



Richard Warmington

New Songdo school opens its doors

By Christine Kim

"Sit in that chair over there," a tall, silver-haired man said as he disappeared into the next room. In a few seconds, his face appeared on an enormous flat-screen panel hanging on the wall opposite a chair and desk that had a small chess board on top. The screen also displayed a chess set in the next room. "This is what our students will be using in class."

Richard Warmington, who recently became the president of the Chadwick International School in Songdo, Incheon, was confident as he demonstrated the state-of-the-art technology installed in his brand-new school.

"This is a very high-tech school," Warmington said as he explained that students in grades three and higher will each have a Macbook with them at school, a part of the "one-to-one" program implemented by the school.

"Kindergartners will have iPads if we ever figure out how to get those here," he added, laughing.

Warmington was deemed a "natural choice" by the Chadwick School, which is located in California, because he is an alumnus of the school (class of 1960).

The Chadwick School is a highly-regarded day school in the U.S. that was founded in 1935 and has students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Although it is only accepting kindergartners to seventh graders at this point, the Korean campus will also

Chadwick International hopes to broaden students' opportunities

eventually accept students in all grade levels.

Not many people are willing to make a career move like Warmington, who worked for Hewlett-Packard for 33 years and lived in Seoul for four years starting in 1988 as the president of a joint venture between Samsung and HP.

Warmington was later promoted to head Asia-Pacific operations at Hewlett-Packard in Hong Kong until he retired from the company in 2000.

Warmington says there were many people who could not understand how he could retire and then decide to devote his life to education.

"It's just been that way," he said. "I think my experience at Chadwick has given me a passion [for education]."

In fact, Warmington has been deeply involved in the field of education since he graduated from the Chadwick School. He was the chairman of the board of directors at the Athenian School in Danville, California, and was on the board of his son's school when his son was in high school.

"The 15-year period I was on the board of Athenian gave me a lot of knowledge about how schools operate," Warmington said. Both of his children, who are ethnic Koreans adopted by Warmington and his wife, were sent

to what he describes as "independent schools" when they were students.

His involvement in his children's lives also explains his dedication to education.

During his time in Hong Kong as the head of Hewlett-Packard's Asia-Pacific operations, Warmington said he was always home on the weekends, a practice he says he followed "pretty religiously."

However, he said he still missed out on raising his children during that time, which led him to step away from the company.

When news of the open position at Chadwick reached him in early January this year, Warmington said he found the perfect chance to funnel his passion for education into his alma mater.

"I was heavily involved in education and a graduate of Chadwick, I helped to create a company for four years in Seoul and I have two adopted children, so when this opportunity came up it took about four hours for me and my wife to say: this makes sense. Why don't we do this?" he said.

Seven months later, Warmington is living in Songdo and preparing for the school's opening on Sept. 7.

Warmington explained that the satellite school will have the same mission as the main school in California.

"They have the same core values," he said. "This is my intent and one of the reasons I'm here is to bring the culture of Chadwick into this school."

Warmington also says he looks forward to mingling with the students and that he is looking forward to being an adviser, especially to middle and high school students wondering about their future beyond Chadwick.

Another of the school's missions is to help students broaden their educational opportunities beyond Korea to schools around the world, he said.

"I think this broadens the opportunity for students to learn more than just the academics, so they're also learning skills," he said. "But hopefully [we're] encouraging life-long learners, and not drudgery."

He is also looking forward to teaching a class of his own in business administration.

Chadwick is expected to bring more life into Songdo City, a \$35 billion development project that gained approval from the Korean government in 2003. The satellite campus in Korea is currently being subsidized by the city's backers including Korean steel maker Posco.

Warmington says that like all new schools, Chadwick will experience growing pains, and he is eager for the challenge.

"We have a lot of thoughts, we haven't implemented them yet, but it's exciting," he said.

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