

Providing Educational Opportunities for Vietnamese Youth through Art and Music



ROCK - PAPER - SCISSORS
Children's Fund



Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

2013 was a very exciting year for Rock-Paper-Scissors Children's Fund and we want to begin by thanking all those who supported us throughout the year, the impact we had on over 200 children could not have been accomplished without you. Thank you.

After traveling and living in Vietnam we have experienced firsthand the hardships and poverty that exist there. Although education is on the rise the poor are among the most highly uneducated, and fall way behind the middle class in their ability to attend school through High School and beyond to college. While living in Vietnam, we learned that the majority of youth have little or no opportunity to take part in after-school activities, and clearly are never offered the opportunity to learn art or music unlike our children here in the United States. In 2012, we decided to try and do something about that, and applied to become a 501.c.3. non-profit in order to raise money to provide these opportunities to young Vietnamese students living in or on the edge of poverty.

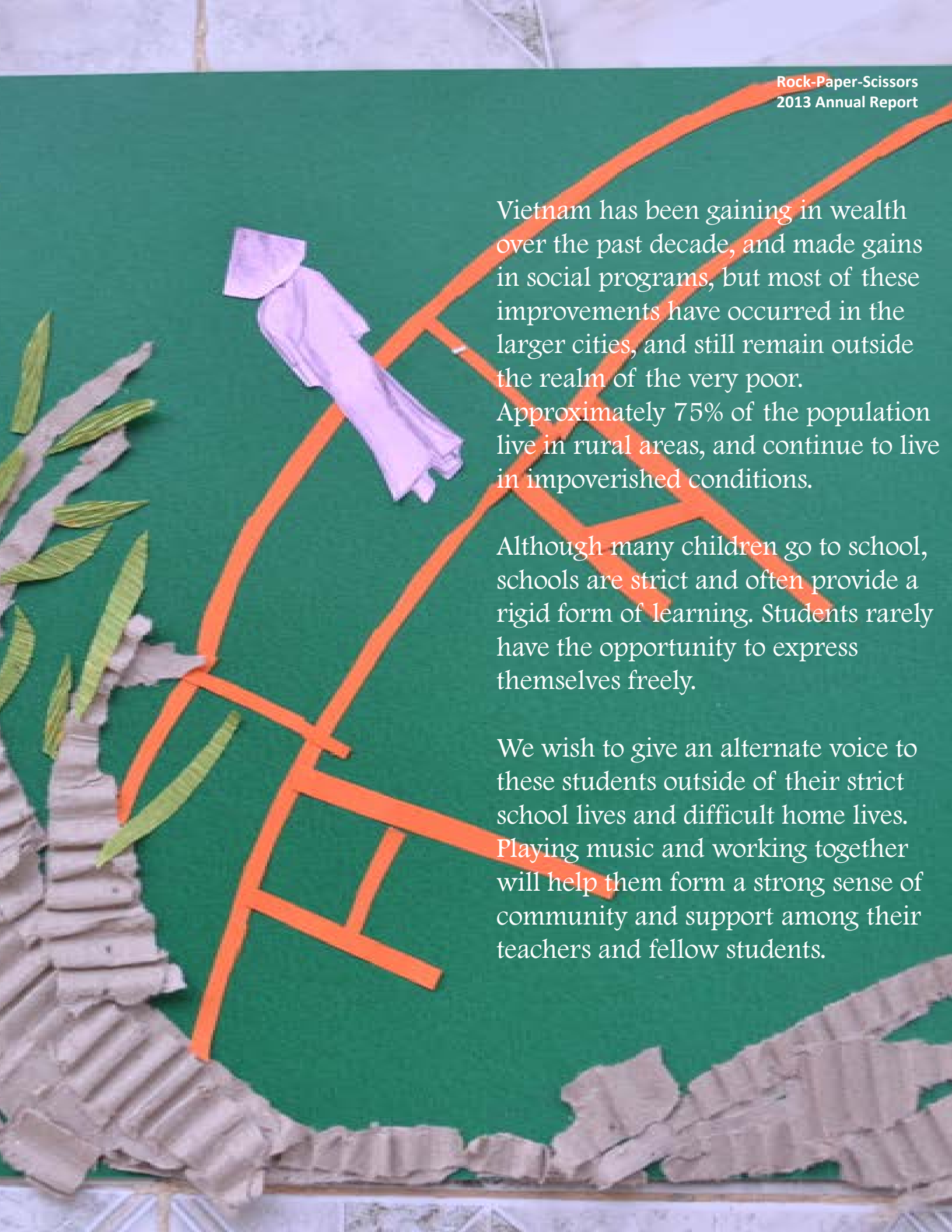
Often times when we are in Vietnam, we get the questions, "why music and art, these are not necessarily things that will help poor people", and yes, when we travel along the roads and into the countryside we often wonder, would it just be easier and better to raise money to help buy clothing and food. It is a hard issue, and it is hard to be in a community with so many poor and not think this is best, but in the long run, seeing the students come to our programs, work and learn together, play music together, create art together, is such an important addition to their education. We have interviewed our students and their families and we hear, "I love coming to play music with my friends", "I love to hear my daughter practice her violin at home", "we love music and we love being able to be artists". So many studies have shown the benefits of learning music and art for kids; better grades in school, better attendance, and enthusiasm to learn. We feel that all children in the world should receive equal opportunity to this kind of learning experience, no matter where they live in the world.

