



# Friends for Street Children Association

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## Yeu thuong

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"Yeu thuong" means "love" in Vietnamese. We often use this word at FFSC wishing that children grow up with abundant love.



### Preface

*In a few days, year 2019 would past and everyone is anticipating the new year with utmost enthusiasm. The atmosphere is buzzing with energy.*

*Students have just finished the first term of the academic year 2019 - 2020. Every year, the Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese of Saigon organizes Christmas celebration and other activities for disadvantaged children.*

*Afterwards come the second academic term and Tet Holiday. Before Tet, centers organize term-end award ceremonies and Lunar New Year 2020 events. Term-end ceremonies see the report of students' academic achievement and award exemplary individuals. In addition, the centers present disadvantaged students and their families with gifts, serving as an incentive to keep them engaged with the centers in the education of children. The centers always keep in touch and encourage students to return to school after the holidays.*

*On behalf of the students, employees, and teachers at the centers, we deeply appreciate the efforts of donors, sponsors, and volunteers in supporting us with the children's education. We hope that you keep on being by our side.*

*We wish you a Happy New Year 2020, good health, and success.*

*Executive Director*

*Le Thi Thao*

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Let's Join hands for Children's future

## A KIND ACT FOR HEARING IMPAIRED

On the morning of October 19th, 2019, the Center for Research and Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CED) held a hearing care program: ears test, tympanometry measurement and hearing test for 39 children and the staff of Binh An Development Center. The program was led by Ms. Hanh Duong, Founder/ Executive Director of CED, and assisted by five members of the CED staff, as well as Doctor Minh Hoang from District 4 Hospital, and Ms. Tram Nguyen, a nurse from University Medical Center.

Ms. Hanh Duong said that she has lived with hearing loss since she was six years old. Despite this adversity, she made her best efforts in her studies and earned master degrees in both Education and Chemical Engineering from the University of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology, respectively. After her graduation, she volunteered at Disability Research and Capacity Development Deaf (DRD) - a non-government organization. Due to her hearing loss, she found difficulties in fulfilling her work. She then attended a project called “World Flight for Hearing” conducted by Johan Hammarstrom, a hearing impaired Swedish pilot. This project advocates concern, love, compassion, and support for each and every person with hearing impairment. Ms. Hanh’s burning desire to serve people with hearing loss was motivated by the pilot’s good deeds and advocacy.

In 2011, Ms. Hanh founded the Center for Research and Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to serve people suffering from deafness and hearing loss. There are currently 10 staff members, 28 students, and volunteers at the center.

The FFSC would like to express our deep gratitude to Ms. Duong Hanh, Doctor Minh Hoang, Ms. Tram Nguyen, and the CED’s staff for coming to the center and providing us the Hearing Care Program. We wish you good health, happiness, and success.





## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP CEREMONY

On the morning of October 27th, 2019, student scholarship ceremony for the first semester of the school year 2019-2020 was held at Binh Trieu center. The attendees were Mr. Phil and Mrs. Frances MacLaurin— the main sponsors, Sr. Le Thi Thao- the executive director, and special guests: Mr. David – volunteer English teacher, teachers, and 50 students.

The joy of the ceremony was enhanced by some indoor activities conducted by Ms. Hoa Nguyen from WWO (Worldwide Orphans Foundation Vietnam) and Ms. Thanh Huong – the FFSC's scholarship manager.

Group activities such as introducing oneself within a group were played and also games including conveying a message, jigsaw puzzles, and building bridges using plastic plates/cups and newspapers. These activities aim at guiding the students to build team spirit while working together. The organization board's message through these activities was to call them to support one another in their studies and lives. Each student was observed to participate in the activities with enthusiasm.

The program continued with a report from Ms. Huong on the students' academic results from the second semester of the school year 2018-2019. It was followed by the presentation of awards to students with good results and graduate students. Thanh Truc represented the graduate students expressing their deep gratitude to the FFSC and benefactors who have accompanied and supported them. Mr. Phil shared with the students his experience of teamwork that he has learned from his life and career. Before the closing of the ceremony, Sister Thao had some words to the students and expressed her gratitude to the benefactors.





