

# VSO Friends of Vinh Son Montagnard Orphanage

## February Newsletter 2018 Volume 15 Issue 2

### Contact & Donation Information

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### FOCUS ON EDUCATION

When we began traveling to Kontum to visit the orphanages and identify the needs for the future year, we attempted to learn about the education system in Vietnam and how “our” kids were doing in school. We found that although the government provides primary and secondary education, the kids cannot go to school unless they have required school uniforms and equipment. We partner with another organization to cover most of the cost for these items.

We also learned that, much like when our parents were in school 80 years ago, many students dropped out of school after the 8th grade because, in their minds, that was all the education they needed to be a farmer. We thought about that for quite some time before deciding that the best way to help the kids be more excited about finishing high school would be to start from the top down. We began by offering to help pay for some of the sisters to attend college in Kontum. Their example led to some of the kids becoming interested in a higher education.

Each time we visited the orphanages, we attempted to find the kids we had met on earlier trips who had a special place in our hearts. We asked them what they planned to do after completing high school and told them that we would help them if they went on to college. As time went on, we found that other travelers who visited Vietnam with our groups also began to tell a “special” kid that they would help with education costs. About 5 years ago a contributor provided college money for two girls, Y Le and Y Vui, who graduated with Pharmacy degrees. Y Vui is now studying to become a Nun and Y Le is working in Saigon. They were followed by Y Hoi and Y Lyly. Y Hoi earned her nursing degree at a college in Da Nang and Y Lyly just finished up at the end of December. Another student completed a computer program in Saigon.

We are currently supporting 18 students.

Effective this year, we have implemented a scholarship agreement that specifies what we will do and what the student is required to do. Each student is required to provide a telephone number, physical address, and an email or Facebook address. They must communicate with us at least once per month and are asked to provide a short story about their lives and how they are doing in school. Stories from the students are very interesting and help us understand more about them.

Each new student from Kontum receives money directly from us rather than sending it through the sisters. Money for the students from Pleiku flows through Franciscan Charities, also known as Phanxico in Vietnam. Phanxico staff mentors students, helps them with communication issues and provides guidance when necessary.

As of today, we have over \$40,000 committed to scholarships. We assume that 6 students will graduate each year and 20 new students will apply for scholarships. Education is a very important key to help the kids break out of the bonds of poverty. With education, they gain confidence, develop a better understanding of their opportunities, and may even become leaders in their community.

**If you are as passionate about education as we are, your contributions will help to keep this valuable program moving forward. All you need to do is to write “education” in the memo line of your contribution check.**

**Dear Benefactors,**

**My name is Y Xuan (pictured on the left) from Kon Dao Commune, Dak To District, Kontum Province. I am a freshman at Da Nang community college in Kontum. My major is accounting.**

First of all, I want to send my best wish to you. I feel that I am so happy and so lucky to receive the scholarship. To me, it is not a material but it is a great consolation, it helps me to overcome challenges in life. We all have different circumstances in life, when I found out that I got the scholarship, I realized my unfortunate life has turned around and it gives me strength. My parents are so poor, work hard everyday so they can take care of us. In order to help my parents, my older sister dropped out of school to work as well. My eldest sister married and left our family to go with her husband side. I have 3 younger siblings are going school. My parents are older and not in good health but they still work hard so we can go school. I understand my parent's poverty and hard work so I try to study harder. I know I am slow in learning but I will never give up and always challenge myself to study harder.



In life, no one wants to take away anything from people, next to unfortunate people like me there are kind people like you are willing to love and to care for me. Although my family is so poor and have difficult time, I am so happy and lucky to have the sisters at Vinh Son to take care of me, give me meals and help me to go school with my friends. My life at Vinh Son is good, happy, comfortable and learn good things.

Everyday, the sisters teach us to do housework so we can teach other younger kids to do the same later on. With the care and love from my family and the sisters, I could grow up and could go school. When I was in high school, I dreamed to pass the exam, to graduate and to go college. My dream is to step into a new road, learn new things and have more knowledge for future, that is the road to college. I only hope after I graduate I can requite my parents and the sisters for taking care of me and help me to go school.

I sincerely thank you all of my benefactors for helping me. Even though, you are so busy with work, you give your time to care for us, you give us the significant gifts. I am thrilled and thankful. With your helps, I can pay things for school, believe in myself, and not to disappoint you. Receiving this great gift, I do not know how to describe enough my happiness. My family and I cannot say enough to sincerely thank you for helping me. Finally, I wish you with best wishes. I wish you to succeed in the future and full of energy in life. I sincerely thank you for all your helps!

**From:**

**Friends of Vinh Son Orphanages  
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**Vinh Son & Sao Mai  
Orphanage Facts**

- About 830 Montagnard children live in seven orphanage facilities in the Kontum/Pleiku area, Vietnam
- FVSO is a humanitarian, Non-Profit organization approved by IRS Code 501©3. Donations are tax deductible.
- Run by Sisters of the Miraculous Medal & St Paul Chartres

**Donation Information**

Please make checks payable to FVSO or Friends of Vinh Son

Donations are gratefully accepted year round

\$12 feeds, shelters and educates one child for one month

**To:**