



# CHILDREN OF VIETNAM

## BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES

May 2018



### Celebrating 20 Years of Building Bright Futures

*We believe every child deserves to thrive and is entitled to a future without poverty. Yet, children are particularly vulnerable with little control to influence their environment. By addressing the many facets of poverty, together we have transformed thousands of futures. Thank you!*

**Poverty hurts children. Poverty is multifaceted. The impact is lasting.**

#### Poverty

37% of all children in Vietnam live in poverty

#### Poor health

10 million children are infested with parasites

#### Poor nutrition

24% of children under 5 are malnourished

#### No sanitation

41% of children do not have access to hygienic toilets

#### No clean water

Unsafe water & sanitation accounts for half of most of the communicable diseases

#### Low income

Minimum wage in Vietnam only meets between 50% to 70% of basic needs

#### Minimal or no education

80% of children with disabilities never attend or drop out of school

- Given out **8,553,600** vitamin fortified meals to hungry children.
- Built **43** kindergartens giving **8,800** children an early start to a brighter future.
- Administered parasite remediation treatments to **394,943** rural children.
- Provided **4,065** comprehensive interventions for **813** children with disabilities including those affected by Agent Orange.
- Assisted **350** single mothers to build micro-enterprises to support their combined **681** children.
- Given **11,066** children access to an education with scholarships and educational aids.
- Constructed **777** homes for families giving reliable shelter to **1,401** children.
- Repaired **151** houses, orphanages, street children's facilities impacting **916** children.
- Responded with emergency relief for **3,001** families impacting **7,658** children.
- Awarded **838** university and vocational scholarships to bright but poor students.



### Save the Date for PIGSTOCK

Do you like Bluegrass and BBQ? What about Brisket and Rock and Roll? How about a wholesome hoe down with the whole family? If any of these things sound good to you, then YOU should come to Pigstock! PigStock is a BBQ and concert all wrapped up into one big family friendly event! BBQ cook teams cook all night to share their best and to compete for a top award. There is pork shoulder, ribs, chicken, beef brisket, chili, sides and dessert with all the usual condiments and plenty of drink. Pigstock is being organized by Rotary and donating all of the proceeds to Children of Vietnam. So mark your calendars and plan to *come-on-down* on November 3rd!



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## Appreciating the past and looking to the future . . .

My first time in Vietnam was in 1995 – 1997 on a two-year project assignment for my American company. I was responsible for constructing a major Joint Venture factory with a DaNang company in Central Vietnam. My home in the center of DaNang by working families and many children was interesting. Day-by-day the children were very focused on the “foreigner” living in their midst and were very often at my door selling American chewing gum, seashells from the beach and smooth stones from the Han River. Very enterprising children.



At that time, I was one of only three Americans working in DaNang. Not only was I accepted as a foreigner by all local and national associates in my workplace but also around my residence as well. As an American I was astounded how I was accepted as a friend and supported in all areas of my life there.

The owner of my house had a sister, Luong Thi Huong, who assisted me arrange all permits required for living in DaNang. There were so many interesting children coming to my door, I wanted to know what their daily lives were like. Huong led me to the Street Children Program, orphanages, schools for the disabled, hospitals and public schools.

There were malnourished children (obvious from observing their physique), children with disabilities and hearing loss, some without necessary tutoring, suitable clothing or shoes, many not attending school and a need for tutoring and health care.

As time came when the factory was complete and as I was preparing to leave, Ms. Huong asked me “What can we do to improve the lives of these children, Mr. Ben?” That was the spark that started the fire that has been burning for 20 years with Children of Vietnam. Building bright futures for these children has been our objective, having served hundreds of thousands of children since our beginning! Our focus has been Education, Health Care, Housing and Nutrition, all vital to their lives, ages birth to 18 years.

For twenty years now, Ms. Huong has been our dedicated Vietnam Country Director managing ten fantastic staff in DaNang each working daily with great care and compassion for all children. TODAY our work goes on, sometimes seven days a week, building bright futures for vulnerable children. Looking to the future, I know that together we can eliminate child poverty in Vietnam in the next 20 years.



Ben Wilson  
President & Co-Founder

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## Hearing for Sang



*Sang with new hearing aid listening to his father*

Sang has always been a quiet, sweet and obedient boy, but something was wrong. By the time he was two years old, he still was not talking, not even trying. Sang needed help but how to afford a doctor? Mr. Luan’s and his wife’s total income was just under \$150 a month for a family of four. This is barely enough for food and clothing! Nonetheless, they saved and saved and were finally able to take him to a hearing specialist where they received good news and bad news. Sang would be able to hear with aids! The bad news, they did not have the funds to buy them.

For two more years, Sang stayed at home without help. Typically, children in Vietnam begin kindergarten at three years, but Sang did not join his peers to learn and play. Then in 2016, his parents were introduced to COV’s *Hope System of Care for Children with Disabilities* (HSC). COV staff invited a team of specialists to assess Sang and his family’s situation and an individual care plan was developed. Sang was tested again and finally a hearing aid was provided! He could hear! Today, Sang is now attending a special school where he is making friends, learning and importantly receiving speech therapy five days a week. Additionally, the family received support to repair their home improving their living circumstances with tiled flooring and painted the walls. Everyone’s spirits are high, and while Sang has much to catchup, we are all hopeful.



