

38 AMA Scholars sponsored by our kind donors in 2013

Thanks to our generous donors, AMA was able to support another 38 recipients for our Class of 2013 Scholars from the University of Education in Ho Chi Minh City (35 BA's, 2 MA's, 1 PhD). Cumulatively, AMA is now supporting a total of 53 scholars at the university (85% BA's, 9% MA's, 6% PhD). On 29 November 2013, we hosted our 2nd annual Award Ceremony at the university and quite a few donors and special guests joined us for this occasion, where they had the opportunity to meet the recipients in person. We want to thank everyone for their attendance and support, including the university staff and the recipients for making informative presentations and thoughtful performances for our guests. We were all emotionally touched by the singing performance of our blind recipient Tam, who sang a beautiful and meaningful song while playing his guitar. Please find some photos here for your review.

Class of 2013: 38 AMA Scholars at the Award Ceremony



Vice Rector Đặng Chính Nghĩa and Peter of AMA. Mr. Nghĩa has been supporting AMA since the very beginning in Dec 2011.



Our donor Edmond Ng and his daughter Selena presenting the scholarship certificate to their recipient (AMA's Vy was her interviewer).



Our donors Aaron & Shirley Kim with their 2 daughters presenting the scholarship certificate to their recipient (AMA's Tuan was her interviewer).



Our donor John Tsai and his 2 children presenting the scholarship certificate to their recipient (AMA's Sylvie was her interviewer).

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Our donor Son Nam Nguyen presenting the scholarship certificate to his recipient (AMA's Tung was her interviewer).



Our donors Peter & Sophia Mach presenting the certificate to their recipient (AMA's Huong was her interviewer).



MA recipient Phan Thị Cẩm Hồng (in blue shirt) was selected by the AMA team (left to right: Natalie, Sylvie, Peter, Vy, Tuan).



Our guest speaker and donor Tony Williams gave an inspirational speech for our recipients.



Our MA recipient Le Minh Tam sang a beautiful song that moved everyone to tears. He plays a few instruments and can work off a laptop despite his blindness.



Miss Minh is a teacher who graduated from the university. She was our guest speaker. She is now part of AMA as a volunteer in HCM City.

Our Focus: Mentoring, Training, Development

AMA is transforming from a scholarship program into a Teachers Fellowship program for our recipients as we aim to expand basic services across Mentoring, Training, and Development in order to make a bigger difference in their lives and ultimately improve the quality of education in Vietnam over time. In **Mentoring**, we have the fortune of welcoming Mr. Gary Howlett to the AMA family, who will be spearheading the direction of our mentoring program. On March 10th, Gary (together with our Natalie Pham and 2 volunteers from her high school LSTS) launched our very first mentoring lunch for our group of **MA and PhD** recipients from the class of 2012 and 2013. Though it was a "meet and greet" first-time event, it was meaningful for both the recipients and Gary. While Gary had many positive comments about these recipients post the event, we were encouraged by the below feedback given to us via email by our MA recipient Phan Ngoc Tran:

"It was very benevolent and thoughtful of you and the AMA team to arrange for us the mentoring lunch on Saturday. I found it very much inspired to have nice and intimate conversations with chị Natalie and Mr. Howlett. These kinds of event are very helpful for all the AMA recipients since they offer great opportunities for us to build up academic connections with the professionals, especially in the area of education. We would be very much grateful if AMA could keep up with these wonderful activities in the future."

Our Focus: Mentoring, Training, Development (continued)

Starting in April, we intend to host our first mentoring luncheon for our 45 BA recipients from both the classes of 2012 and 2013. We will invite seasoned teachers in the field to share their experiences with our recipients. These functions will provide an opportunity for our scholarship recipients to learn from their predecessors through personal interactions, becoming exposed to critical questions that will shape their future. Our recipients can also build a network of relationships over time, gaining awareness through real life experiences of teachers who have travelled down the same path before.

In **Development** work, Dr. Natalie Pham of AMA is scheduled to launch her **“Portfolios”** session in May 2014 for all the recipients. In this program, which will take place twice a year, each recipient is asked to write and maintain his/her own “portfolio” during the school years for the purpose of personal and professional development. Natalie will help recipients build “portfolios” for themselves in a structured manner, focusing on some key questions and areas for development:

Who are you? Why do you want to be a teacher?

Where are you going with your life? How will you get there?

Do you have a resume? What does it say about you?

How will you interview with potential employers? Are you ready for it?

In **Training**, just like last year when Natalie conducted training courses for our class of 2012 recipients on effective teaching methodologies, she will be doing the same this year in June 2014 for all the recipients. Here is a summary of our training program to be held over 9 days in each year: (1) Classroom Management: Foundations for great classroom management, rules, procedures, and techniques; (2) Classroom Management: First day of school essentials, record keeping; (3) Multiple Intelligences; (4) Bloom’s Taxonomy; (5) Rubrics; (6) Effective Teaching: Criteria 1: Lesson is focused on objective, Criteria 2: Deliver content clearly; (7) Effective Teaching: Criteria 3: Teaching time is maximized, Criteria 4: Engage all students; (8) Effective Teaching: Criteria 5: Check for understanding and respond to misunderstanding Criteria 6: Interaction with students are positive; (8) Watch demo teaching video and use effective teaching rubrics to evaluate; (9) Learning Centers; Use of Portfolios.

