

Korean Times Los Angeles Edition Thursday August 25, 2011

### The Spirit of Pilsung Saved My Life

Robert J. Ott, a Caucasian martial arts master overcomes his blindness. This is his special love story about Korea.

“The lesson of *Pilsung* was taught to me by a Korean martial arts instructor, and made me what I am today. I am blind, but I am grateful to the Korean society which gave me the light to face life head on.”

A Caucasian martial arts master, he used the philosophy of *Pilsung* (Certain Victory) as his personal motto and allowed it to be a weapon to combat his disability and in turn, fell in love with Korean culture. Chief Master Robert J. Ott (age 42) from New Jersey runs the Temple of Certain Victory dojang in Olympia, Washington.

“When I was 11 years old I saw a Korean instructor’s Taekwondo demonstration and I fell in love with it. I decided that was my path. When I was 21 I was shot in the temple at a nightclub. Upon arrival to the hospital no one thought I would make it but the spirit of *Pilsung* saved me. “

At that time, Chief Master Ott was left alone for 17 hours in the emergency room. His injury was so horrendous no doctors thought they could do anything. Chief Master Ott says, “Even while I was unconscious I envisioned the principles of Pilsung. I actually grabbed my nurse’s wrist just before they pronounced me dead.” After a major surgery he survived, but lost his eyesight. However he began his second life.

“I lost my eyesight but I couldn’t give up my life. The spirit of Pilsung is a lesson that enables me to set goals in my life and follow them through. So I took just 2 bags and \$500.00 and relocated to the state of Washington. Successfully completing the Business Enterprise program I had taken reminded me once again of *Pilsung*. “

Now Chief Master Robert J. Ott runs his own dojang and teaches 200 students the arts of Taekwondo, Hapkido, Sin Moo Hapkido, etc. Also he runs Certain Victory Food Services which feeds the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest military base in the country.

“Without the Korean culture that I have studied it would be quite difficult to imagine the Robert Ott I am today,” he says. He always emphasizes manners and respect to his employees. He had no intention, but the name Certain Victory Food Services has become known to many. During the past seven years Robert has employed as man as 830 employees at one time. In conjunction according to an occupation therapist 28% of the staff in 2006 were disabled. Going a step further the average of Korean employees ranges 40-50% during the busy times.

His story was so moving he was placed in Taekwondo Times Magazine’s Hall of Fame Master of the Year by owner Woo-Jin Jung. Chief Master Ott who fell in love with Taekwondo, Hapkido and Hwarangdo, says, “I’m a happy family man and bread winner with a wife and two children. I hope military officers who suffer injuries or anyone who experiences any kind of hardship gets a positive spirit from my story.”

In addition, Chief Master Ott’s autobiography Certain Victory is going to be translated into Korean and introduced into Korea.

For more information about Chief Master Robert J. Ott please visit [www.certainvictory.com](http://www.certainvictory.com)

By Kim Hyung-Jae

Translated by Guy and Gi-Ryung Larke