

Good afternoon,

My name is Yong Kwon and I was the 7th president of KPAI back in 1985. On behalf of KPAI, I want to thank everyone for coming to our 30th anniversary ceremony event and seminar today.

For those of you who are not familiar with KPAI, it was established in 1979 by a small group of Korean-American automotive professionals with a common interest in contributing to and growing within the automotive industry.

After several meetings, we created a group called Korean-American Professionals in the Automotive Industry, or KPAI. In the early years, there were only about 20 or so Korean professionals working for the Big 3. KPAI provided members with an opportunity to network and support our professional and personal growth. It also provided us with not just a professional network, but a group of lifelong friends. In fact, you will see many of the founding members here today.

I am very proud of ALL of the KPAI members who have helped build KPAI over the last 30 years. Today, it is a group of over 200 highly educated and talented professionals who work in all sectors of the automotive industry – from the Big 3 to suppliers, from research to engineering, from executives to developing managers.

As is customary in Korean culture, KPAI has sustained the tradition of having senior members guiding younger members and younger members respectfully heeding the advice of senior members. It is very important for us to maintain this tradition and pass it on to the next generation – to preserve part of our heritage as Koreans. However, I firmly believe that in order for KPAI to continue to grow, all of us need to think more broadly than about our own professional development. In this challenging time for the automotive industry and for the state of Michigan, we should think about ways that we can actively contribute to the health and future of the auto industry and our communities, in general.

I'd like to thank all of the speakers for coming today to share your expertise and vision with us. It is our great honor to have you here. I trust that your speeches will inspire us and guide us to overcome the challenges that the automotive industry is facing today.

I'd also like to thank all of the donors who contributed to KPAI's new scholarship fund. It is pretty remarkable that we were able to raise funds in this tough economic time. I'd like to say a personal thanks to those who supported my fundraising request; I was truly humbled by your generosity.

Finally, I'd like to recognize the members who worked hard for the last several months to prepare for this event. It is their dedication to KPAI that made today's event possible.

I hope that you enjoy today's seminar and the 30th anniversary celebration this evening. Thank you.