

Life-Changing Scholarship Programs for Girls and Young Women in Vietnam



The Asia Foundation

Improving Lives, Expanding Opportunities

Educating a girl transforms her life and the lives of those around her to catalyze economic, social, and health benefits with lifelong impact. Providing girls and young women in Vietnam with opportunities to pursue an education and build 21st century skills is one of the most effective ways to support girls and women to exercise their voice and leadership in their families, communities, and country.



The Asia Foundation's University Scholarship and Secondary School Scholarship programs support low-income and disadvantaged girls and young women in Vietnam to pursue an education and build key life and leadership skills. Since 2004, we have supported 1,700 girls in Nam Dinh, Dien Bien, Cao Bang, An Giang, Can Tho, and Hau Giang provinces to attend secondary school. With declining dropout rates and higher grades, more than 70% of these students have been admitted to universities or vocational colleges. Since 2011, we have supported 220 young women to pursue university degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields in which women are particularly under-represented, such as engineering and natural sciences. Of the 100 young women in the first cohort, 100% graduated from university, 84% found a stable job, and 10% have pursued a Master's degree overseas.

The Foundation's secondary and university scholars come from low-income families who are unable to support their daughters to attend school. Secondary school scholars must have strong academic credentials and a demonstrated work ethic, and receive recommendations from their schools, local Educational Promotion Associations, and local authorities. The university program awards scholarships to young women

in their first year at a participating university who have demonstrated academic achievement and a commitment to learning. The Foundation works closely with a local partner and university administrations to identify university students who meet the selection criteria for scholarship recipients.

HOLISTIC, TAILORED SUPPORT IS KEY TO STUDENT SUCCESS

The Asia Foundation's education programs are distinguished by the holistic, tailored support provided to girls and young women in secondary school and university. This includes material support to offset the costs of attending school to students and their families, such as tuition, fees, books, uniforms, housing, and transportation assistance. Our programs also provide essential support outside of the classroom. One-on-one mentoring, peer networking, counseling, and academic monitoring helps the students thrive in their studies. In addition, our programs support 21st century soft skills development, including self-confidence, problem solving, and communication. Skills trainings, career development, immersive field trips, and volunteer opportunities help girls and young women develop vital life skills and exposure that helps them succeed academically and prepare to be leaders in their careers, families, and communities.



MEET OUR SCHOLARS

“I come from a small village in the outskirts of Hanoi. Both of my parents are farmers. When I was first informed that I was accepted into National University of Civil Engineering (NUCE), I was so happy yet so nervous at the same time. I was afraid that my family could not afford university for me since the tuition was relatively high and everything is so expensive in Hanoi. I spent my first university semester in the dormitory, and I had to do everything by myself. And then a special event happened: I was one of the lucky female students to receive an Asia Foundation scholarship, and thanks to the financial support I received, I was able to carry on with my courses.

When I first chose to study at NUCE, I realized that this university mainly provided a technical environment for male students rather than female students. The courses got harder and harder, so I had to stretch myself to catch up. I had to self-study, do self-research, and ask for advice from my teachers and my peers many times in order to achieve good results. The scholarship has provided a huge support. First, the scholarship covered my tuition so that I was able to continue my courses. I used to think that my university life would be so difficult in terms of finances, but fortunately, the scholarship was awarded to me and things became much easier. I could focus more on my study and worry less about all the fees I have to pay. Secondly, the scholarship also organized soft-skills training programs and exchange events that helped me to acquire more knowledge. From a shy and introverted girl, I have become a dynamic and confident student thanks to the support of the scholarship.”

—**Ms. Nguyen Mai Hoa, Economics and Construction Management student at National University of Civil Engineering (NUCE)**

“I will try to study as hard as I can. My father died of a serious illness, and my dream is to be enrolled in a medical school after my graduation from high school and become a doctor to cure others so that children won’t lose their loved ones as I did.”

—**10th grade scholarship student Sen is from Cao Bang Province. Her father died when she was just 4 years old. Sen lives with her 80-year-old grandmother, and after school, she helps with the housework and herds the buffaloes.**

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN’S EDUCATION

The Asia Foundation’s University Scholarship and Secondary School Scholarship programs are supported by individual donors, family foundations, and corporate partners, who are requested to fund students through the duration of their studies. We work with the Center for Education and Development, a local NGO registered under the Vietnam Association for Promoting Education, as well as local Educa-

tion Promotion Associations and representatives from the participating schools who help monitor students’ academic performance and support needs. The Foundation oversees program and financial management, and monitors implementation and impact. In addition, the Foundation provides regular technical assistance and advice to its local partners.

For more information about our University Scholarship and Secondary School Scholarship programs, contact Dinh Kieu Nhung, Program Specialist for Education, The Asia Foundation Vietnam, nhung.dinh@asiafoundation.org.



The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.