In summary, below is a draft schedule of the value-added services AMA is launching for the benefit of the recipients on behalf of donors. We want to offer our gratitude in advance to all the people who are giving AMA these pro-bono services, particularly Natalie, Gary, the university staff and all the caring volunteers who will be taking part in making these programs a success.

<u>Mar ‘14</u>	<u>Apr ‘14</u>	<u>May ‘14</u>	<u>Jun ‘14</u>	<u>Aug ‘14</u>	<u>Sep ‘14</u>	<u>Oct ‘14</u>	<u>Jan ‘15</u>	<u>Mar ‘15</u>
Mentoring: MA & PhD	Mentoring: Bachelor’s	Portfolio: Session 1	Training at LSTS	Portfolio: Session 2	Mentoring: MA & PhD	Mentoring: Bachelor’s	Mentoring: Bachelor’s	Mentoring: MA & PhD



Above: MA recipient Phan Ngoc Tran is an outstanding student/lecturer who gave us positive feedback on the mentoring lunch. He is applying for a PhD program now.



Above: Gary and Natalie on their 1st mentoring lunch with our MA/PhD recipients. Two high school volunteers (LSTS) helped Gary as translators.



Above: Miss Minh (right side) is a teacher who graduated from the University of Education in HCMC and introduced AMA to the “Phước Thiện” school. She is now a member of AMA and the coordinator for our “Phước Thiện” project.

AMA expands to Hue and Danang

In February 2014, AMA's Natalie, Vy, and Peter held meetings with school officials from the University of Education in both Hue and Danang to conduct our feasibility studies for launching our Teachers Fellowship program in both locations by the end of 2014. The two cities in central Vietnam are only 3 hours away from each other by car, so it was fairly easy to manage both locations in one trip. We thank Vy for organizing this trip and spearheading this expansion (Vy was born in Central Vietnam).

We were impressed by the professionalism demonstrated by both schools. Having already learned about AMA's activities from speaking with the University of Education of Ho Chi Minh City prior to our meetings, the school officials in both locations did formal presentations to introduce their schools, followed by long Q&A sessions for our assessment work. Afterwards, we toured the campuses and the dorm rooms, where we also took the opportunity to chat with students about their livelihood.

We were convinced by the needs of the students in both cities. Most of the students come from the neighbouring cities and provinces, which are generally poor and lack sufficient job opportunities. For example, official job statistics show that about one-third of the graduates from these universities cannot find jobs annually. Secondly, much fewer students can find tutoring jobs to earn enough money to pay for living costs while in college. Hue, despite being a major cultural and learning center of Vietnam historically, relies heavily on tourism as it lies inland and does not benefit as much from Vietnam's industrial growth in areas such as manufacturing. The central part of Vietnam also suffers terribly from annual monsoons and subsequent floods.

By late 2014, we intend to offer 4-year scholarships and some basic training and development services to 10 BA students per location. Given the lower costs of living in these central cities versus Ho Chi Minh City in the south, we priced the scholarship amount at USD 300 per year per student. This translates into USD 24,000 that we need to raise in 2014 to support 20 scholarships over the next 4 years. Again, every dollar donated to AMA will go directly to the recipients.



Above: Meeting with University of Education in Hue.



Above: Meeting with University of Education in Danang.



Above: Students in traditional Ao Dai when leaving campus in Hue at 5pm.



Above: Students drying clothes outside of their dorm room in Hue.



Above: A student typically studies on a "table" on his bed.



Above: She is a Masters student at the University of Education in Hue.

AMA Welcomes 3 Members

AMA is pleased to welcome 3 new members to our team, taking the total headcount to 15 people across 3 cities. Mr. Gary Howlett will lead our Mentoring efforts. Miss Minh is the coordinator for our “Phước Thiện” non-profit primary school project. Mr. Ngo Vinh-Tuan will be our “European Representative” and help us with business development needs in Europe. We are proud to have them on board and thank them for giving us their time and energy. Please read their self-introductions below.

Gary Howlett:

"I first came to Viet Nam in the fall of 1968 as an infantry platoon leader with the 25th Infantry Division. Having grown up in a rural farming community in central Illinois, I found that I had much in common with the people in the rural villages in Tay Ninh Province especially the farmers. I also witnessed the horrible toll that war places on fellow human beings regardless of the side one is on. I left Viet Nam with a silver star, bronze star for valor, a combat infantryman's badge, two purple hearts and clearly a broken heart. I was evacuated to Camp Zama, Japan where I spent three months in the hospital recovering from wounds. While in Japan, I spent a great deal of the time reflecting on how I might best effect positive change in the world. Further, I began to meditate on who had most influenced me up to that point in my life. My grandfather popped into my mind, my mother to be sure, but a whole host of teacher faces appeared in my mind's eye. It was at that point that I decided to become a teacher. Little did I know at the time, but for many of us, finding purpose and direction in helping others to learn and grow also helps us to learn and grow! "To teach is to learn twice."