## TEACHER APPRECIATION DAY



On November 16th, 2019 Binh An Center organized a fun day for the children at Binh Son Church. The organizers include Sister Dang Thi Thu Hanh - the center's manager, Mr. Tuan Nhat - a social worker, Mr. Phong - MC, and volunteer students from University of Economics and Finance (UEF). Not only did the students gather to attend various activities but also they were present to express their gratitude to the sisters, teachers, and benefactors on the coming event - Teacher's day November 20th. Special guests coming for the event were Sister Le Thi Thao – Executive director, Mr. & Mrs. MacLaurin, Mr. David, Mr. Mahamad, and representatives of a 4-T group.

The program began with a performance named “ Bay Cao Nhung Uoc Mo” conducted by fifth graders. A student representative delivered her speech to express their deep appreciation to the sisters, teachers, and benefactors for having accompanied and taught them. Beautiful pots of flowers were presented to the sisters, the teachers, and the guests to congratulate them on Teacher's day.

Following the ceremonies there were some outdoor and indoor activities and the students were divided into groups to compete in the games. Before the closing of the event, individuals and groups who won the competitions were called up to be awarded.

Our great thanks to the organization board, the students from UEF, benefactors who supported us in holding the event and giving the students a relaxing and meaningful day. Also, our special thanks to our benefactors who provided the children with lunch and snacks on this event.

May your lives be filled with joy and success.





# HAPPY TEACHERS' DAY



With the joy and excitement of the Vietnamese Teachers' Day, Binh Trieu Center jubilantly organized a day to thank teachers and benefactors. Attending the ceremony were Sister Le Thi Thao - FFSC's Executive directress, Sister Bui Thi Hong Hanh – Manager of the center, Mrs. Frances - benefactor, Mr. David - English teacher, Mr. & Mrs. Tri – guests from France, benefactors, parents, and all teachers and students of the center.

The ceremony solemnly began with the national anthem. In gratitude, a student representative delivered her speech to sincerely thank the sisters, teachers, and benefactors who have supported and guided them. Sister Hanh and Sister Thao expressed their appreciation to the teachers and benefactors for having supported the association in educating the children for so many years. Mrs. Frances also sent her deep gratitude and best wishes to the sisters and teachers for their hard work in taking care of the children.

The program was followed by awarding students who had good achievements in competitions such as drawing, storytelling, and calligraphy. The students from kindergarten and all grades conducted excellent performances including singing, dancing, and storytelling. Before the closing, each of the students received a gift from the center.

We would like to express our deep gratitude and appreciation to the benefactors and the guests for coming to the event and for your support. Wishing all of you energetic good health with joy as you continue to accompany us in caring for and educating the young generation.







Amid the excitement of Christmas season celebration and the anticipation of Santa Claus' gifts, children from the Binh An center painstakingly put their simple, but touching wishes on notes. Some students just want to receive any present; some ask for a small gift; some have a seemingly simple wish of sharing a gift to others.

The letters are then put into a mailbox attached to their classroom door. With their skillful drawings and creativity, the kids decorated their letters and envelopes which look so beautiful and attractive.

Below are some children's letters to Santa Claus.



Dear Santa Claus,  
My name is Huynh Van Hieu. I'm a student from Binh An Center.  
I wish to receive a present from you. I wish you are in good health to join us for Christmas.

I love you, Santa Claus.  
Santa dear, it's Christmas time. I wish for a warm jacket for my Christmas outing. I promise to be nice and listen to my teachers.  
I love you, Santa Claus. I'm a student from Binh An Center.  
Huynh Thi Y Phung

Ho Chi Minh City, December 20th, 2019

Dear Santa Claus,  
My name is Le Thach Ngan Tuyen.  
I'm a student in class 3/B.  
I want a castle.  
Binh An Center

Dear Santa Claus,  
I'm in third grade. I wish to be in school with my friends. My name is Nghia, a student at Binh An Center. I want to send this letter to Santa Claus.  
Nghia



Dear Santa Claus,  
My name is To Thai Thanh Thao.  
I was born on May 30th, 2006.  
I just wish Santa would help my family overcome hardship and that my parents live a long life and be with me forever. That's all I wish for.

Since it's Christmas time, I wish I could help other families who are also going through a hard time like mine.

May the children's simple and practical healthy and do well in school. We hope



wishes come true. We want you to be for your happy lives and successful future.





## *A MERRY CHRISTMAS WITH SANTA CLAUS AND FRIENDS*



As Christmas is around the corner, FFSC centers are bustling with festive activities - making Christmas cards, setting up Nativity scenes, decorating Christmas trees, writing to Santa Claus, and preparing performances. In addition, FFSC centers also welcome philanthropists and sponsors to celebrate the holidays and present gifts to the students.



