

'Volunteering in Korea evolving fast'

Charles Phillips
May 26, 2011

Volunteering is evolving at a rapid pace in South Korea, and the outlook appears positive, helped by the concerted efforts of the country's key sectors, an expert said Thursday.

"Korea is recognized as the nation where volunteering is growing the most rapidly in the past 10 years," said Charles Phillips, president of Service For Peace, an international volunteer organization, in an interview. "The rapid growth of the volunteer sector in Korea is attributed to the joint efforts and synergy between the media, educational institutions and the government."



Charles Phillips

Phillips, who visited Seoul this week, said Korea is currently moving toward the value of volunteering service as people learn compassion and how to care for others.

"The active cooperation that service fosters builds community. Furthermore, service can build bridges between neighboring countries as demonstrated by the service Koreans provided in Thailand after the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 and more recently after the earthquake in Japan," he said.

Phillips, also CEO of Chas Phillips and Associates and adjunct professor at the University of Bridgeport, said volunteering is a driver for his transformative experiences: "Growing up in during the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S.A. I felt compelled to reach out and provide basic human rights and improve the quality of life for all on our planet. I found volunteering a powerful means for personal and social transformation."

Phillips said the core value in volunteering and social entrepreneurship is compassion and genuine care for others. "It is this compassion for others that drives volunteers and social entrepreneurs to make a difference in the world," he said.

As for the trends in volunteering, he said one key development is a search for innovative solutions to pressing social problems. "People and organizations want to go beyond providing charity, although that is still needed, but people want to make change that is sustainable and lasting," he said.

(insight@heraldm.com)