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# DUC SON CHILD

## EDITION - 0921

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Edition : September 2021

English version

Biannual journal from Duc Son Child association, founded in 2011, from french law 1901 recognized as a general interest association, able to deliver tax receipts upon donation.



## EDITORIAL



### 10 ANS

En 2011, nous visitons Huê, en plein été, à la recherche d'orphelinats ou nous pourrions être utiles. Notre objectif, alors, était de contribuer, à la hauteur de nos moyens, à aider le pays que nos parents avaient fui plusieurs décennies auparavant. Nous avons parcouru la ville de Huê ; un peu par hasard, nous sommes tombés sur l'orphelinat de Duc Son. Où nous avons rencontré les bonnes sœurs, les 170 enfants, orphelins, issus des contrées les plus pauvres du centre, abandonnés pour la plupart à la naissance. La pauvreté, dans un pays comme le Vietnam, se manifeste notamment par ces trop nombreux centres et orphelinats, qui hélas ne bénéficient que d'un très modeste soutien de l'état. Nous avons commencé, par la voie de notre président, par de l'aide de première nécessité, notamment du lait, des jouets et des médicaments, pour les nourrissons. Nous continuons ces actions 10 ans après, mais il nous est cependant apparu important par ailleurs pour aider durablement ces jeunes orphelins de miser sur l'éducation, en particulier supérieure. Des 170 enfants du centre, trop peu tentaient leur chance à l'université ou dans le supérieur, trop chère, ou trop difficile. De ce premier voyage est né le projet de notre petite association : celui d'aider les plus pauvres et méritants, au Vietnam, et en particulier de leur permettre d'accéder à l'éducation supérieure.

10 ans après, à l'heure de faire le bilan, nous sommes convaincus de la pertinence de notre projet. En 10 ans, nous avons parrainés plus d'une cinquantaine d'étudiants, dont plus de vingt aujourd'hui sont diplômés. Dans chacun des trois centres avec lesquels nous travaillons, nos bourses ont permis à plusieurs jeunes de finir leurs études ; ceux-ci, désormais professeurs, ingénieurs, cadres

d'entreprises, sont autant de figures, de grandes sœurs et de grands frères, qui, nous l'espérons, inspireront les plus jeunes de ces centres à s'imaginer un destin. Ce chemin parcouru en 10 ans n'aurait pas été possible sans le soutien précieux de ceux qui travaillent à nos côtés au Vietnam, de nos bénévoles et de nos donateurs. Nos remerciements les plus sincères et chaleureux vont à tous ceux, nombreux, qui nous ont accompagné durant ces 10 années. En particulier, nous pensons aux bonnes sœurs, aux personnels de notre foyer à Phu Thuong, qui font un travail tout à fait admirable, et ce bien avant que notre association ait vu le jour. Tout ce personnel, par sa générosité et son sens du sacrifice, a été une grande source d'inspiration pour nous ; à l'heure de nos 10 ans, nous nous devons de remercier en premier lieu ces personnes qui nous rappellent tous les jours ce que servir signifie.

Cinquante étudiants, hélas, cela demeure beaucoup trop peu à l'échelle du pays. Nous souhaitons, dans les 10 prochaines années, continuer à faire croître notre système de bourses, pour permettre à toujours plus d'enfants pauvres d'accéder à l'éducation supérieure. Sur le terrain, à Hue, nous devons hélas refuser beaucoup trop d'enfants méritants, faute de budget de notre part. Sur le terrain, à Hue, nous ne travaillons hélas qu'avec 3 centres ; or il en demeure beaucoup d'autres, qui auraient tout autant besoin de notre soutien, mais que nous ne pouvons aider faute de moyen. C'est pour nous un crève-cœur : demain notre objectif est de pouvoir continuer à faire grandir notre projet, et d'aider toujours plus largement les contrées les plus pauvres du pays. Alors évidemment, pour continuer nos actions, nous aurons demain besoin de toujours plus de bénévoles et de donateurs. Notre autre crève-cœur, COVID oblige, est de ne pouvoir célébrer dignement avec vous ces 10 ans. Notre bureau avait pour projet un grand événement, pour célébrer comme il se doit cette date charnière pour notre association. Il n'est que partie remise : nous espérons bien avoir l'occasion de ce grand projet, dans un futur proche. En France, au Vietnam, aux Etats-Unis, en Australie, là où se trouvent nos membres, nos bénévoles, nos donateurs.

## EDITORIAL



### 10 YEARS

In 2011, we visited Huế, in the middle of summer, looking for orphanages where we could be of help. Our objective, then, was to contribute, within our means, to help the country that our parents had fled several decades before. We had traveled through the town of Hue; it was quite a coincidence that we came across the Duc Son orphanage. We met the nuns, the 170 children, orphans, from the poorest regions of the center, mostly abandoned at birth. Poverty in a country like Vietnam is manifested in particular by these too many centers and orphanages, which unfortunately receive only very modest support from the state. We started, through our association president, with basic aid, including milk, toys, and medicine, for infants. We are continuing these actions 10 years later, but it seemed important to us also to help these young orphans in the long term to focus on education, in particular higher education. Of the 170 children at the center, too few tried their luck at university or college, which they consider too expensive, or too difficult. From this first trip was born the project of our small association: that of helping the poorest and deserving, in Vietnam, and in particular to allow them to access higher education.