On the morning of December 18th, 2019, Dr. and Mrs. Vinh visited Binh Trieu center and brought Christmas gifts to the students there. Their gifts were also sent to Binh An and Binh Tho centers.



On the morning of December 20th, 2019, Ms. Trang and her friends celebrated Christmas with students from the Binh An center.



On the morning of December 21st, 2019, AMPA team distributed gifts to some children from the Binh Trieu center, who are in most need of help.



Seminarians from Saint Joseph Seminary celebrated Christmas with students from the Binh Trieu center.







On Saturday, December 21st, 2019, at Saigon Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese, the Christmas event organized by the Caritas was joined by 3,000 disadvantaged, disabled, poor, and orphaned children. Each child was given food stamps, gift-swapping cards, and game cards. Students from FFSC's Binh Trieu center brought an excellent musical performance to the event. Joy and happiness were evidenced on the children's faces.



On December 22nd, 2019, EMAR group brought Christmas gifts to the children from the Binh Trieu Warm Shelter.



After reading an article about the hardship of the students on VNExpress (published on December 18th, 2019), a few readers visited the Binh An Center and celebrated Christmas with them there.



All the love-filled Christmas gifts and sweet Christmas wishes from the sponsors and philanthropists have undoubtedly brought the children much laughter of happiness during this festive season.

On behalf of the FFSC's children, the FFSC would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all the sponsors and philanthropists who have given us your time, sacrifice, and love. Our special thanks to you for bringing the children joy and happiness this Christmas.

We hope for all the best things to come to you on the upcoming new year.





## Point of View

Nguyễn Huỳnh Thanh Trúc, one of the FFSC scholarship student, has graduated with a degree as a general practitioner from Pham Ngoc Thach University of Medicine. On the day the students gathered at Binh Trieu center to receive their scholarships and awards, Thanh Truc represented the graduate students expressing their deep gratitude to the FFSC and benefactors. Below is her speech.



*I am Thanh Truc. I have graduated with a degree as a general practitioner from Pham Ngoc Thach University of Medicine. I think I am one of the students who have received a scholarship from FFSC for the longest period of time. I observed several students from the scholarship group who graduated before me standing here to deliver their speeches to express their gratitude to their benefactors, I wished to have that honor for my graduation, and thankfully, my wish has come true.*

*From the bottom of our hearts, we-graduate students would like to express our deepest thanks to Mr. Phil and Mrs. Frances, Sister Thao, Ms.*

*Tho, and all the FFSC's staff. There is no words*

*that can describe how grateful we are for your love, kindness, concern, and support. We would not be able to fulfill our dream to go to university if we did not receive support from the FFSC. In addition, during the time we were in school, we received other sources of support from the FFSC. Activities such as picnics and indoor/outdoor games, and inspiring words from Mr. Phil and Mrs. Frances are the unforgettable moments and invaluable lessons for our next journey. There will be trials and challenges ahead, but we promise to never give up. We will continue to make our best efforts to fulfill our dreams and not disappoint you for your great love for us. Personally, I would like to accompany the FFSC in future activities though I will not continue to receive FFSC's scholarship. As a doctor, I will use all the knowledge that I have earned from the school and will never stop improving my knowledge and ability to serve the society with my responsibility and love.*

*Now, I would like to take this opportunity to offer some words to my graduate friends.*

*My dear friends,*

*We can say that we were not lucky to be born in an underprivileged family, but it was a blessing in disguise. Please do not feel inferior. Adversity trains us, strengthens our will, and inspires us with great desires, greater than anyone else's desires who was not trained in adversity. These great desires enable us to overcome life struggles. Take these desires as your motivation to succeed; take them as your driving force to overcome any downward pull of obstacles as you slowly but confidently move toward success.*

*Once again, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Phil and Mrs. Frances –our benefactors, the sisters, and the entire staff of FFSC for your great love and support for us during these past years. May you have good health to continue this meaningful mission, and may all the best that life has to offer come to you. Also, our warm wishes to the current students. Our hope is that you will live with your whole heart and make your best efforts to study and to gain all the knowledge of which you are capable while you have the opportunity to attend school. Furthermore, we wish all the students who have graduated or who will graduate a good start to your future lives.*



## Our Thanks

On behalf of children from the three centers: Binh Trieu, Binh An, and Binh Tho, the Friends For Street Children would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to each and every sponsor who generously contributed your monetary gift to the fund for the swimming course for FFSC's children. The total fund is 176, 129,000 vnd which is spent on paying a swimming course fee and swimming suits for 145 children from the three centers (Binh Trieu: 40, Binh An: 30, Binh Tho: 75).