This year has been a great year for us in that we were selected by Microsoft to be featured on their Give for Youth website, as well as their partner organization's website, Global Giving. They provided matching funds to us last March and December that gave us a start. They have provided great exposure for our projects around the world. Thank you Global Giving and Give for Youth!

One very important aspect of our programs are the people and youth in Vietnam who help us manage our projects, teach the kids, and spend hours being involved and helping us run the programs in country. We could not do this without their help and support.

We believe that attaining equality in educational opportunities is an achievable goal throughout the world, and for every student of ours who picks up an instrument to play Beethoven, or a paint brush to be inspired by their dreams, or who now can easily ride her new bike to school, we will get a tiny bit closer to achieving this goal.

Sara Stevens Nerone
Founder/Board Director



Vietnam has been gaining in wealth over the past decade, and made gains in social programs, but most of these improvements have occurred in the larger cities, and still remain outside the realm of the very poor.

Approximately 75% of the population live in rural areas, and continue to live in impoverished conditions.

Although many children go to school, schools are strict and often provide a rigid form of learning. Students rarely have the opportunity to express themselves freely.

We wish to give an alternate voice to these students outside of their strict school lives and difficult home lives. Playing music and working together will help them form a strong sense of community and support among their teachers and fellow students.

Rock~Paper~Scissors in Vietnam



In these areas, 50-80% of the population are at or below the poverty level (World Bank, 2010)



Music Education

Kids living in rural areas of Vietnam have no opportunity to learn or own an instrument. Prior to entering the music school, they often have never seen a real violin, cello, or viola, let alone hold or play one. This is a new and wonderful experience for them.

Supporting Youth~

Rock-Paper-Scissors
2013 Annual Report

through Music



Instruments

Each of our students receive their own instrument when they enter our program. They learn to care for them and keep them at home so they can practice or play whenever they wish. Violins cost \$100USD and Cellos \$350USD. Our music program supported 25 students this year, with 1 teacher.

Method

The students are taught using the Suzuki method, and learn first by ear through repetitive listening and then learn to read music. The students receive both semi-private and group lessons weekly, and all students come together to play in a string ensemble.

Supporting Youth~ through Music

Rock-Paper-Scissors
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Career Growth

Our Khanh Hoa music program is run by a young, local musician named Tuan. Tuan always dreamed of becoming a music teacher, but never had the opportunity to train or purchase instruments. He taught himself to play the flute and the organ at a local church.

Our goal is to support each community by hiring local musicians and providing them with professional training opportunities. This year we provided Tuan with private violin lessons weekly in Nha Trang city. We supported Tuan by not only providing lessons, but also transportation to and from the city.

Supporting Youth~ their Stories

Rock-Paper-Scissors
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This is Nhat, he is one of our newest students. Nhat lives with his mother, father, grandmother and younger brother. Nhat started playing the violin 6 months ago and is doing extremely well. He is a very good student in school and tells us that his favorite subject is biology. Nhat's family is very poor and both his mom and dad make a living collecting recyclables around town. In an interview with both Nhat and his parents, Nhat talked about how happy playing the violin and learning music makes him feel. He says playing with all the kids as a group is his favorite.

Supporting Youth~ through Music

Rock-Paper-Scissors
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New Music Program

In 2014 we will be opening a new music program in the Province of Quang Tri. The directors of Rock-Paper-Scissors Children's Fund traveled to Quang Tri in 2013 and established an agreement with the local officials of the Hai Hoa Commune for the new program. With the generous use of classroom space in the local elementary school and the permission of the principal and local government officials, we now plan on opening the program in early 2014.

This program is the dream of Luu Phan, a Vietnamese-American who immigrated to the US with her family when she was 8 years old. Luu, who traveled back to Vietnam as part of a college Service-Learning program decided she wanted to bring music to the kids living in the village where she was born and grew up prior to moving to the US. We are very excited to be able to provide this opportunity and for Luu's dream to come true. Luu has now joined us as a member of our Board.

