



STEP
RIGHT
UP

Sunflower Mission 2019 Annual Report

SunflowerMission.org



Sunflower
Mission

Sunflower
Mission
Education: Hope for the Future

ỦY BAN NHÂN DÂN HUYỆN LẠC DƯƠNG - TỈNH LÂM ĐỒNG

LỄ KHÁNH THÀNH

TRƯỜNG TIỂU HỌC PANG TIỀNG 1 - XÃ LÁT,
HUYỆN LẠC DƯƠNG, TỈNH LÂM ĐỒNG



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 President's Letter
- 4-5 2019 Work Camp
- 6-7 Step Right Up Fundraiser
- 8 Sunflower Mission's Young Leaders
SEEDS T-shirt Sales
Books 2 Smiles
- 9 Stepping Right Up To Make A Difference
- 10 The Impact of One Scholarship
SAS Scholarship
- 11 Statement of Operations
- 12 Donors List

VALUES

We are a non-governmental, non-religious, and non-political organization. We support students only on the basis of academic potential and financial need. We comply with U.S. and Vietnam laws and regulations. We treat people with respect.

VISION

We aspire for our students in Vietnam to become successful teachers, engineers, and professionals; and for our volunteers to learn the skill sets required of effective leaders, including compassion, gratitude, confidence, and global perspectives.

MISSION

Sunflower Mission is a 501(c)3 organization committed to improving the lives of the people in Vietnam, mainly through educational assistance programs. We bring school facilities, teaching and learning materials, and scholarships to teachers and students in the most remote areas of the country.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Sunflower Mission Family,

In a middle school play I was cast as Hellen Keller. One line that resonated with me is a well-known quote “Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much.” These words come to mind when reflecting on Sunflower Mission’s work this past year. There would be no Sunflower Mission without our supporters and volunteers. Together we have brought hope for a better life to our students and together we have witnessed the transformative power of education.

In 2019, we built 7 classrooms at the Pang Tieng School in Lam Dong. We added 2 classrooms each to our An Hiep School in Ben Tre and Lac Chi School in Phu Yen and renovated another 8. These additions have made it possible for over 300 students to attend elementary school in a safe environment. We awarded 1,382 scholarships for Kinder - 12th grade students and 154 scholarships at the college level. 50 scholarship recipients graduated from college. Together we made a difference!

SM’s 2019 annual fundraiser was Step Right Up, which not only captured the carnival themed event but also the enthusiasm of our supporters and volunteers throughout the years. There is no greater cooperative effort than when people of all ages and backgrounds “step up” to support our work. This annual report features their stories.

SM believes that leadership and civic education for the next generation are important. We prepare our next generation of leaders by giving them greater responsibilities and voices in our decision making. This includes being a representative at the round table discussion led by the Michelle Obama Girls’ Education Alliance. In Viet Nam, former scholarship recipients come back to volunteer with us, taking on leadership roles. In the U.S., our young members are invited to all board meetings and are engaged in our work and fundraising efforts.

As we embark on a new decade, we remain steadfast in our belief that education is the only sustainable way to change the world. We recognize that we alone cannot do much without your trust, generosity, and compassionate support. Let’s continue to “step up” so that together we can change lives! On behalf of the students we serve, THANK YOU!

With gratitude,
Kim Oanh Nguyen

A stroke of paint, one school is built, one student continues her education. A work camper meticulously paints details for a mural onto a classroom wall.

