within America and compared with a nation different from their own.

During the study tour to Korea, Project Bridge students visit many places in Korea of historical and social significance, stay with a host family, and engage in open dialogue with Koreans. Some of the sites they visit include the National Assembly, the Demilitarized Zone, Jeollabuk-do and Gyeongju City.