10 years later, when it comes time to take stock, we are convinced of the relevance of our project. In 10 years, we have sponsored more than 50 students, of whom more than 20 today are graduates. In each of the three centers with which we work, our scholarships have enabled several young people to finish their studies; these people, now teachers, engineers, business executives, are all role models, big sisters and big brothers, who, we hope, will

inspire the youngest of these centers to imagine a destiny. This 10-year journey would not have been possible without the valuable support of those working alongside us in Vietnam, of our volunteers, and our donors. Our most sincere and warm thanks go to all those, many, who have accompanied us during these 10 years. In particular, we think of the nuns, the staff of our foster home in Phu Thuong, who do a very admirable job, and this long before our association was born. All the staff, with their generosity and sense of sacrifice, has been a great source of inspiration for us; As our association is turning 10 years old, we owe it to those people who remind us every day of what serving means.

Fifty students, alas, is still far too few across the country. We wish, in the next 10 years, to continue to develop our scholarship system, to allow more and more poor children to have access to higher education. On the field, in Hue, we unfortunately have to refuse too many deserving children, due to a lack of budget. On the field, in Hue, we unfortunately only work with 3 centers; yet there are still many others who need our support just as much, but we cannot help because of lack of resources. It is heartbreaking for us: our goal for the future is to be able to continue to develop our project and to help the poorest areas of the country more extensively. So obviously, to continue our actions, tomorrow we will need more and more volunteers and donors. Another thing that breaks our hearts is not being able to celebrate these 10 years with you with dignity, because of COVID-19. The association board had planned a major event to properly celebrate this key moment of our history. It is only a matter of time: we hope to have the opportunity to bring this event to life soon. In France, Vietnam, the United States, Australia, where our members, volunteers, and donors are located.

**EDITORIAL**



**Thấm thoát đã 10 năm trôi qua**

10 năm về trước, chúng tôi bắt đầu hỗ trợ Đức Sơn qua những hoạt động cấp thiết như cung cấp lương thực thực phẩm, nhu yếu phẩm, vật dụng, thậm chí cả đồ chơi cho trẻ em mồ côi. Hoạt động này vẫn được gìn giữ cho đến ngày hôm nay. Tuy nhiên, chúng tôi tin rằng những hoạt động này chỉ có thể giúp các em một phần. Để hoàn toàn thay đổi tương lai một trẻ em, ngoài tình thương yêu và nuôi dưỡng, chúng ta cần giúp các em có được cơ hội tiếp cận một nền giáo dục tốt, đặc biệt là giáo dục đại học. Thế nhưng mỗi năm, chỉ có 1-2 trẻ mồ côi tại Đức Sơn theo đuổi đến cấp Cao đẳng, Đại học. Phần lớn các em đều bỏ học ở bậc Trung học Phổ thông. Thực trạng này đã thúc đẩy Tổ chức Đức Sơn Child đặt lại mục tiêu sứ mệnh, tạo điều kiện cho càng nhiều trẻ em nghèo Việt Nam được tiếp cận giáo dục, và tốt nghiệp đại học.

10 năm đã trôi qua, Tổ chức Đức Sơn Child nay đã chung tay hỗ trợ cho ba đơn vị tại Thành phố Huế, bao gồm chùa Đức Sơn, chùa Ưu Đàm và Nhà Bảo trợ Học sinh nghèo Phú Thượng. Chúng tôi đã giúp đỡ và hỗ trợ hơn 50 trẻ em nghèo, mồ côi tiếp cận bậc giáo dục đại học. Trong đó, hơn 20 em đã tốt nghiệp và có công việc ổn định. Các em nay đã trở thành những giáo viên, kỹ sư, nhà quản lý ; là tấm gương để các trẻ em khác phải noi theo. Đây là những nỗ lực tuy nhỏ, nhưng cũng làm chúng tôi rất đỗi tự hào.

Chúng tôi không thể đạt được những thành quả này nếu không có sự tham gia hỗ trợ của những hội viên, tình nguyện viên, các nhà hảo tâm đã luôn sát cánh cùng Tổ chức Đức Sơn Child trong 10 năm vừa qua. Chúng tôi cũng xin chân thành cảm ơn các sư cô, các tình nguyện viên và các cá nhân đã tận tình nuôi dưỡng, trao cho trẻ em nghèo, mồ côi tại

Đức Sơn, Ưu Đàm, và Phú Thượng những tình thương, sự quan tâm đồng cảm. Chính lòng vị tha này đã giúp thay đổi cuộc sống của những mảnh đời khốn khó, mang lại cho các em một mái ấm gia đình. Họ chính là những vị anh hùng thầm lặng ; sự hy sinh cao cả của họ chính là động lực để Tổ chức Đức Sơn Child quyết tâm thực hiện sứ mệnh của mình.