Board of Directors:

Chairman

Mr. Tuan Dao

President

Ms. Kim Oanh Nguyen

Treasurer

Mr. Hoa Ta

Secretary

Mr. Thanh Bui

Director of Capacity Development

Mr. Dinh Ngo

Director of Communications

Ms. Quyen Ma

Board of Advisors:

Mr. Quynh Bui

Dr. Nam Hoang

Ms. Duy-Loan Le

Mr. Khiem Ngo

Dr. Thai Dinh Nguyen

Dr. Tito Phuc Nguyen

Dr. Hoang Phi

Ms. Kim Smith

Ms. Elena Tran

Dr. Thuan Tran

SEEDS officers:

President

Ms. Jacqueline Hoang

Vice President

Mr. Dalton Bui

Volunteer Staff:

Book Keeper

Ms. Amina Tang

Donation Tracker

Ms. Hau Hoang

Annual Tax Filing

Ms. Tram Mai

Historian

Ms. Mai Huong Bui

Design Team:

Lead Designer

Ms. Nguyen Pham

Design Director

Ms. Quyen Ma



Above: Sunflower Mission volunteer leveling the ground to build a sidewalk

Left: In November of 2019, Michelle Obama alongside Maya Soetoro-Ng, from the Obama Foundation, hosted several non-profits organizations doing work in Vietnam. SM representative, Zenda Nguyen (front row, far right) attended and presented information about our work.

2019 WORK CAMP

Pang Tien, Da Lat

WE CARE!

by Thanh Bui (Board of Directors)

Sunflower Mission's sole purpose is to improve education standards for children in Viet Nam through building schools, providing scholarships, organizing an annual work camp, and service. Each initiative requires many dedicated volunteers and countless hours to plan and execute while maintaining SM's secondary goal: a family-friendly atmosphere. This camaraderie is something we can feel but can be difficult to describe, until the 2019 work camp in Păng Tiên, Đà Lạt.

In the first week of camp, individuals commuted over 70 minutes, daily, to reach the school building site. During this commute we got to know each other. We started out as strangers, however, after a few days our bond was strengthened. This bond could be felt between work campers and the locals.

We had a friendly soccer game between work campers and locals, before saying good-bye. Unlike previous games, this year, one of our work campers suffered a twisted ankle. The concern among everyone was clear. Most of us are not medical professionals. But as family members, we sprang into action. As the patient was being transported to the hospital, the rest of the team rallied to make sure the family members of the patient were cared for. These small actions speak volumes and reflect the true character of SM's work campers.

True to the Vietnamese proverb “Một con ngựa đau cả tàu bỏ cỏ”. Translate: when a horse is ill, the entire herd gave up eating. The mood was significantly somber after that night.

The sense of sadness broke when the injured joined the team for breakfast, on crutches. The focus shifted to figuring out who would take turns staying with this individual as they healed. A sense of relief and normalcy had returned to the herd! It can be difficult to describe the close-knit nature of the group, but the spirit of our supporters really come through during difficult times.

We are Sunflower Mission. We care!



Above (left to right): A friendly soccer match between the locals and our work campers at Pang Tieng, Lam Dong.

The Sunflower Mission work camp soccer team.

“It can be difficult to describe the close-knit nature of the group, but the spirit of our supporters really come through during difficult times.”



Clockwise from top: Work campers present gift packages to the local students at Pang Tieng, Lam Dong.

“Is that you?” Taking a break, Don Dao interacts with local kids during the 2019 work camp in Pang Tieng, Lam Dong.

Local students and work campers pose together and show the bond they have developed in a short amount of time.

“Giddy-up!” Work campers Kobe Ngo and Kory Ngo give local kids a ride around the school work camp site.



Above (top to bottom): Mr. Tuan Dao, SM Chairman of the Board, posed with a few local students at Pang Tieng, Lam Dong.

Work campers Thuy, Tina, Cindy, and Tiffany pose in front of a plaque commemorating the building of another school by Sunflower Mission with support from Mona Foundation and National Instruments Corp.

ENGLISH INITIATIVE MAKES A FULL CIRCLE

by Dalton Bui and Jacqueline Hoang

In 2018, SM's English Initiative (EI) was created to help college students in Vietnam improve their English by having weekly video chats with Vietnamese-American youth. The mentees are comprised of SM scholarship recipients, and the mentors are made up of mostly SEEDS (the youth of SM). As mentors we achieved our goal of helping the mentees become confident in their English. We learned more about the lives of students in Vietnam. Just as important, we made new friends, who happen to live half a world away!