*Sang snuggled on his father’s lap*

*Note: If you would like to help this family to purchase a second hearing aid for Sang’s other ear, please contact Executive Director, Nancy Letteri at [nletteri.childrenofvietnam@gmail.org](mailto:nletteri.childrenofvietnam@gmail.org). All donations to HSC help children just like Sang meet their challenges. Every child deserves to reach his or her potential.*

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## Hieu and My Gets Warm Nutritious Meals

Meet Hieu and My. They both attend kindergarten and benefit from COV's nutrition program.

Hieu attends a rural kindergarten that COV constructed in 2002. When we met him, he was playing and running around during free time with all of the other girls and boys. Ms. Lan, the school principle who also co-teaches Hieu's class of 35, tells us, "The children look well-fed now, but when they first come they are with inadequate nutrition. The families only have rice and maybe a little vegetable."

Limited food diversity like Hieu's family diet puts young children at risk for stunted growth, the impact of which is irreversible. Stunted children fall sick more often, miss opportunities to learn, perform



*My (on right) on the right loves the vitamin-fortified meal*

less well in school, are at risk of growing up to be economically disadvantaged and more likely to suffer chronic diseases. In Vietnam, one third of children below five are stunted as a result of chronic malnutrition. (UNICEF)

My is similarly at risk. She is shy but happy. During a visit to My's kindergarten, we found her giggling with a few friends in the corner. My's teacher shares a concern, "My's household income is below the

poverty line. Her parents are primarily farmers so the family income is precarious.

My has an older brother and a younger sister, but they do not attend school. The family has only two meals a day, lunch and dinner, while for breakfast they eat instant noodles or just not eat." The teacher tells My, "Eat to grow fast so that you can find work to help your parents." Later during our visit, My shared with us that she wants to become a doctor to help those with no money.

In both kindergartens, when the mealtime arrives, the children scatter to wash hands and sit quietly and patiently. Everyone is ready to eat. And eat they do...sometimes multiple bowls of the vitamin-fortified porridge which has vegetable and a little meat added.

In Hieu's and My's kindergarten and in other kindergartens across rural DaNang and Quang Nam province, the distribution of over 1 million vitamin-fortified meals annually are having an impact. With our partner, Rise Against Hunger, and your support to ship, warehouse and distribute these meals, we are reducing the risk of stunting of nearly 10,000 children. These meals are life-altering!



*Hieu (on right) sitting next to a friend eating*

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## Founders Circle Update



*Country Director: Luong Thi Houng and children*

As we continue to celebrate Children of Vietnam's 20th Anniversary we will be welcoming to the United States our co-founder and Country Director, Ms. Luong Thi Houng. Houng and Ben saw children in need 20 years ago and vowed to make a difference in their lives. Their partnership and leadership have helped thousands of children have a future. Look for information on her visits this fall.



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## IRA Required Minimum Distribution

Required to take a minimum distribution from your IRA? You have the option to distribute tax free by directing it to the charity of your choice. Your distribution can support charitable causes and get a tax break while meeting tax requirements for IRAs. Please contact your financial advisor for more information and consider Children of Vietnam in your discussions.

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## Children of Vietnam Legacy Society

Leave a legacy that continues your care and compassion beyond your lifetime. Join the Children of Vietnam Legacy Society by making gift to Children of Vietnam in your will. For more information please contact Ben Wilson, President, at (336) 727-1110 or email him at [bwilson8202@triad.rr.com](mailto:bwilson8202@triad.rr.com).

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# Children of Vietnam

www.childrenofvietnam.org

## Change Service Requested

### Our mailing address!

PO Box 18039  
Greensboro, NC 27419

### Our phone number!

336.235.0981



## Remember COV in your Workplace.

Federal Employees: our CFC # is 15685.  
State Employees: COV is included in CA, FL & NC campaigns.

## Building bright futures for vulnerable children...here's how:

### MAKE A DONATION TO HONOR OF A LOVED ONE

— you are lighting the path out of poverty.

#### Educating

- A scholarship for a poor primary school student for 1 year . . . . . \$55
- A bike for a child to get to school on time and ready to learn . . . . . \$70
- A 4-year college scholarship for a bright but poor student. . . . . \$2,060

#### Healing

- Parents with children with disabilities support group meetings . . . . . \$20
- Critical care for a child with disabilities for 1 year . . . . . \$350

#### Sheltering

- Orphanage facility repairs and supplies . . . . . \$200

#### Nurturing

- Vitamin-fortified meals for 1,250 young children . . . . . \$25
- Business training for a single mother so she can support her children . . . . . \$100
- Single mother business startup for a sustainable livelihood for her family. . . . . \$500

#### Disaster Relief

- Emergency ready-to-eat food and supplies for victims of disasters. . . . . \$65

**Cảm ơn! Thank you!**





## Thank you to our 2018 Sponsors



## Cycling Out Child Poverty 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ride raised \$112,327!

Twenty-two cyclists pedaled their hearts out this past March all to raise funds for our Cycling Out Child Poverty 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ride. Our goal was ambitious, but the need is great. The fundraising goal was exceeded and we are now on our way to help many more children. This event was so much more than a bike ride, it was also a chance for riders to meet some of the children and families who benefit from our programs and to see what a difference dollars raised make in their lives.