50 sinh viên không phải là một con số ít, nhưng nó cũng không phải là nhiều trong bối cảnh khó khăn của Huế nói riêng, và của Việt Nam nói chung. Mặt khác, sự hạn chế về thời gian và tài chính khiến chúng tôi chưa thể lên kế hoạch hợp tác với các cơ nhi viện khác, mặc dù chúng tôi hiểu rằng vẫn có rất nhiều trẻ em nghèo hiếu học cần nhận được sự hỗ trợ này. Vì lẽ đó, trong 10 năm tiếp theo, Tổ chức Đức Sơn Child vẫn sẽ tiếp tục theo đuổi sứ mệnh mở rộng cơ hội tiếp cận cho càng nhiều trẻ em nghèo nhận được học bổng và theo đuổi nền giáo dục đại học. Để không một trẻ em nghèo hiếu học bị bỏ lại phía sau, chúng tôi mong rằng Tổ chức Đức Sơn Child sẽ tiếp tục nhận được những đóng góp quý báu của các nhà hảo tâm, các hội viên, thành viên, và các tình nguyện viên với tấm lòng vàng.

Do những diễn biến phức tạp của đại dịch COVID-19, rất tiếc chúng ta không thể tổ chức một buổi lễ kỷ niệm đánh dấu cột mốc quan trọng trong lịch sử hình thành và phát triển của Tổ chức Đức Sơn Child. Chúng tôi hy vọng rằng sẽ sớm thôi, chúng ta sẽ lại được gặp nhau, chia sẻ với nhau những thành quả Đức Sơn Child đã và sẽ đạt được. Dù ở Pháp, Việt Nam, Úc hay Hoa Kỳ, chúng tôi cũng xin chân thành cảm ơn quý bạn, những nhà hảo tâm, hội viên, thành viên, và tình nguyện viên của DSC.

**Nguyễn Lương Hiền**



At Duc Son, we wear uniform to go to school

## OUR ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT



Life in Duc Son, Phu Thuong  
and Uu Dam

**This year has continued to be tough for our three centers in Hue.**

Hue, like the rest of the country, has suffered several waves of COVID-19 outbreak. A city, once vibrant with foreign tourists, is now deserted and quiet. The economic situation has worsened. The lively streets of the center of Hue, Chu Van An or Pham Ngu Lao, are now desperately empty, with several stores, restaurants, shops now closed. The COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly harsh on the poorest populations. For them, the pandemic has caused an unprecedented drop in their income, pushing them back below the poverty line.

Surge of poverty means, for our centers, more demand, and less funding. Poverty is the root cause for family disruption, leading to inability to raise a kid or worse, child abandonment. Last year, faced an unprecedented increase



*Our 4 kids (Minh Khanh, Ngoc Thao, Manh Anh and My Tam), graduating high school in June and preparing to start University in September*

in number of abandoned newborns, specifically for Duc Son pagoda. Unfortunately, this year has seen no difference. Meanwhile, it has been particularly more difficult to find new donors and sponsors. Without an inflow of tourism, a substantial source of income has disappeared for our centers. In addition, corporate funding has been reduced as a result of the economic crisis in the last year. We now place all of our hopes on a better FY21-22.

As we write this annual report, in June / July 2021, the COVID outbreak exacerbates and shows no sign of abating in Vietnam. The 4th wave has been spreading since the end of June, with social distancing measures imposed in several provinces of Vietnam. Number of new cases is reaching a new height, exceeding 5000 a day and forcing a strict lockdown in several provinces. Fortunately, Hue and the central provinces are less exposed to this new wave. However, the situation remains complicated in our centers, and kids cannot return to school during this month of June. And of course, the prolonged lockdown is putting Hue and the central provinces under substantial economic pressure.

## Our actions, this year (FY2020-21)

### At our center: in Phu Thuong

Similar to last year, our activities with Phu Thuong center have been one of the key highlights of this year. Phu Thuong center is home to 32 kids, from 12 to 18 years old, from very poor background and / or orphans in the region of Thua Thien Hue.