Taking advantage of being in Vietnam for work camp, we met our mentees for lunch on our last day in Saigon. It was great meeting each other in person! We discussed music, our hobbies, movies, food, school, our future careers, sports, clothing, riding motor-bikes...everything.

We may have differences, having grown up in different places with different cultures. However, we are all young adults, who are Vietnamese, going to school, finding jobs, and establishing our adult lives. Our similar roots bring us together.

We were inspired by the ambition of the mentees and reminded of our purpose in starting EI. We look forward to continuing this new tradition at future work camps!



Above: After a great meeting between Sunflower Mission's SEEDs and SM scholarship recipients, in Sai Gon, everyone takes a moment to pose for a group photo.

HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL FUNDRAISER

STEP RIGHT UP

by Quyên Ma

Six months of planning, twelve hours of conference calls, sixty two dedicated volunteers, all building up to one big fun night. This is what Step Right Up looked like on paper.

Ghosts, goblins, vampires, and more gathered for festivities and fundraising on October 25th. As an event chair, your one hope is for a successful evening. No matter how many hours of planning you put in, inevitably, you will hit a wrinkle, something you really could not have anticipated. This evening, the one thing I had not planned for was the enthusiasm of our guests.

The night's primary entertainment and fundraiser would be a costume contest. Pre-registration numbers for the contest were modest, we had twelve contestants. On the night of our modest 12 contestants turned into 36! I was a bit overwhelmed. Would the system we created to keep things organized for the costume contest work? We were surrounded by some very excited contestants. I looked at our president and co-chair in distress, I was ready to throw in the towel!

Dressed up as 'Ice Queen', our president looked at me and said, "No, you have a system. Keep with the system and it will work."

I put my head down, and went with the system. We had some hiccups. It was not perfectly executed. The event raised over \$90,000. Our 400+ guests had fun! It was a success. Despite the panic and doubt, the committee and volunteers helped me stay the course. They stepped right up! I am so grateful to be a part of an organization filled with heart, confidence, and enthusiasm.



Above: Enthusiastic attendees, in full costumes, for our Halloween Carnival



Top to bottom: Mr. Ring Master & MC Dinh Ngo with Batman and other costume contest contenders.

Game show hosts Dalton Bui & Jacqueline Hoang testing the contestants on Sunflower Mission facts.

Attendees look on as participants play "The Price is Right" on stage.

Opposite page (top to bottom): TKO pose for a photo at the end of the night with Sunflower Mission founders and some members of the Board of Directors.

A group of students from Hung Vuong Language School (Houston) perform on stage at the beginning of the evening.

TKO: PERFORMANCE OF A LIFETIME

by Michael Lee, John B. Nguyen, Tyler Nguyen, Tommy Phan, Peter Trinh, Derek Pham

Tau Kappa Omega (TKO) experienced much success in the past year fundraising for Sunflower Mission (SM). Through restaurant benefit nights, a date/haircut auction, and raffles sales, the brothers of TKO worked hard, collectively, to raise \$6,900. All of the brothers approached Spring Philanthropy Week with passion and dedication; even sacrificing their hair at the haircut auction.

This commitment to SM was recognized in the 2019 fall semester, when some of the brothers attended SM's 'Step Right Up' fundraiser in Houston, a Halloween Carnival themed event. Dressed in a variety of costumes, some of the brothers performed a group dance on stage as part of "S-class".

Their dynamic and exciting show was met with thunderous applause. Those in attendance had the opportunity to meet SM's Board of Directors, presenting them with the cumulative sum of their fundraising efforts on stage!

Everyone felt a great sense of camaraderie and accomplishment, returning to Oklahoma with great memories from Houston. This amazing experience was made possible with the gracious help of TKO alumni: Quoc Pham, who provided us a very nice place to stay, Peter Trinh who entertained us with his karaoke skills, and Dinh Ngo and his wife, who also provided us with lodging, entertainment, and delicious wonton soup.

