

First lady had humble beginnings

Posted: Wednesday, December 24, 2014 10:04 am

CUMBERLAND — Yumi Hogan knows about rural life and the tough life of a single mom, and she doesn't intend to forget that as Maryland's first lady. Hogan grew up on a chicken farm in South Korea. Yumi Hogan is the wife of Gov.-elect Larry Hogan, who will take office Jan. 21. She's a Christmas baby, too, turning 55 on Christmas Day.

While she wouldn't describe herself as a political person, she's looking forward to her new role as first lady.

"I'm excited. I really want to represent Marylanders well," Hogan said. "My first priority is the community. I want to be of help."

At the same time as she's looking forward, Hogan said her past will influence some of her work as first lady.

"I want to reach out to single moms. The life of a single mom is hard — no father — always working hard," Hogan said. Hogan said she hopes to do volunteer work helping single moms and their families. She was part of a big family as a child. Her parents had eight children — she was the youngest.

Yumi Hogan is also an accomplished artist. And she doesn't intend to stop painting. "I am going to have a studio in the governor's home," Hogan said. That may not happen right away. "I'm thinking about moving (into the mansion). Now, I cannot spend time painting," Hogan said.

She began painting at an early age. "I was always painting, even in middle school," Hogan said. She came to the United States after graduating from high school. Her paintings are a mix of Asian and Western techniques and motifs. She works in acrylics, Sumi ink and Asian pigments and does a lot of abstract landscape paintings.

"Having grown up in Korea, my memories of the farmland, ever so important to the strength of the people, remain vivid to me. Having moved to the Maryland area 22 years ago, the land and water around me still form a bond of past to present with daily landscapes reminiscent of past memories," Hogan wrote in her artist statement on her website.



Yumi Hogan

Only in the past few years has she finished up her arts education and begun to teach art. She earned a master of fine arts degree from American University in 2010. Recently, she has served as an adjunct faculty member at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. She enjoys teaching and interacting with the students, she said.

Advocacy for the arts is one of her interests. Hogan said she hopes to have an arts competition for children on the grounds of Government House in Annapolis. That's the official residence for Maryland governors. She foresees an outdoor event with tents for the displays.

Hogan discussed her background and plans as first lady with the Times—News on Tuesday. Rural Maryland reminds her of South Korea where she grew up. The Salisbury area reminds her of her home, as does Western Maryland, “very countryside,” Hogan said. She does a lot of landscape painting, so the hills, mountains, lakes and rivers of the state have a special appeal for her, Hogan said. The people of rural Maryland, too, remind her of the people from her homeland.

Although she's not a political person, she had no problem working in the gubernatorial campaign. The simple reason: “I want to help Larry.” Yumi Hogan married Larry Hogan in 2004. Yumi Hogan has three grown daughters from a previous marriage.

Her Asian origins have stirred quite a bit of press coverage in that region of the world since her husband's election. That includes a story in the U.S. edition of the China Daily which prominently notes Hogan is Maryland's “first Asian first lady.”

Samples of Hogan's art work, and more about her, can be found on her website:
www.yumihogan.com.

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