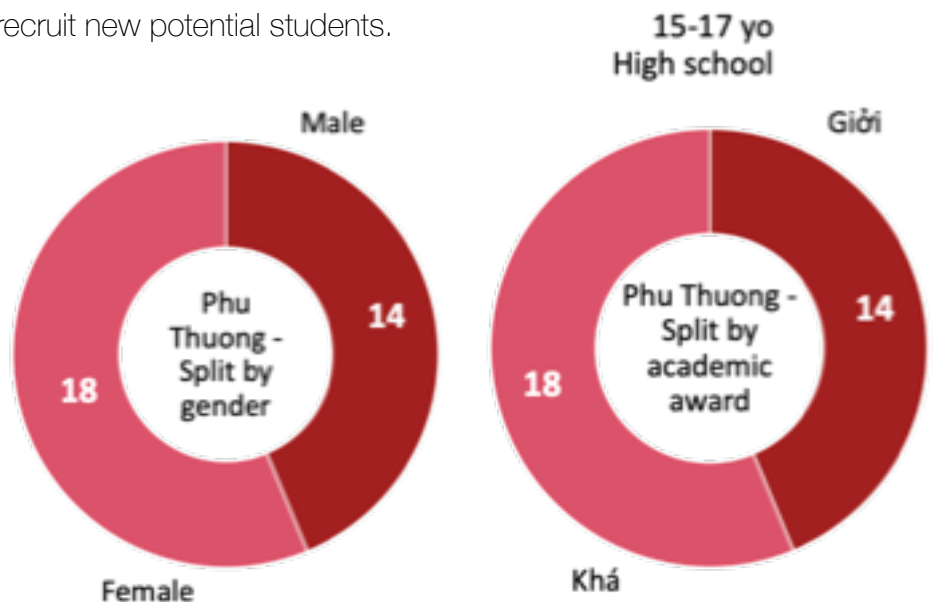
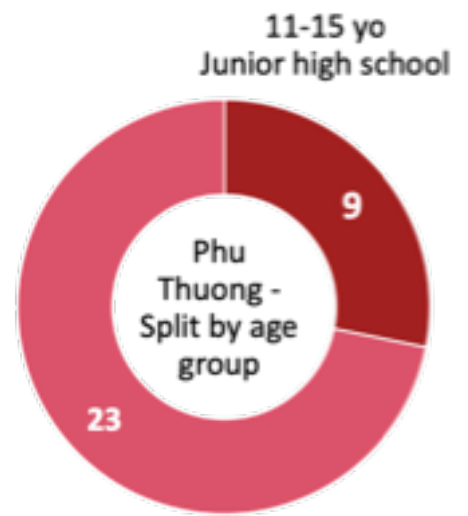
This year again, we are extremely proud of the results of our kids in Phu Thuong. From its creation, in 2007, Phu Thuong's philosophy has been to offer a chance for underprivileged kids from poor areas and / or difficult family background a chance to get a bachelor degree. From the inception, most kids have been hard working, earning good grades and passing the highly selective university exams at a 100% success rate.

This year, all of our 32 kids at the center earned academic awards, from their school. 15 of them got the highest award (labelled "giỏi", i.e. "great results" or "excellent", award normally granted to top 3-4 students of a class), and the rest of them got the second highest award (labelled "khá", i.e.



Our kids from 11th grade and 12th grade (lop 11 and lop 12)

"satisfactory"). 4 of these students will graduate from high school this year, and we expect again all of them to successfully pass the exams to the university. As they graduate from high school, these 4 students will leave Phu Thuong center (to join our university scholarship program). We will replace them with 4 new students. Our staff from Phu Thuong are currently conducting field work to recruit new potential students.



## Our actions, this year (FY2020-21)

We used this COVID year to conduct several upgrade works, much needed for the facility (electricity, painting, new kitchen appliances). In total, we invested over 2000 euros last year in various upgrade works. We hope to continue to improve the living conditions of our kids at the center.

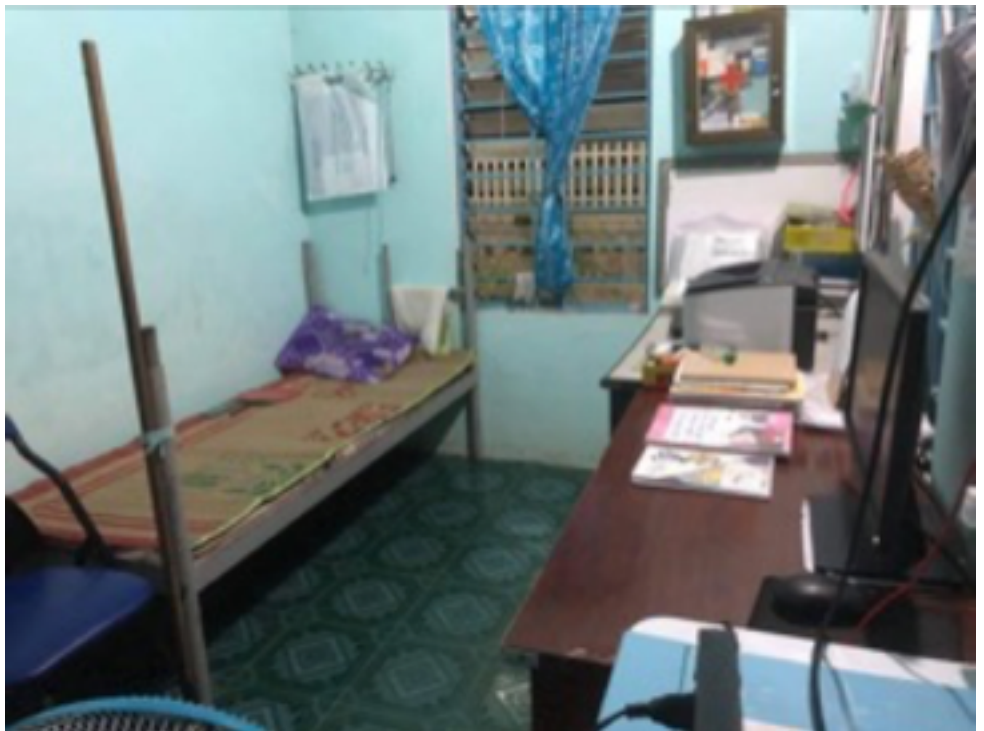
### At our center: in Uu Dam

This year has been quite difficult for Uu Dam. The pagoda is still being very well managed by sư cô Phước Thiện and her team. They are doing a tremendous work caring for the 45 kids living at the orphanage, in a particularly difficult period. The number of students at university, joining our scholarship program and fully sponsored by our association has been growing. We hope again that this year, several more students managed to pass the exams for higher education and joins our programs.