I have spent most of my career as a special education teacher, School Psychologist & learning advisor specializing in students with serious social & emotional challenges, at-risk youth & others with learning disabilities. I have been a board member & consultant with “Teachers without Borders” for the past 11 years. “Teachers without Borders” advances human welfare through teacher professional development on a global scale. We have members from over 118 countries and an affiliation with Johns Hopkins University (www.teacherswithoutborders.org). I have been a long time member & board member of New Horizons for learning. Since 1980 New horizons has served as a leading-edge resource for understanding learning. In the spring of 2010 New Horizons became part of the education department at Johns Hopkins University (www.newhorizons.org ; www.education.jhu.edu/newhorizons).

Currently I work with the University of Washington's Center for Experiential Learning & Diversity teaching a course entitled "Strengths-based Education: Serving the Under-served" A course rooted in Positive Psychology & Positive Education. The university students are required to mentor or tutor students in the local public schools. We facilitate the use of evidenced-based strategies to encourage success with at-risk or underserved populations. I continue to do parent programs, professional development for educators, consult and maintain a small private practice doing Positive Psychology coaching & mentoring. I prefer those terms to more deficit oriented practices associated with counseling & therapy. I follow the work of the International Positive Psychology Association and the work at Penn (www.authentichappiness.org) being done by Dr Martin Seligman and others.

I am so very excited to be part of the AMA family. I have a deep love & respect for Viet Nam. I admire the culture, emphasis on family, work ethic & resilience of the people. I have had the great pleasure of knowing and working with Natalie Pham for the last ten years and look forward to getting to know the rest of the AMA members as well.

I still believe that education empowers individuals, families, & communities. I have always tried to work professionally with the simple "my kid" rule. What is it that I want for my kid(s)? And why would I want anything less for the children & families in Viet Nam? I leaned as a young man that war is not an answer. I believe a quality education for all is at least part of the answer for a better future. Encouraging & supporting those who teach can have a profound effect on generations to come. AMA is poised to have a powerful impact on people's lives. I am proud to play a small part."

AMA Welcomes 3 Members (continued)

Bùi Thái Quế Minh

“Born and raised in Tra Vinh, a remote province in Mekong Delta, I received my K-12 education from local public schools. Since the age of 13, I have been pursuing the dream of improving the education quality in Vietnam for the sake of all Vietnamese children. I attended the University of Education in Ho Chi Minh City and became a teacher of English in 2011. I worked for 2.5 years at Lawrence S. Ting School, where I had access to a professional and international education environment. Now I am a private tutor and part-time teacher, which allows me time to participate in charity work, especially those for education. I value the vision of AMA Foundation as we aim at long-term benefits rather than short-term results, which is essential for investments into education. With all my respect to AMA founders and donors, I wish to devote my labour, ideas, knowledge and skills to the activities and development of AMA. I believe that we can bring about a better community, a better country, and a better world thanks to better education.”

Ngo Vinh-Tuan:

“I acknowledge that only exceptional individuals can change an entire society, but I am a believer that each of us can impact positively our society at our own scale. I was born in Vietnam. In 1979, I left my country as a boat person with only my father, leaving my mother and my 2 younger brothers behind. They eventually joined us 9 years later. After a 13-day journey full of events during which my father and I should have died numerous times, we ended up in France. Once in our new country, my father decided to go back to university to give us a better life. A French family, Mr and Mrs. Francois Beaugendre, whom I had met less than an handful of times, offered me to stay with them during my father's studies. My French “angels” are very educated individuals and they taught me the love of the French culture, the importance of learning, and our duties to leave the world better than how we enter it. Living amongst them clearly changed my entire life and has been a cornerstone of the success in my life. Thanks to my Vietnamese parents and my French benefactors, I was able to graduate with a BA from a French elite “grande ecole” and an MBA from The Wharton School in Philadelphia in 2002. I went on to have a successful career in banking and today I work for a leading US hedge fund Alden Global Capital. Whenever I am back in Vietnam and when I meet my family members who stayed behind in my country of birth, I realise how lucky I am. The poor Vietnamese persons on the street struggling to feed their families could have been me. The only differences between them and me are a bit of luck and the chance I have had to meet the right people that had allowed me to realise my potential. Being happily married and a father of 3 beautiful kids, I feel the need to give back to the society as part of the inheritance I would like to leave to my kids. I want to find a meaningful way to thank both my biological parents and my French parents for their love. I believe there is no better way to achieve my goals than to support education in Vietnam by setting up the right environment to develop teachers, who in turn will prepare the future Vietnamese generations successfully. I have been looking for a project that will motivate me enough to get involved. I have decided to join the AMA team because I particularly like the zero slippage of the donated money, the strong relationships between donors and recipients, and the tangible impact AMA has on people's lives.”
