



Children's Education Foundation – Vietnam Newsletter

Welcome to our fifth Children's Education Foundation – Vietnam Newsletter.



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Gifts that I Receive

As the hands-on *in-country* person there is always work to do; although it's constant, it mainly doesn't feel like work. I am in a very fortunate position of being the conduit; the one who helps funds manifest into reality at this end. I see sponsorship and donation funds turn into school supplies, children in school, medicine and vitamins and food for some. It's satisfying work connecting our sponsors with children in need; it feels like giving a child a *guardian*.

There is a great deal of joy and satisfaction in being in my position. I see the children go to school and advance. I see their health improve and put on some weight. What is truly miraculous is when I see them shining with the awareness that a different and better future is possible with an education.

We receive deeply moving communication from both children and their parents as well as from our donors and sponsors. Recently we have had some compassionate sponsors wanting to make sure that the children's caregivers are also looked after. We receive gifts for the children from our visiting sponsors. We sometimes receive drawings from children and food gifts from sponsored parents as these are two ways they can show appreciation.

There are sad times too when we realize some of the parents and grandparents are close to death or have died.

Of course some of the work is a challenge; days out travelling from community to community and the almost constant making of major decisions; who we interview, who we help, how much we help, if food is needed, who we send to have a full medical examination and which of the poorly parents can we help as well?

We have fun too; we enjoy buying New Year presents, planning award giving, and special events like the beach outing last year and the one upcoming in two months' time. On

some visits we give balloons, or a camera for them to take photos of each other while we talk with their parent or guardian.

All our kind, generous donors, sponsors and supporters make all this possible. Every single person contributing in some way *makes a difference*. Thank you very much.

Woman's Day Visit

On Woman's Day I wanted to honor a wonderful, loving, caring and gentle mother; a peaceful, radiant woman. She has advanced brain cancer so we don't know how long she has left with her family. She never complains until the pain is too much then she just takes herself off to hospital for a day or two to get large doses of painkillers. Her daughter who is an excellent student is sponsored by CEF VN.



I enjoyed putting an album together of lovely family photos from the last few years that brought back many good memories. The pictures were mainly of her with her lovely daughter and when she saw them her face shone. She

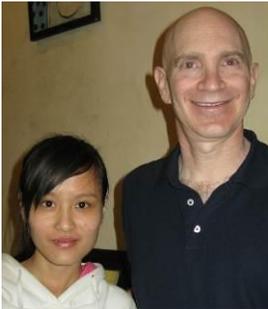
commented on her daughters' beauty. I made a Woman's Day award certificate for her and I presented it with the album and a basket of lovely flowers. With the help of my translator I told her how much I respect her for being such a caring, loving mother especially when she is not well. Despite her pain she has a peaceful, radiant presence even though she is suffering. I can't help but admire this lovely lady. My life is enriched beyond imagining in the presence of such beautifully stoic people.

Visit to a sponsored child

One of our sponsor's sisters contacted us and asked if she could visit the child her sister sponsors. The child's mother is a garbage collector who is away from home frequently and the father is mentally ill, so granny cares for her and her siblings. We managed to arrange a meeting in the few hours the sponsors sister had free. It was a sweet visit and she kindly brought some school supplies and a beanbag toy for Hanh. She also thought of CEF too and gave us some art and photography supplies for a future project with the children.



Stephen's visit



Stephen Jackel our CEF Vietnam manager and coordinator in the US recently visited Vietnam. During an evening get together with staff we thanked Duyen for her many skills which she shared with CEF for three years. He was also involved in many interviews with families who have requested assistance for their children so that they may continue their education. Over the years I have become used to seeing the severe poverty and dimly sad situations, but for Stephen it was an eye-opener. He now has firsthand knowledge of the extent of the destitution here and understands why we are driven to continue our work in helping more and more children with their education.

Stephen visited Hanoi where he had the opportunity to meet Le Thu, the girl he is sponsoring through university in Hanoi. She is very shy but he was still thrilled to have the opportunity to meet her face to face.



Newly sponsored children

Trinh

Trinh's mother sells betel nuts. Her daily income ranges from 50 cents to a dollar; sometimes it is even two dollars. This is the work that she knows and that she can, with her poor health, still manage. However, the meager income was not sufficient to send Trinh to school, but happily Trinh is now sponsored by CEF. Debbie, who is herself an artist, wanted to sponsor an artistic child and Trinh is the perfect fit! Trinh can now, not only stay in school, but also has the support of an artistic kindred spirit.

Thuy and Sanh

These two live in the same household with their granny along with a physically and mentally disabled aunt, a mentally ill uncle, another ill aunt and three cousins. Granny is responsible for the care of everyone. The uncle and aunt can sometimes earn money. It is a truly depressing situation to witness, but Thuy and her youngest cousin are still happy children but Sanh is older and knows how serious their situation is and worries. Sanh and his cousin Thuy now have support for the remainder of their schooling which is wonderful and gives them the possibility of a far better future. Sanh is sponsored through Go Philanthropic and Elaine and Bruce of Journeys of the Heart organized Thuy's sponsorship.