We are very happy to have, this year, our first 3 students from Uu Dam, graduating from university, 3 years after we have initiated the program with Uu Dam. They are right now in the process of



*Phu Thuong, June 2021 – outdoor and the room of our director, Cô Dương at the center*





## DUCSONCHILD ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

finalizing their curriculum to get the degree (which should be completed in July), and we are very confident they will have no issue finding a job. Congratulations to Phat, Tai and Khanh and all the best for this new milestone in their young life.

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*Our three kids from Uu Dam, first to graduate and sponsored by DSC since they entered university (Nhu Ý, Xuân Thu ờng, and Kim Ng ậ n)*

Khanh and all the best for this new milestone in their young life.

Last year, our activities with Phu Thuong center have been one of the key highlights.

**In addition,** our association has supported several of the humanitarian initiatives from Uu Dam. This year, our association has sponsored a mission in the mountainous areas of Thua Thien Hue to help the ethnic minorities. These are extremely poor population, for which any humanitarian operation is a major relief.



*Operation in the mountainous areas, Tết 2021, co-sponsored by DSC and lead by the Uu Dam team*



### At our center: Duc Son pagoda and orphanage

The absence of tourists is particularly difficult for Duc Son, for which tourists are an essential source of funding and sponsor. We mentioned, last year, that the number of newly born abandoned and left to Duc Son pagoda was a bad sign of the increased poverty and misery in Hue. The trend this year, is unfortunately very similar to last year. Duc Son this year welcomed 5 more orphans, abandoned just few weeks after they were born.

With Duc Son pagoda, this year we focused our actions on the ad-hoc support and funding, to help the pagoda in their daily management. The travel restrictions have put a halt on our operations with Duc Son. We hope that soon, we will be able to relaunch our historical operations with them (including among other humanitarian missions from France, funding for purchase and development of agricultural land, etc.). More than ever, Duc Son pagoda, the largest and oldest orphanage in Hue, will require our support.