The memories from this trip and performance will continue to fuel the passion the brothers of Tau Kappa Omega have for philanthropy and SM.



EVENT UNDERWRITERS

Kim Son Family

UNDERTAKER UNDERWRITERS

Dao-Le Family
Luu Tran Huyen Thanh and Danh Quang Le
DTL & Friends *
National Instruments
Chanh Nguyen
Le Hoang Nguyen
Dr. Giao Duong & Khanh Phan*
Hoa Ta
Amina Tang *

VAMPIRE VIPS

Diem Nguyen & Dr. Hung Anh Bui
Mai-Huong & Thanh Bui
Thu & Nhut Nguyen / Canh Doan
Houston Kidney Consultants
Frank Kelley
DTL & Friends
Hoai Anh Nguyen & Khiem Ngo
Phi Family
Sonnie Schepps Robinson Foundation
Le & Dang Vo
You Got I.T.

MONSTER MASHERS

Linh Truc Ngo & Quynh Bui
Thuy Dao (in honor of Van Dao)
Hasenmyer/Ma Family
Headspring Consulting Inc.
Christine Hoang
Khanh Van Bui & Dr. Nam Hoang
Khai Tri Academy*
Khai Tri Academy Students
Quynh Pham & Dinh Ngo*
Dr. Michael Ngo
Hoai Anh Nguyen
Thi & Huan Nguyen
Le Hoang Nguyen
Yen Nguyen*
NousLogics Inc.
Luu Tran Huyen Thanh

*Denotes 2 sponsorships

SUNFLOWER MISSION'S YOUNG LEADERS

SEEDS (Students Expanding Education by Devoting Services)

SEEDS T-SHIRT SALES

by Liliane Pham and Kyra Burke

Lily and Kyra are avid supporters of Sunflower Mission and active SEEDS members. Kyra became involved in Sunflower Mission when attending her first work camp in 2017 with her cousins. Lily became involved by collecting donations and raising awareness for the organization through the 2018 t-shirt fundraiser project. In that t-shirt fundraiser, she worked with SEEDS and her high school service club.

As last year's spring semester came to a close and preparations for the 2019 work camp began, Liliane and Kyra decided they wanted to use their free time to support a cause rooted deep in their hearts. They collaborated on two unique t-shirt designs. They promoted the sale of the shirts through social media platforms, in-school organizations and friends and family members. Thanks to the help of SEEDS, they raised over \$1000! Both Liliane and Kyra are so grateful that their efforts will go towards helping children in Vietnam get the education they deserve.



Above: Back design of a shirt from Lily and Kyra's fundraising efforts.

Right: Work campers and local students hold some of the books donated by Klein ISD during the book drive launched by Mahtab.

BOOKS 2 SMILES

by Allison Vaughan

On January 13, 2019, Mahtab, a 7th grader at Kleb Intermediate School was struck with an idea. It all started with Hurricane Harvey. "I was affected by Hurricane Harvey and lost basically all my books," recounts Mahtab. "I really missed having them, and that's when it struck me that so many other children around the globe never have the chance to read books. I knew that I wanted to change that. I emailed Mrs. Vaughan and told her about my idea, and asked for her help. Of course...being the wonderful librarian she is, said 'sure!'"

The following week, Mahtab and I met in the library to discuss her idea. There were so many questions to answer! Who would we help first? Where was the greatest need? How would language and culture factor in? Through our inquiry, we discovered that Vietnam was a country that had a large population of people learning the English language and a great need for books. She decided Vietnam would be the country she would help.

There were more questions to ponder. What types of books? For which age groups? English or Vietnamese? How would we get the books to Vietnam? We began to research organizations in the Houston-area that we could partner with. After several calls we found Sunflower Mission. Sunflower Mission was planning to send a team of 40 volunteers to open a K-5 school in June 2019 and was in need of English books for the school's library! The timing could not have been more perfect!

