

Grace Jo was born in North Korea, a place where she almost starved to death as a child. Two of Grace's brothers died of starvation. Grace's father was tortured and starved to death. he passed away when North Korean agents transferred him from a detention center to a jail. his "crime" was that he left his country in search of food for his family. One of Grace's older sisters went to China to find food for her family, but went missing and was probably sold into human trafficking. Grace was repatriated twice to North Korea by the Chinese government, and suffered imprisonment after she was repatriated. Grace's mother and one of Grace's sisters were repatriated four times and suffered torture after repatriation. In 2006 Pastor Philip Buck bribed North Korean agents to let Grace and her two remaining family members escape North Korea. In 2008, the UNHCR rescued Grace and her family from China, and enabled them to enter the United States of America as legal refugees. Grace is one of 170 refugees from North Korea who have settled in the U.S. Currently, Grace lives outside of Washington D.C. In 2013, Grace became a U.S. citizen. Alongside her family, she has protested the forced repatriation of North Korean escapees hiding out in China. In addition to being a human rights activist, Grace dreams of going to law school to study international law for the purpose of helping North Korean defectors. Grace works as a DCA (Dental Certified Assistant) in the United Dental Group to earn a living, and she attends classes in the evening to reach her academic goals. Grace is also a volunteer for her sister's non-profit organization NKinUSA, which helps North Korean refugees in the United States and China.