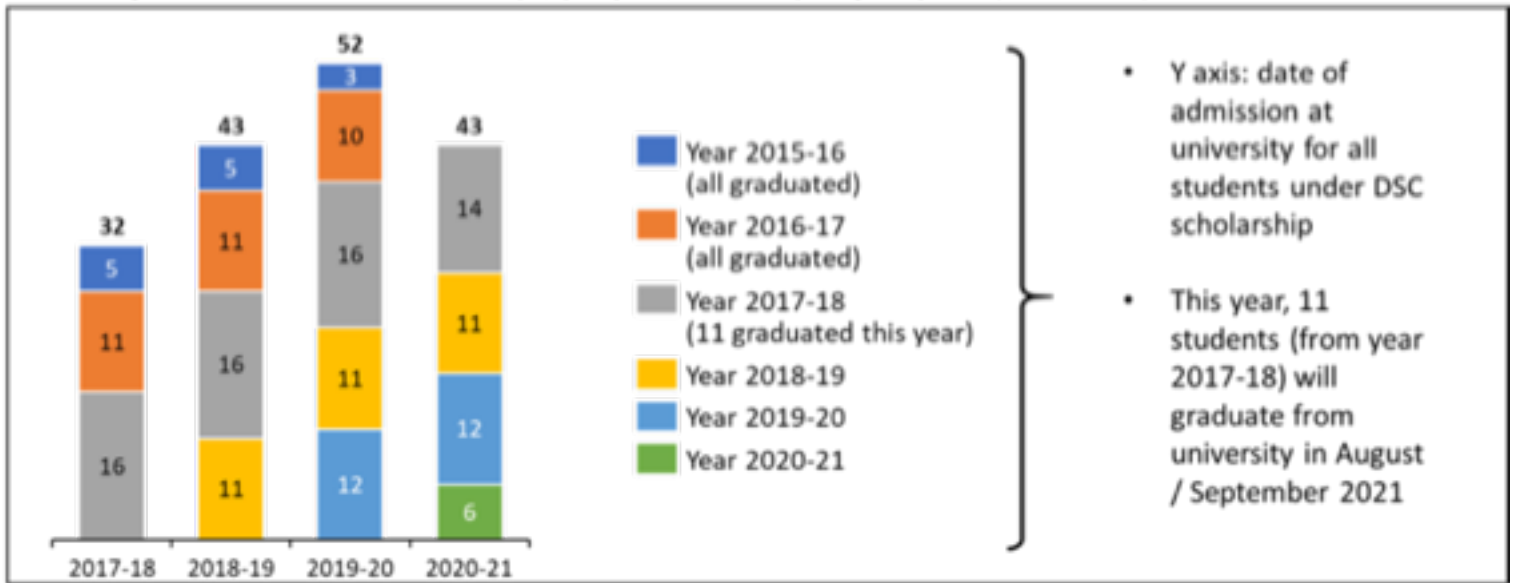


*New-born, 2020-21, at Duc Son orphanage*



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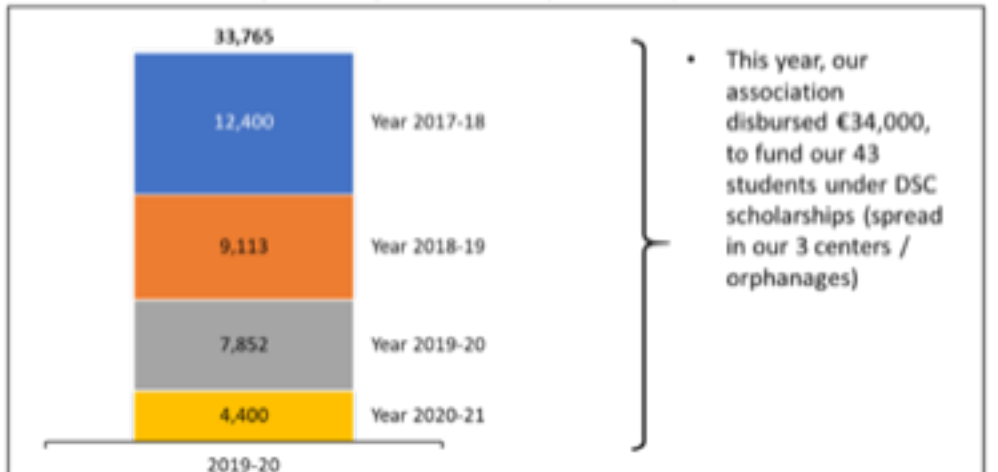
Number of students with DSC scholarships, per year, over the past four years (2017-2021)



## Our university scholarship program

Our university scholarship program remains our key and flagship initiative. Since the implementation of the program, 7 years ago, we have been providing full financial aid (between 800 to 1500 euro per annum, per student) for our students under our program. For every student from each of the 3 centers we have been working with, we guarantee that any and every student graduating from high school and entering university will be eligible to our scholarship program.

Total disbursed amount from DSC, for our university scholarships, in euros



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Duc Son pagoda, the largest and oldest orphanage in Hue, will require our support.

This year, our program provided financial support to 45 students, disbursing over 31,000 euros. This year, we are extremely proud to announce that 11 students will graduate. In total, our program will, by the end of July, have a network of 25 alumni. Building a strong alumni network, to continue to build solidarity after our students graduate, is one of our ambitions in

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Name	University	Graduating in	With DSC since..	Future job after graduation
TRẦN THỊ DIỆP	University of Economics of Danang	sept-21	sept-17	Currently working for Bach Viet Group, in the Danang Office
NGUYỄN THỊ ÁI HOA	Saigon Open University	sept-21	sept-17	Currently working for PAO Materials, technical trainee, in Binh Duong
HÀ THỊ MỸ HOA	University of Tourism of Hue	sept-21	sept-17	Currently working for Non Nuoc Viet Tourist (private tourist office)
NGUYỄN THỊ THU HỒNG	University of Technology of Saigon	sept-21	sept-17	Has a job offer at Saigon Hue Tourism office; however delay due to COVID outbreak
TRẦN VĂN LONG	FPT University	oct-21	sept-17	Will start to work in september for FPT Software as an engineer
ĐOÀN THỊ MÊN	University of Tourism of Hue	sept-21	sept-17	Has a job offer at Saigon Hue Tourism office; however delay due to COVID outbreak
NGUYỄN THỊ HOÀI PHƯƠNG	Vietnam National Uni - Saigon campus	sept-21	sept-17	Has a job offer at Saigon Hue Tourism office; however delay due to COVID outbreak
LÊ HOÀNG PHÚ QUÝ	University of Economics of Hue	sept-21	sept-17	Currently looking for a job
LÊ NHÂN TỬ THÔN	University of Foreign languages and IT of Saigon	sept-21	sept-17	Received a full scholarship to study in Master in the US (see her testimony)
CÁI THỊ THANH THUẬN	University of Tourism of Hue	sept-21	sept-17	Currently working with his family in Hue
HOÀNG THỊ THÚY	Univerisity of Agriculture of Hue	sept-21	sept-17	Will start to work for Seafood company, Tan Quan Minh

the short term. Our initial project was to create a solidarity community network, where successful graduates would give back to their community and hometown once they were successfully set. This ambition remains, and as our number of alumni grows, this is our next big milestone.

### Financing and budget

We have disbursed, in total, 65000 euros to support our three centers and to finance our scholarship program. The decrease vis-à-vis previous year is mainly due to the reduced number of students in our university scholarship program (47 students last year vs 40 this year). Indeed,

last year 14 students graduated and exited our program, while only 7 new students joined the program.