Plans for collecting books for Vietnam kicked into high gear. There was so much to do and only a few months left of school to get it all done! Mahtab created a flyer and video about her book drive that was sent to all the librarians in Klein ISD asking if their libraries would be willing to donate two picture books each. The books were collected in April, and delivered to Sunflower Mission in May. From there, the books would travel with Sunflower Mission's volunteer team to the new schools in Vietnam and be dedicated, along with the school in June of 2019.

"So many people were involved in making this happen," says Mahtab. "Thank you so much to Mrs. Vaughan, the schools in Klein ISD, and of course Sunflower Mission, for making all this possible!"



Above: Kleb Intermediate school Librarian, Allison Vaughan, with 7th grader Mahtab pose alongside our Director Dinh Ngo after they deliver books for students in Vietnam.



STEPPING RIGHT UP TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

by Le Hoang Nguyen

In 2010, Le Hoang Nguyen took his two young sons Ryan and Cooper (then, 14 and 12 years old) on a work camp with Sunflower Mission (SM) in Vietnam. After returning, the father promised he would build a business that would lend him freedom and resources to impact the trajectory of the lives of the students he encountered while in Vietnam. Nguyen believes education is the only way to break the cycle of poverty for these students.

In 2017, Nguyen started to implement his promise. In 2019, he STEPPED UP in a way that inspired others to follow in his footsteps. Below are two stories that exemplify how we can change the world through education, one student at a time.

The gift of generosity: "I met Sharon Lemons at Fenway Park when the Astros played the Red Sox in game 4 of the ALDS. After following me on Instagram, she sent me a message offering to donate her company's suite at Minute Maid Park for a game between the Rangers & Astros. She wanted to help raise money

for SM by raffling off the suite. The value of the prize: \$4,000. We were able to raise more than \$20,000!

When she heard that number, she donated her suite again, raising another \$5,100. Her efforts alone sent 65 students to college for 1 year!

The gift of friendship, from the heart: I met Stephen Hanser and his son, Erik, at an Astros vs. Phillies game. They were in the middle of their father-and-son trip to various baseball ballparks. I gave Erik a used game ball because we shared a love of the game. We met again in 2018 at Fenway Park for a game between the Astros and the Red Sox.

Last season, Stephen donated \$500 to SM for a chance to win an Astros suite. When he won, he flew in from Bristol, Connecticut with his kids to attend the game; giving away the remaining 8 tickets to military families.

Stephen was my guest of honor at the SM fundraising event, STEP RIGHT UP. After attending, Stephen became an ambassador for Sunflower Mission. Stephen bought a suite at Fenway Park with 18 tickets for a game between the Astros & Red Sox. He's selling \$75 raffle tickets to help raise money for SM. Stephen is STEPPING RIGHT UP TO THE PLATE. Thank you, Stephen!"



Clockwise from above: Le Hoang Nguyen with sons Ryan and Cooper at the 2010 Work Camp.

Le Hoang Nguyen presenting an autographed Carlos Correa rookie jersey as a gift to Sharon Lemons to express his personal gratitude for her generosity.

Le Hoang Nguyen with Stephen Hanser and son Erik Hanser.



DISTINGUISHED PARTNERSHIP CIRCLE

in honor of lifetime contribution
& invaluable advice

eSilicon Corp.
Frees Foundation
Mona Foundation
National Instruments Corp.
Texas Instruments Inc.

LEADERSHIP DONORS

in honor of Patron & Benefactor donors for 5 years or more
since 2013

Amina Tang
Chanh Nguyen
Dao-Le Family
Dolsoft Inc.
Dr. Anthony Phi & Mrs. Kim
Oanh Nguyen
Dr. Kun Shan & Mrs. Judy Lin
Hoa Ta

Kim Son Restaurant
Mark & Judith Finger
Mark Evenson
Shaunna Flynn Black
Texas Instruments Foundation
University of Oklahoma: Tau Kappa
Omega
Vigilant Solutions

BENEFACTORS (\$5,000+)

Amina Tang Affinity Program
Benevity Fund Foundation
Bridgwater Foundation
Chanh Nguyen & Private Matching
Dao-Le Family
Dolsoft Inc.