Special children on the waiting list are sponsored



Every child that I meet deserves to be in school, but some of their stories are more heart wrenching than others and I am always so grateful when sponsors show up for these special cases as they have done for Hien, Lan and Quynh. Hien's mother, who remarried after her father's death, could no longer look after her, so granny took over her care. Granny has heart disease and poor health and only earns a dollar a day making shoes. Without help from CEF's generous donor Hien would no longer be in school. Lan and Quynh's mother has cancer and with a large escalating

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Blog: cef-vietnam-usa.blogspot.com

Website: www.cef-vietnam-usa.org

debt there weren't the funds for them to continue their education. Now they can!

Forging Strong Partnerships Journeys of the Heart

Bruce and Elaine amaze me yearly with the support they muster through their friends and family for CEF. They are constantly thinking of how they can help further.

They write a wonderful blog 'Journeys of the Heart'. It's Bruce and Elaine's stories of their journeys to Vietnam; the work they do and the adventures they have.



One of their projects is supplying protective bandages for the Hoa Van leper community. These are made by Elaine and her friends. They also have found many donors and sponsors for children in the leper community. If it weren't for them three years ago we wouldn't have been able to help 13 children from a leper community to stay in school. Now there are 14 in school.

See about their projects in Hoi An and their recent support for CEF – VN in their April 2 and April 3, 2012 postings at, <http://ebtovietnam.blogspot.com>.

And thanks to Bruce and Elaine we met Lydia Dean of Go Philanthropic (see story below).

Go Philanthropic

We partnered with Go Philanthropic a year ago and in that short time they have found 15 sponsors for us. Some of the Go Philanthropic team were here in Vietnam for a visit in January. It was wonderful that they could meet and spend time with some of the children for whom they had arranged sponsorships. At the CEF office they did some food prep, drawing, painting and played games. It was a rich experience for the team to



personally meet the children whom they are helping and of course the children were ecstatic.

The support from Go Philanthropic www.gophilanthropic.org has been wonderful with so many children now in school or college because of their support. For more see our January 23, 2012 blog.

The D.O.V.E. Fund - Bandages and stump protectors for parents affected by leprosy

We have 14 children in one of our education programs in Danang and most of them have parents or grandparents affected by leprosy. Some beautifully knit bandages and stump caps made by knitters in the D.O.V.E. Fund Bandage Brigade arrived recently. They were gratefully received by the father of one of the children in the Danang program. Kim Anh's father has been affected by leprosy himself. For more on the D.O.V.E. Fund work see our blog dated December 14, 2011 and theirs at <http://leprosybandages.blogspot.com>.



The US CEF Team

The main team member in the US is Stephen Jackel, our US Manager and Coordinator who does so much for CEF VN. We have a great board of directors and advisors who are very supportive. Along with the *Go Philanthropic* team and the *Journeys of the Heart* team we are able to help many children, especially girls who need that little extra bit of help here, to have a better life.



Changes in Staff

Duyen has said good bye after three years with CEF as she is moving overseas. She was a huge help, had excellent English and was genuinely multi-skilled. Quan and Hieu have both started working for CEF. I am thrilled to have both these sweet and talented people working with us.



CEF VN plans for the next few months:

- Female and male health and sexual health care for the teenage children in Danang Education Support Program.
- More interviews of families who have approached us recently for help in the next school year.
- Home visits of all the children in all our education programs; in Danang, Quang Nam and Thai Binh provinces.
- Summer Day outing for children in Quang Nam Province.
- Find more sponsors for our education programs and fund our medical and food funds.
- Fulfill our present wish list of a new or second hand bike, a new or second hand motorbike and a new printer and new or second hand lap top.

It's Easy to Make a Difference!

1. Two girls would benefit from your sponsorship

Sisters, Thanh and Nga live with their mother and an aunt in granny's home of bamboo, with walls of straw mats and metal sheeting, where five people sleep in one bed. Their father died and mum who earns \$80 a month is now the sole supporter for the girls. She is concerned about being able to keep the girls in school. Thanh the older sister is artistic and Nga is the younger is very bright. Can you help?

2. Our wish list is easy to contribute to

- A new printer, a new or second hand bike, motorbike and laptop
- Donations
- Sponsors to educate children
- Sponsors to share the education of college students

3. Share about Children's Education Foundation with others

4. Follow our blog / subscribe to our FREE blog and share it <http://www.cef-vietnam-usa.blogspot.com>

5. Share our newsletter

6. Raise funds for sponsorships, for our food fund, our medical fund or our extra curricula education fund (for example donations instead of birthday presents, donations in exchange for a meal you cook for friends.)

And remember we do have: **Tax exempt status**

This year we have 501(c)(3) status and it has meant we have received even more donations from New York, California and Canada. We have been able to help more children through educational sponsorships. This has been such a blessing. Although I know donors don't like to be specifically mentioned I do want to say thank you so much for your kind, very generous donations.

All checks payable to: Children's Education Foundation – Vietnam

Mail to: Stephen Jackel, CEF-VN USA Coordinator, 277 Broadway Suite 1010, New York, NY 10007

To ask questions please e-mail: Linda or Stephen at cef.vn.usa@gmail.com We have tax exempt status (501(c)(3) status), therefore all donations made are tax deductible to the extent that the law permits.

*See the Children's Education Foundation – Vietnam blog and website: [cef-vietnam-usa.blogspot.com](http://www.cef-vietnam-usa.blogspot.com) www.cef-vietnam-usa.org
Helping Girls Grow to be Women with Choices*