We would like to thank again all our donors and sponsors, without whom none of the activities above would be possible. In particular, we would like to warmly thank Linkbynet, for their renewed sponsor, to USA International relief and Dr. Thanh. Thank you also to all our individual donors in France, in the US, in Vietnam; several of them have been supporting us since the first years of our association. All this would not have been possible without you.

For this upcoming year, we are again calling for donors and sponsors. We plan to strengthen our corporate partnerships, which will be necessary to sustain our

activities. Our operations will continue to require substantial funding, and we do hope we will be able to count on your continuous support this year.

background a chance to get a bachelor degree. From the inception, most kids have been hard working, earning good grades and passing the highly selective university exams at a 100% success rate.

This year, all of our 32 kids at the center earned academic awards, from their school. 15 of them got the highest award (labelled “giỏi”, i.e. “great results” or “excellent”, award normally granted to top 3-4 students of a class), and the rest of them got the second highest award (labelled “khá”, i.e. “satisfactory”). 4 of these students will graduate from high school this year, and we expect again all of them to

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Financials - in Euro	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
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Spending						
Scholarship program - Phu Thuong	2 600,00 €	12 400,00 €	25 500,00 €	34 500,00 €	37 900,00 €	31 700,00 €
Scholarship program - Uu Dam			1 100,00 €	2 000,00 €	2 112,44 €	2 227,71 €
Scholarship program - Duc Son	1 100,00 €	1 350,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 500,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €
Full management of Phu Thuong				28 368,97 €	26 081,85 €	28 754,31 €
Buying land - Duc Son (1)			18 480,00 €			
Buying land - Duc Son (2)				- €		
Other operation to Uu Dam				900,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €
Other fees	114,00 €	147,72 €	250,00 €	246,98 €	246,98 €	246,98 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 814,00 €</b>	<b>13 897,72 €</b>	<b>46 330,00 €</b>	<b>67 515,95 €</b>	<b>68 341,27 €</b>	<b>64 929,00 €</b>

Revenues						
Individual donors - france - sponsors	6 174,75 €	5 452,04 €	15 122,00 €	3 600,00 €	3 500,00 €	4 500,00 €
Sponsorship Linkbynet				21 000,00 €	10 000,00 €	7 500,00 €
Operations in France			3 973,86 €	5 000,00 €	5 000,00 €	5 000,00 €
Corporate Donors - US					9 000,00 €	5 000,00 €
Individual donors - Vietnam	2 600,00 €	12 400,00 €	22 513,00 €	30 000,00 €	26 000,00 €	30 000,00 €
Individual donors - Australia					3 000,00 €	1 000,00 €
Fund raising for land purchase				- €		
Donation from Association "Avenir"			4 000,00 €	7 300,00 €	12 000,00 €	12 000,00 €
Other donations				4 524,98 €	1 000,00 €	
Donation for "Uu Dam"				900,00 €		
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 774,75 €</b>	<b>17 852,04 €</b>	<b>45 608,86 €</b>	<b>66 900,00 €</b>	<b>69 500,00 €</b>	<b>65 000,00 €</b>

successfully pass the exams to the university. As they graduate from high school, these 4 students will leave Phu Thuong center (to join our university scholarship program). We will replace them with 4 new students. Our staff from Phu Thuong are currently conducting field work to recruit new potential students.

## ALUMNI DUCTIONCHILD



It's time to create our network and continue to help orphan

**Summer 2021. The date when Saigon started officially started its lockdown.** From the beginning of this the sanitary crisis, the country was never affected like this. The exponential amount of infected people increased so quickly that force the government do what we had three times.

One year ago we were in their situation. However it seems this one is managed differently. In Saigon army is deployed and constraint people to stay at home. Foods are delivered in front of doors and one chance per week to buy furnitures. That could work for a week but clearly not for a month. How can you buy daily basic stuffs if you are being capable to sell something ? Those sellers, will suffer if this situation stay longer. A additional crisis may come ?

On the other hand, in Hue, where we have our centers, the situation is slightly different. The sanitary status is less dangerous than the



*Our 4 kids (Minh Khanh, Ngoc Thao, Manh Anh and My Tam), graduating high school in June and preparing to start University in September*

south capital that's why only basics rules stay applicable. Like wearing the mask, keeping the distance or washing our hand with antibacterial gel but fortunately for us our students are safe. Therefore move in from this context to the lockdown may be mental challenge to solve. This is what will happen to our students this year. By leaving our center to continue their scholarship program in the big cities, they will have to face different restrictions and different manner to live.

When you arrived in town. Being alone doesn't matter at the beginning. You feel excited and enjoy every step out you make. However day after week you feel that life is different than our quite center. You change your way of life, you adapt to those constraints and try to figure out all new thing you encounter.

The first months are the most important after move in because you prepare all you foundation and habits for the next years. Find a place to live, search a partial job to have additional income, start their university program, build up a new social network and keep away from distraction are not an easy tasks. Especially for far from home eighteen years old student. They grown fast, really fast, which is great but do they need to go thought those pain full moment alone ?