Dr. Giao Duong & Mr. Khanh Phan
Dr. Sy Q. Le & IVFMD
Dr. Thai D. Nguyen
Frees Foundation
Le Hoang Nguyen Affinity Program
Mona Foundation
National Instruments Corp.
Shaunna Flynn Black

Shell Oil Company
Texas Instruments Foundation
Thanh Nguyen & Mina Hoang
Thuy Nguyen & Chevron Humankind
Matching
University of Oklahoma: Tau Kappa Omega
Vigilant Solutions (subsidiary of Motorola
Solutions)

PATRONS (\$1,000-\$4,999)

American Comfort Solutions
Ann Nguyen & Khiem Ngo
Asure Dental & Frank Hieu
Bonnie Kelso & NI Matching
Dinh Ngo & ConocoPhillips Matching
Discount Power Affinity Program
Dr. Kun Shan & Mrs. Judy Lin
Dr. Anthony Phi & Mrs. Kim Oanh Nguyen
Dr. Arnau Aparicio & Dental Associates
Dr. Fareed Elhaj
Dr. Medhavi Jogi
Dr. Nam Hoang & Mrs. Vanessa Bui
Dr. Neda Nosrati

Dr. Vu Doan Theriot & Nouslogic Inc.
East West Furniture LLC
Father & Daughter - Le Trung Son & Le
Thanh Mai
Florence Tang
Frank Kelley
Greater Houston Community Foundation
Hanh Tang
Hoa Ta
Hoang Thanh Xuan
Hong Phuc Nguyen
Houston Kidney Consultants PLLC
Isaac White Agency LLC
J. Downey Bridgewater
Jody P Prevatt

Khanh & Diep Ly
Mark & Judith Finger
Pedagogical Studies Inc
Sonnie Schepps Robinson Foundation
Stephen Hanser
Tairus LLC
TBK CPA PLLC
Thanh & Mai Huong Bui
Toan Dao & NRG Matching
Trang Le
Trang Le & Kim Vo
Trung Vuong '80 Saigon & Friends
Van Vu
Vincent & Chau Phan
You Got I.T.

SUPPORTERS (\$500-\$999)

Amanda Williams
Brad Adcock
Christopher Boyd
David Christos
David Van Noy
Dr. Calvin Hoang & CH CARE PA
Drs. Tito Nguyen & Hana Bui
Dung Hoang & Tam Tran
Gary Edmonds Insurance Agency
Hoang Nguyen
Jimmy Moon
John LeBlanc

Just for Kids Pediatrics
Khiem Nguyen & Lien Pham
Kieu & Minh Dinh
Kim Anh Tran
Maitrang Truong
Matt Bronaugh
Milene Plisco Inc
Nhan Nguyen
Pals Group
Patrick Dennis
Quang Pham
Que Vu
Quyen To Ma
Quynh Bui & Linh Ngo

St. John The Baptist Catholic Church
Tammy Gee
Terra N Vo
Thi Uyen Pham
Thu Phi
Thuy Dao
Trung Vuong 6P1
Trung Vuong '80 (In memory of
'Hoang Lien')
Tu Minh La Dental PLLC
UKOGF Foundation
Vu Nguyen & Ngoc Hoang
Winning Agency

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Sunflower Mission expresses heartfelt gratitude for multi-year pro-bono support

1. Mr. Danh Quang Le & Mrs. Huyen Thanh Luu for printing service of our annual report
2. eSilicon Corp. for administering the Engineering & Technology (E&T) Scholarship Program
3. National Instruments Inc. for LEGO Robotics workshop
4. Drs. AnhThu & Hoi Nguyen of FabLab for 3D Printing workshop
5. Mai CPA for tax service