

JUMP-STARTING YOUNG RESEARCHERS

A dream came true for Dongha Lee: With Merck's support, the 17-year-old 11th grader from the German school in Seoul was able to participate in the 21st Inventor Lab at the Zentrum für Chemie – ZFC (Center for Chemistry) in Bensheim, Germany.

In January 2017, 16 very gifted high schoolers met at the center to tackle the topics of electromobility and fuel cells. Dongha Lee was selected from among 200 excellent applicants from all over the German state of Hesse and the Deutsche Schule Seoul International – DSSI (German School Seoul International). The cooperation between ZFC and the German school was set up by DSSI principal Andreas Hilsbos: "I first learned about the Center for Chemistry in 2000 during a continuing education course. As a chemistry and biology teacher at the Ernst Ludwig School in Bad Nauheim, Germa-

ny, I sent a student from my advanced course to the Inventor Lab Environmental Technology for the first time in 2013. Afterwards, I moved abroad and I have been teaching at DSSI since 2013. Through my contacts we succeeded in becoming the only foreign school to have a collaborative agreement with the Center for Chemistry. The direct contact to Merck Korea came about in 2014 during a Career Day at DSSI," explains Andreas Hilsbos.

Dongha Lee is the third student from the MINT-friendly school to participate in the Inventor Lab in Germany. Together with the 15 other young researchers, he immersed himself in scientific practice at the RheinMain University in Rüsselsheim through dialog with scientists and companies and developed potential solutions.

"It is absolutely fascinating how enthusiastic and serious the young people are. Through the support of projects such as the Inventor Lab, we want to help these talented youngsters to unfold their potential as much as possible – and perhaps become part of the Merck world," states Michael Grund, Managing Director of Merck Korea. "That is why Merck has been supporting the events of the ZFC for many years."

Interview with Dongha Lee

How did you acquire your pronounced technical-scientific interest?

One reads and hears quite a lot about new, innovative technologies in the media. I find the areas of space travel, future technologies and artificial intelligence particularly exciting and fascinating.

Do you have time for any other hobbies?

I'm interested in sci-fi novels and movies, play table tennis and enjoy hiking. I also find it exciting to create videos or animated films.

What do you want to do professionally?

Study engineering in Germany and then work in areas like astronomy and space technology.

In the lab: Dongha Lee (right front) with fellow participants and the fuel cell vehicle: "The materials we received were very limited: everyday products such as a bag of chips, gummy bears, paper and the like. It was a lot of fun to build a car that could even drive from these components. In addition, it was very interesting that our car was powered by hydrogen. It showed us the importance of renewable resources," enthuses Dongha Lee about his time in the lab.