From that feedback what we understood was that having a supportive network inside those big cities could be the game changer. This year we have fourteen graduated students but it's too late. That's why we have to prepare the field for the coming fifty two students.

Each year it's around ten graduated students and in five years all our students will be ready to move in those big cities. Those coming years will be interesting to see how they will succeed their dreams and getting back their experiences to help younger in our center.

**All our graduated students went through difficult moments and get a lot of experience from them.**

That's why we decide to create the "DSCAlumni".

It works like any alumni programme, where former student joining would help their school. In our case, they will support the younger generation, by providing advices, sharing tips and experience, and by contributing financially to the scholarship programme. Once the beneficiaries of the

programme, they will become godfathers and sponsors once they graduate.

DSCAlumi is an opportunity for former student to payback their scholarship program. In a long term, this is how we will finance all our scholarship program for next decade.

## ALUMNI DUCTIONCHILD



Interview of our student  
Nhân Từ Thôn Lê

Can you introduce yourself briefly? When did you join "Nhà bảo trợ Phú Thượng," what memories do you keep from that period?

My name is Le Nhan Tu Thon, and I'm a recent graduate of the University of Foreign Languages and Information Technology in Ho Chi Minh City. At the moment, I am a student at the University of North Carolina.

I was joined in "Nhà bảo trợ Phú Thượng" in 2013, when I was a 9th grader. I have many wonderful recollections of my four years of being raised by "Nhà bảo trợ Phú Thượng." Above all, I recall the first day I stepped inside "Nhà bảo trợ Phú Thượng" - September 6, 2013, shortly after the new school year began. My first impression of this roof is crowded, warm, the instructors are very gentle. But besides that, it was still indispensable to feel anxious for the future when living away from family,



*Me (middle) and my friend in USA*

especially living in a group. In general, "Nhà bảo trợ Phú Thượng" is a place that marked a turning point in my life, as I progressed from a not excellent student to passed Quoc Hoc Hue High School and finally be a typical student at university.

### What university did you join after high school?

After graduating from high school, I achieved a salutatorian rank in International Relations at Ho Chi Minh University of Foreign Languages and Information Technology.

### How did you find student life in Saigon? How has the scholarship from our association helped you?

When I moved to Ho Chi Minh City, I had a reasonably fortunate student life with the guidance of my relatives. For the first year, I lived with my aunt's



family to facilitate adaptation to the new environment, and then I moved to a rental house near the university to facilitate school and work.

Furthermore, it would be unthinkable to overlook the assistance provided by the Duc Son Child scholarship fund, which has significantly improved my student life. Because my school's tuition is quite costly, the scholarship I received has significantly reduced my financial burden. As a result, I can concentrate more on my schoolwork without being distracted by financial concerns. It would be challenging for me to complete my university program and build a better life without the Duc Son Child Scholarship Fund's assistance. For me, the support of the scholarship not only helps me personally but also my whole family. Since my first year of university, I have not had to worry about money, and I have had the opportunity to expand my knowledge and skills, resulting in a solid part-time job with good incomes years later. Even when my brother started college in Ho Chi Minh, I was able to look after him.

From the bottom of my heart, I always feel lucky and grateful to have received support from the scholarship fund during my education. And I believe that the scholarship fund will empower more disadvantaged students to attend school, allowing them to have a better future and, as a result, contributing to the development of a better society.

### **What are you doing now? Describe your current exchange program in the US?**

Currently, I am an exchange student majoring in International Relations at the University of North Carolina. I am honored to receive a full scholarship from the US Department of State, allowing me to attend a public university in the US for one year with \$26000 for each semester. This program provides scholarships to outstanding undergraduate students worldwide for full-time non-degree study combined with community service, professional development, and cultural enhancement.

### **What do you want to do after the exchange program is completed?**

I plan to seek a scholarship to pursue a master's degree in economics or logistics after completing the exchange program. Because after a while of having the opportunity to work, I feel that I still lack a lot of knowledge that I believe is critical for my work. So, perhaps I will continue to study to enhance my knowledge and skills in order to better serve my future career.

### **How would you help other fellow kids and students at Phu Thuong like yourself?**

First, I think that the members of "Nhà bảo trợ Phú Thượng" still do not have a particular connection after leaving there. The students of " Nhà bảo trợ Phú Thượng" are all potential students but also need mentorship from experienced people. Therefore, I believe it is possible to implement the "Pay it forward" philosophy, in which the predecessors reciprocate by leading the youngsters to follow. I believe it is possible to organize sharing and orientation sessions by predecessors for students to assist them in better comprehend university student life, identify what they desire, and benefit from their experiences.

Regarding university students, we can connect by area: Hue, Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh from here, they can support and share with each other instantly and quickly. Or we can connect based on the major group so that they can help each other in an academic setting to obtain better learning outcomes.

Finally, I'm aware that I still have many flaws and am working hard to reach my goals. But I think I can help them as a mentor, a companion by sharing the knowledge that I have learned in the areas of study, extracurricular activities, and part-time work.



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