A RACE TO HELP AS JET BURNED

Crash's 1st responders arrived within minutes to rescue injured amid chaos and devastation

By Kevin Fagan and Vivian Ho

That Saturday morning, before he fell from the skies into the worst jetliner disaster in San Francisco history, Elliot Stone woke up on cloud nine.

The night before, the Santa Cruz County man had become engaged. He and his new fiancee, Elena Jin, were heading home from an idyllic 10-day trip to South Korea. There the 25-year-old Stone, a martial arts instructor, earned a fourth-degree black belt and watched one of his students win a gold medal at a tae kwon do competition.

As Stone and Jin, 23, boarded Asiana Airlines Flight 214 in Seoul with six friends and relatives July 6, the main thing on their minds was future wedding bells.

"Then there was a 'boom!' and the back end lifted up. I grabbed my girlfriend and thought, 'Whoa, we might die right now.' "

Elliot Stone, passenger

By Carla Marinucci

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"The good thing about people who have gone to Santa Clara is that they have a hell of a lot of grace from the Jesuits," he said last week. What kept them going in the nation's capital, he added, "was the ability to say ... a lot of Hail Marys.''

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Politics as prologue for challenges of UC

By Lisa Mucklow

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