

CHRIE FutureFund™ Introduces Jiwoo Jung



I grew up in Jeonju, one of the most traditional cities in South Korea. As I grew up, Jeonju transformed into a well-known tourist destination, and through this process, I naturally began to experience the tensions that emerged within the local community. Why, despite an increasing number of tourists, did tourism income concentrate in certain areas while bypassing others? These questions became the foundation of my academic curiosity and continue to guide my research today.

My research centers on the sustainable coexistence between local communities and the hospitality and tourism industry. Among the challenges facing this coexistence, I identified climate hazards as one of the most urgent yet often overlooked issues. Climate risks are not experienced uniformly; their impacts vary spatially depending on local infrastructure, social vulnerability, and economic structure. Understanding these spatial differences is essential to assessing how communities and tourism systems respond to environmental shocks.

This research orientation led me to pursue my Ph.D. at the University of Florida. Florida provided an ideal context for my research; as one of the most tourism-dependent states and one of the most climate-vulnerable regions in the United States, it offered a unique opportunity to examine the intersection of climate hazards and the lodging industry. Working under the guidance of my advisor, Dr. Jinwon Kim, who has a strong background in geography, I developed a spatial perspective for understanding these dynamics; the same spatial inequalities I had observed in my hometown, now examined through rigorous empirical methods.

Through this training, I have had opportunities to teach courses in research methods and tourism analytics, where I emphasize how spatial thinking and data-driven approaches can bridge theory and practice. Helping students develop these analytical skills before entering the industry has been a meaningful experience that continues to shape my identity as an educator.

Building on this foundation, my dissertation examines how climate hazards affect the short-term rental market using spatial panel models. This work, which was recognized with the Graduate Conference Best Paper Award at the 31st Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism, demonstrates that hazard damage and duration, power outages, and social vulnerability create distinct patterns of operational disruption and revenue impact across Florida's lodging market. By positioning my research at the intersection of environmental risk, community conditions, and private-sector behavior, I aim to show how tourism industries and local communities can coexist and adapt under increasing climate uncertainty.

In the short term, my goal is to continue building a research trajectory that deepens understanding of how hospitality and tourism systems respond to environmental risks. I aim to explore how empirical, data-driven insights can bridge public policy and private-sector decision-making. In the long term, I aspire to become a scholar who contributes to shaping the future direction of hospitality and tourism research. Beyond producing impactful scholarship, I hope to mentor future generations of researchers, fostering critical, data-literate, and socially engaged scholars equipped to address complex challenges at the intersection of communities, industries, and environmental change.