

Song Jung Award and Prof. Song Jung Youn, Bang-Bu

The new era of Korean medical board certification program began in the late 1960s, and a full-scale medical specialist program has made significant contributions to the advancement of medicine during that period; however, the most of medical school graduates have opted to become subspecialists.

Medical school professors and private practitioners were faced with the necessity of introducing the family medicine in Korea due to a growing concern about a shortage of Primary care Physicians that could trigger the breakdowns in Korean medical system. So that it was crucial to increase the number of primary care physicians in order to provide qualified healthcare services.

Dr. Eldon Berglund who was the American Professor of Family Medicine and the member of the evaluation committee for the World Bank visited Korea in 1974 to address the importance of family medicine. With their support, Dr. Song Jung - Youn, Bang-Bu who was the assistant professor of preventive medicine at Yonsei University College of Medicine . Seoul, Korea was able to receive family medicine resident training at University of Minnesota in the United States. Professor Song Jung returned to Korea in October 1978 after successfully completing the full resident training course in family medicine.

The family medicine training program started at Seoul National University in 1979 and in December of that year, the organizing committee established the Korean Academy of Family Medicine. The inaugural meeting was held in January 1980 and Dr. Hong, Chang-Ee as a chairman and Professor Youn, Bang-Bu as a Vice-chairman led the KAFM until July 1981. The second general meeting was held in that year and Professor Song Jung, Youn, Bang-Bu became the chairman of the board and took the helm of KAFM in its beginning period for 12 years.

Korea became a member of WONCA in 1983 and Professor Youn-Bang-Bu was named as a committee member. The family medicine was legally approved as the 23rd medical specialty by Korea government in 1985. On June 1st 1986 the 11th WONCA general assembly decided to hold 1988 AP-WONCA meeting in Korea and on June 16th of that year Professor Song Jung was elected as regional vice president of WONCA, and president of Asia Pacific region. However, due to limited resources, Korea passed up the opportunity at that time and hosted a grand scale WONCA general assembly in 1997. At present, there are 126 institutions that train about 1,200 residents and this program produced around 6,000 family medicine specialists in 2011.

After acquiring board certification and returning from United States in 1978, Prof. Song Jung has devoted all his life to advancement of family medicine in Korea. As a director of KAFM he has presided over complex administrative processes and promoted establishment of family medicine for over 10 years in its infancy. And as an educator, he has devoted his whole life assiduously to students and established the concept of family medicine in Korean society until his retirement as an honorary professor from Yonsei University in 2008.

“Song Jung Award” is to honor the lifelong commitment of Prof. Song Jung Youn, Bang-Bu. It is given to professionals who have dedicated their lives in advancement of family medicine and to remind the students about their professional experiences. Song Jung Award is supported by Song Jung Foundation and presented at the Korean Academy Of Family Medicine.