DUKEENGAGE VIETNAM
This program is organized by CET Academic Programs in collaboration with DukeEngage.

Program Dates: June 16 – August 12, 2018
(Dates subject to change up until the point of departure.)

Program Focus
Making an impact in the local youth community in Quang Tri through building a basketball court, setting up and training the basketball club, teaching ESL to students in grades 8-11, and facilitating cross-cultural exchange with local roommates and community members.

Curricular Connections: While all students are welcome to apply, this program may be of particular interest to students studying anthropology, sociology, political science, international development, education, and engineering. (See below for additional details about connecting this program to your academic work.)

Service Themes
• Community development/outreach
• Health/human services
• Education/literacy

Program Leaders
• Kate Maruyama, Programs Manager, CET Academic Programs
• Vu Ho, Resident Director, CET Academic Programs. Vu comes from the central highlands of Vietnam, moved to Ho Chi Minh City to attend both high school and college, graduated from the University of Economics of Ho Chi Minh City in 2013 with a BA in finance, and first joined the CET Vietnam team in 2010 as a Vietnamese roommate.
• Tri Phuong is a PhD Candidate at Yale University’s Department of Anthropology. He was a Fulbright in Vietnam grantee (2015-2016) studying new media technologies, urban youth cultures, and digital communities in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Prior to graduate studies, Tri worked in different capacities as a community organizer, newspaper editor, and education consultant. He is an alumnus of Harvard College and the Harvard Kennedy School of Government (Social Studies 2003, Master in Public Policy 2007).
• Walter Lee, MD, Associate Professor of Surgery, Associate Professor in Radiation Oncology and Co-Director, Head and Neck Program, Duke Cancer Institute; DukeEngage in Vietnam Faculty Fellow. Dr. Lee’s areas of research include immunotherapy, global health, medical device development and medical education.

Program Overview
On this program, projects are developed in conjunction with local community members and carried out by DukeEngage students and local Vietnamese roommates from nearby Hue University. Typically, projects are a combination of activities that contribute to local infrastructure and ESL teaching—a vital skill for advancement in Vietnam. Students promote cross-cultural understanding and exchange through events like the cultural show, sports events, fundraising efforts, and casually hanging out. The program begins with a short orientation in Ho Chi Minh City.

Vietnam has seen incredible development over the past 10 years. This growing affluence as a whole means that there is less funding to solve ongoing community challenges. However, the growth is far from even. Central Vietnam in particular is an area that has some of the highest need in the country and very few donors and NGOs supporting it. DukeEngage
and CET have worked with the community in Quang Tri since 2010 and have developed a trusting relationship with community members that enables projects to be successfully identified and completed.

**Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

By the end of the program, students should:

- discuss from experience how communication is more than language
- express comfort working with cultures other than their own
- develop concern about local community issues
- learn about different cultures of people in other countries
- understand, in a more nuanced way, how to build and maintain relationships
- comprehend the role and importance of relationships in instigating change
- enhance team skills
- articulate the ongoing impact and usefulness of the DukeEngage Vietnam experience beyond the program summer

**Partnership Opportunities**

Students participate in various education and infrastructure building projects in rural communities.

Projects are selected and teams are determined before students arrive. CET staff meet with Quang Tri community members to learn more about the current community needs, then determine how students can practically assist in sustainably meeting those needs. Each year, the group does one teaching project and one infrastructure project.

Students start at one of several building worksites with their roommates before dawn. All projects are selected in conjunction with the local community and aim to improve local sanitation and public health and quality of life. Projects in the past have included:

- A hand-washing station for an elementary school;
- A new, usable toilet for an elementary school;
- Erecting safety structures to prevent injuries from motorized vehicles; and
- Helping to pave a road in a remote area to ensure driver and pedestrian safety and improve sanitation

In 2018, students will build a basketball court and then set up and train the community’s first basketball club.

In the afternoon, DukeEngage participants teach ESL classes to students, typically grades 8-11, in a local school building. Vietnamese roommates act as co-teachers and together create unique lesson plans. Class content often focuses on oral communication.

Students participate in various intercultural exchange events that aim to promote international understanding with both the local community and their roommates. Past students have participated in a cultural show that showcases American and Vietnam culture, facilitated a youth soccer tournament and other sporting events, and organized a fundraiser for local charities.

Students will be required to participate in extensive physical labor during their service work. These tasks could include: painting, transporting building materials, pouring concrete for a foundation, cleaning up rivers and roads, assisting with building construction and restoration. Students should bring clothes and shoes that are appropriate for manual labor. The climate is tropical and it’s often muddy, thus students should dress accordingly. Exact infrastructure and educational projects are determined in consultation with local partners’ needs and thus are subject to change.

**Program Requirements**

Language/Other Prerequisites: None.
Personal Qualities: Students are assessed based on the degree to which they meet the following criteria. Not all criteria must be met, but a strong candidate will have a combination of most of these attributes:

- Flexibility and high tolerance of ambiguity;
- Experience with building or teaching
- Experience volunteering, especially with building and/or teaching projects;
- Interest in Vietnamese culture and language;
- Experience traveling in Vietnam or other developing countries;
- The ability to work well on a diverse team; and
- Willingness to work under physically demanding environments.