Also, FFSC would like to extend appreciation to:

- Mr. Chung Tan Phong - director of Yet Kieu swimming pool, two main instructors – Mr. Minh Pham and Mr. Nghia Vu who teach swimming to Binh Trieu's children.
- Director of Sports Center in district 8, who helps Binh An's children learn to swim at the Sport center.
- Mr. Hai Dang – a swimming instructor to Binh Tho's children at Thu Duc Sports Center.

Our special thanks to Mr. Pham Huu Tam, General Secretary of the Federation of Underwater Sports in Ho Chi Minh city and deputy secretary-general of Underwater Sports Association and all benefactors and sponsors who have accompanied the group Swimming with Friends to assist the students in learning swimming and protecting themselves from drowning.

We thank you, Mr. Duy and the group who have raised this fund for the swimming course.

We wish you all good health, happiness, and success.







On October 26th, 2019, Ms. Minh Tam-vice principal of a school in Tan Binh district came to Binh Trieu center to provide a specialization training to teachers from the FFSC's centers. The training aimed at guiding the teachers in improving some teaching methods with relevance to the academic levels of the centers' students.



On November 17th, 2019, Binh Trieu Warm Shelter held an event to congratulate 5 children from the Binh Trieu Warm Shelter who has reached to their adulthood and started their independent lives. They are Nguyen Thi Anh Thu, Nguyen Thi Thu Thao, Vo Thi Son Hang, Nguyen Van Thang, Ho Van Ngoc.



On November 19th, 2019, Mr. Yoshida and his friends from Quality of Life Institute visited FFSC office and Binh Trieu center. They presented their gift of 150,000 JPY for FFSC's activities.



Students from Binh An center have some class periods in Recycling with a theme "Go Recycle. Go Creative" run by Ms. Martine, a teacher from France. The goals are first to raise awareness about the preservation of the surrounding environment. They also learn how to recycle used materials/items and make new and unique products of garbage. Through this course, the students are called to join hands to protect the environment.



On November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019, Ms. Miku and two staff from Kids Earth Fund, Tokyo, Japan organized an art workshop at Binh Tho center. Attending the workshop were the third-graders. The drawing that they together did in one big fabric sheet will be brought to Japan for the exhibition.



On November 23rd, 2019, Mr. Phil and Frances MacLaurin invited teachers and staff from the three centers Binh Trieu, Binh Tho, Binh An to have a Teachers 'day celebration at their apartment.



On November 29th, 2019, Sister Hong Hanh and Siste Le Thao awarded education scholarships funded by Sai Gon Pearl International school to 9 students from Binh Trieu center who are in most need of support.



On December 5th, 2019, 12 students from Binh Trieu center who are found to be the most in need of help received education scholarships from Sai Gon Star International School.



## PLAN FOR THE FIRST QUARTER –2020

Month	Date	Content	Centers
January	1	New Year break	All Centers
	16	First Semester Closing Ceremony	Binh Tho
	17		Binh Trieu
	18		Binh An
February	19/1-3/2	Lunar New Year break	All Centers
	4	Classes resume	All centers
March	3	Visit by Mr. Kataoka Seiji	Binh Tho
	6 -7	Dnow group provides children with dental check-up and care	Binh Trieu
	6	AEM group visits the center and some students' homes	Binh An and Binh Trieu
	15	Second Mid-term Exam	All Centers
	19	AEM group visits and discusses project plans	FFSC office
	23	Visit by Mr. Nozu Maki	Binh Trieu

## FFSC PRODUCTS

We are introducing two new designs this month.



### 1. Pouch

This roomy pouch is perfect to hold anything you want, from cosmetics to sewing kits, DIY tools or stationary. On the front, it is embroidered with an initial, making it a great choice for gift. There are three sizes: S: 12x7x5 cm; M: 15x10x6 cm; L:17x12x7 cm as well as multiple colors to choose from.

### 2. Phone pouch.

There are compartments to hold your phone, cards, and money. Never be afraid to lose your essentials with a secure strap.

All products are handmade from fabric to ensure the best quality.