We visited the DaNang Victims of Agent Orange Center where children with disabilities are cared for and taught vocational skills. We also met many of the children that COV helps at the Thanh Binh Charity Association; these children are in our program Hope System of Care for Children with Disabilities. The children receive health checks, physical aids, and many other needed services, and the family is assisted so they can better care for the child. When we visited a kindergarten where children benefit from our nutrition program, they were eating and enjoying the delicious rice soup mix provided by Rise Against Hunger, and they even shared some with us!



We also attended the dedication of a newly constructed kindergarten in the mountains where most of the population are ethnic minority C'Tu. While there, we were treated with ethnic dances and singing by children.

Our ride was an adventure for sure . . . the mountains, muddy and slippery roads, countryside dirt roads and roads with crazy traffic and water buffalo crossings. There was hot weather, small narrow bike seats, bamboo bridges, and even leeches! But we met amazing people along the way . . . C'Tu ethnic children, children with disabilities and sweet kindergarteners. All-in-all there was a tremendous amount of good cheer, dedication and commitment to the children. This event was so successful Children of Vietnam is already planning to hold it again next year. So, if you are interested in Cycling (all levels of experience), learning more about what Children of Vietnam does and are ready to help break the cycle of child poverty in Vietnam . . .mark your calendars for next March and Join Us!



COV would like to thank each and every one of the businesses that sponsored this event and helped to make it a success!

### \$112,327 will provide...

- 289 scholarships for poor students to attend school,
- 245 emergency ready-to-eat food for disaster victims.
- 227 bicycles so children can get to school ready to learn!
- 159 single mothers with life skills and business training to support their children.
- 45 children with disabilities critical care, including those impacted by Agent Orange, for 1 year.
- 32 single mothers start their own businesses so they can care for their children,
- 8 bright but poor college students with a 4-year education.

**That \$112,372 will provide a bright future for children in all of our programs.**

**THANK YOU!**

# Hungerford-Clinard Kindergarten Challenge

*The Hungerford-Clinard Kindergarten Challenge proposes to build 14 kindergartens in this area to provide early education for every child.*



*This is what YOU and two devoted donors did on #GivingTuesday in 2017 to make a difference in the life of children*



## In the Past . . .

Amongst rolling hills and dense forested paths there are villages of C'Tu people studding the rural and remote landscape. Members of the C'Tu ethnic minority make up 97% of the population in Tay Giang, a remote mountainous district located in Quang Nam province in Central Vietnam near the Laotian border. There are 70 small village communities and 12,992 people living in this 351 square mile area. The



C'Tu are generous and peaceful people primarily living off the land. The rainy weather is ideal for growing jute to produce fibers needed for their beautiful textiles. Although economic advances have been made in the urban areas of Vietnam, nearly all Tay Giang residents live below the poverty level. Most have neither sanitation facilities nor clean drinking water. There were no kindergartens in most of these villages to give the smallest inhabitants a head start on a bright future. Larry Hungerford and Woody Clinard decided to make kindergartens a reality in each village and YOUR DONATIONS ON GIVING TUESDAY helped make that happen. To quote Mr. Hungerford "why should children have to wait?"



## In the Present . . .

COV dedicated this brand new kindergarten in March 2018 in the Arui Village in Tay Giang District, and the entire village came out to join in the celebration. This kindergarten includes a fully equipped classroom, a small kitchen to make daily snacks, and a bathroom with kindergarten sized toilets and sinks to teach the youngest members of the



village about sanitation. There is also an outdoor playground where the children can learn through play and just have fun. Two additional kindergartens in two other villages are under construction and will be finished by June 2018.

## In the Future . . .

COV is committed to helping Larry Hungerford and Woody Clinard keep their promise of building 11 more kindergartens. For every dollar COV raises Larry Hungerford and Woody Clinard will match that gift. This summer we are asking you to join COV in meeting the Hungerford-Clinard Kindergarten



*This is a plot of land in the K'noond Village that is waiting for a kindergarten.*



*A Ting village waiting for kindergarten*

Challenge so that we can bring these new kindergartens to the children. And we will not only give these children a head-start but also bring clean drinking water to each village. COV is putting a water filtration system at each of the kindergarten sites that will be shared with the entire village. Please take the Hungerford-Clinard Challenge, why should children have to wait?

For more information visit <https://www.childrenofvietnam.org/hungerford-clinard-kindergarten-challenge/>.