Curricular Connections
Courses on Southeast Asian culture or history, specifically Vietnam, as well as education and international development may be of interest.

Program Details
Description of Community: Students will begin the program with a short orientation in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Students will then relocate to a rural area in the Central Region where they will continue orientation and conduct their project work. One of the areas hit hardest by Vietnam War, Quang Tri is still recovering from the effects of Agent Orange and decades of poverty. Quang Tri has a tropical climate and a hilly terrain.

Housing and Meals: Students will live in guesthouses with Vietnamese roommates who will also participate in the program. In both the rural and urban areas, all students live at the same guesthouse that has simple yet comfortable rooms. Air conditioning, hot water, western-style toilets, and internet are usually available in Ho Chi Minh City. These may not be as widely available in the rural area. For example, students usually wash clothes by hand, have irregular access to the internet, and experience frequent power outages.

Health Note: Shellfish and soy are common ingredients in the local cuisine. Ready, nearby access to treatment for travelers experiencing a severe allergic reaction to this and other food(s) may be limited at this program site. Students who are considering application to DukeEngage-Vietnam should review these facts with their families and medical providers before applying. Once accepted, a participant with severe food allergies is expected to inform DukeEngage, dukeengage@duke.edu, of their specific concerns and needs no later than January 19. The DukeEngage staff will work with participants on a safety assessment and to identify reasonable accommodations and meal options.

Living with Vietnamese roommates provides DukeEngage students with a unique perspective on contemporary and historical issues in Vietnam. Students address these by participating in projects that aim to benefit the community. Students will perform physical labor for the majority of the program and thus should be in good physical health. Students must know how to ride a bicycle. Participants must also be amenable to frequent scheduling changes. It is expected that students actively practice and improve communication skills with the Vietnamese people.

Students will primarily eat as a group enjoying traditional Vietnamese food: pho (rice noodles, thinly sliced beef, and beef both), vegetables stir fried with sauces over rice, small portions of cooked meat over white rice or rice noodles. Students will also have some opportunities to buy their own food from vendors selling local fruits, Vietnamese sandwiches, and various rice-based stir-fry dishes. Students may take their meals at a local family restaurant and share meals family-style as a group. Due to the high level of physical activity and the limited availability of a variety of foods in the rural area, students are encouraged to practice flexible eating habits. Cooking for yourself, vegetarian diets, and severe allergies may be difficult to accommodate.

Transportation: In Ho Chi Minh City students will travel primarily by foot, bus, or taxi. When the group takes enrichment trips a private van will be used. In rural Vietnam, most students will travel by bike and on foot to the worksites daily and must be comfortable riding for approximately 30 minutes each way. When biking, all students should wear a bike helmet. Students are prohibited from riding Vietnamese motorbikes (mini motorcycles).

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Communication: Students can decide to bring their laptops, but DukeEngage is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal property or electronic devices. While Internet connections in Vietnam can often be spotty, the guest house or nearby Internet cafes have connections. Students are lent a cell phone in Vietnam and are required to keep a minimal balance during the duration of the program. The cell phone should be used to remain in touch with group members and program staff and can also be used to call home. Coverage is moderate to good depending upon one’s location.

Local Safety and Security; Cultural Norms, Mores and Practices: As part of their planning, DukeEngage strongly advises all prospective applicants to familiarize themselves with the common challenges travelers encounter at this program site in order to make an informed application decision that is right for them. We recommend starting with these two resources:

- the International SOS (ISOS) portal for up-to-the-minute travel, health and security advice (Log in to the Duke ISOS portal with your Duke NetID)
- the Diversity, Identity and Global Travel section of the DukeEngage website.

Reflection Sessions: Your site coordinator will lead weekly reflection sessions in which you and the local Vietnamese roommates will be expected to participate. During the reflections sessions, students may reflect on what surprises them about the initially unfamiliar environment, discuss their experiences in the local community, and share thoughts on personal and community challenges and solutions. More details will be shared after arrival onsite.

Other Opportunities: Students will participate in service projects all morning and afternoon. Many evenings and some weekends may include other activities, teaching preparation, or discussions. In general, students will have limited free time for downtime or to pursue social activities. Lunch breaks and “downtime” is typically spent interacting with local community members. Students may spend their free time getting smoothies or playing soccer with local students, or traveling with their local Vietnamese roommates. Students and local roommates may work together to design and facilitate a variety show as thank you to the Quang Tri community. Ocean swimming will not be allowed in any DukeEngage program.

More Information

- It’s a Living: Work and Life in Vietnam Today. G. Sasges, ed. U.S. release date in November 2013. Through 67 interviews and 59 color photographs, ‘It’s a Living’ reveals the energy and struggle of the world of work in Vietnam today. Based on frank and freewheeling interviews conducted by students, the book engages a broad range of Vietnamese on their feelings about work, life and getting ahead. By providing a ground-level view of the texture of daily working life in the midst of rapid and unsettling change, the book reveals Vietnam today as a place where ordinary people are leveraging whatever assets they have, not just to survive, but to make a better life for themselves.
- 2017 group blog: https://dukeengagenvietnam2017.wordpress.com/
- CET Academic Programs website: http://cetacademicprograms.com/programs/summer/vietnam-service/