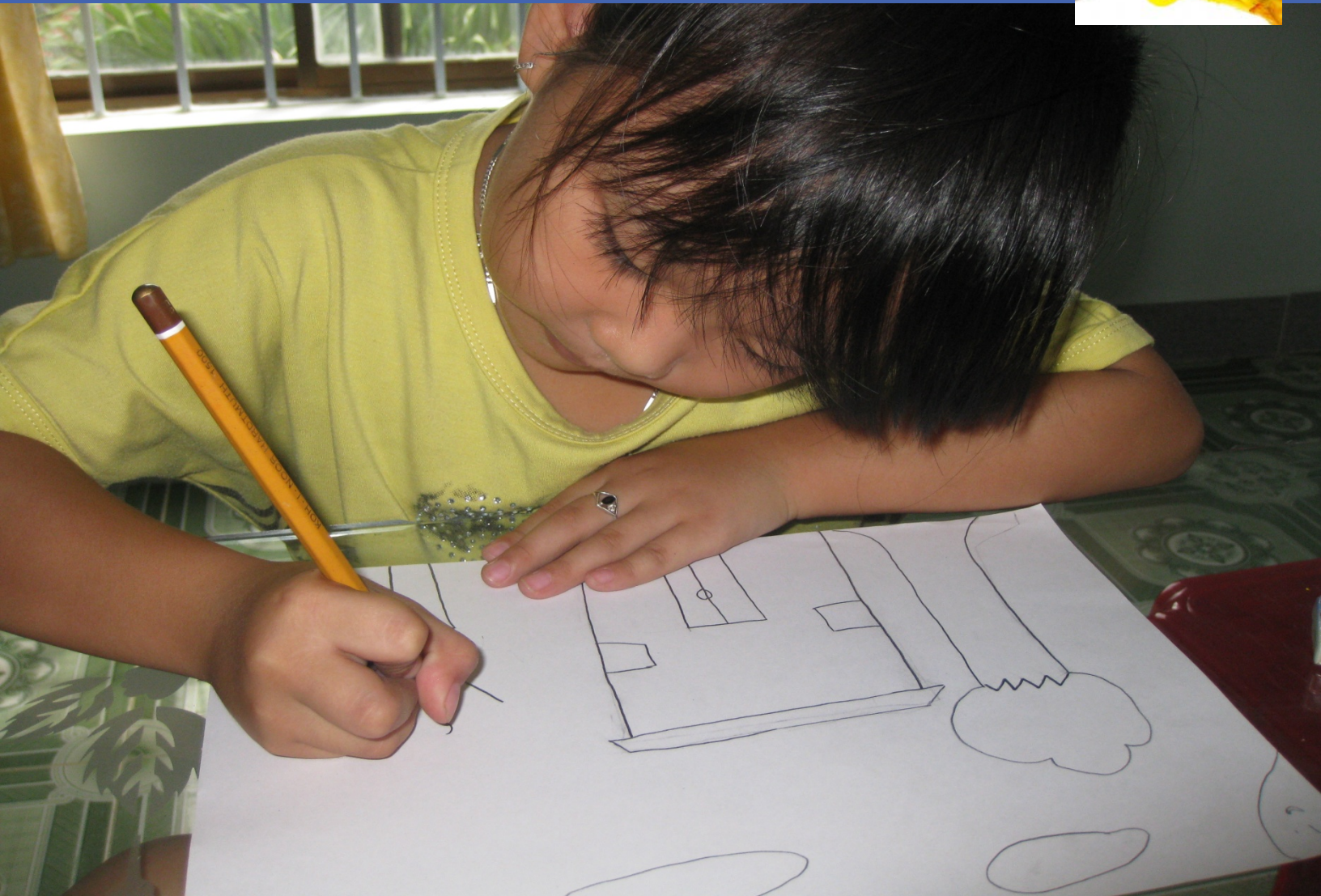




Art Education

Supporting Youth~ through Art

Rock-Paper-Scissors
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The Power of Art

Poverty carries the universal language of hopelessness, and the harm it inflicts on an individual is dependent upon personality and support systems available to them. Art provides an avenue for youth to be heard and express themselves above and beyond difficult life circumstances.

Room to be Creative

Art helps students observe and learn about the world around them, it helps them share their thoughts and life circumstances with others. We provide teachers, creative space, time and materials for kids who face the everyday challenge of living in poverty.

Supporting Youth~ through Art

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Our Curriculum

Our program has been developed with the help of primary and secondary school art teachers from the USA. A variety of painting techniques are taught, along with projects utilizing the exploration of a wide-variety of materials found locally.

Dream of Art Project

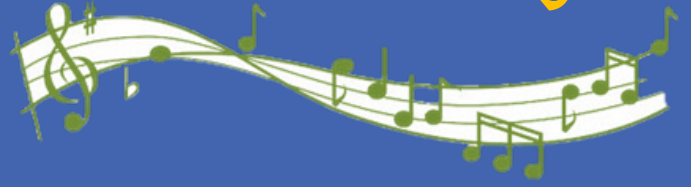
We have brought art to over 200 students in Vietnam. We now have an established program in Khanh Hoa Province in the same rental space as our music program. We identify students interested and talented in art with the help of local school teachers, and invite the students to attend our classes.

Supporting Youth~ through Art

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Building Community



Our music and art programs not only provide a place for students to be creative, but also provide a needed community of support and friendship. Our students form strong bonds and friendships that carry over into their daily lives at home and in school.



Bikes for Girls

Rock-Paper-Scissors
2013 Annual Report



Supporting Girl's Education~ through Bikes



Educated girls have a greater chance of a
better life for themselves and their children

How do Bikes help?

- Bikes provide access to schools
- Bikes save commuting time
- Bikes provide access to health care, education, and other economic opportunities

Bikes for Girls Program-2013

Since August 2013 we have provided 85 girls with bikes and raised funds for 150 bikes that will be provided to girls in the beginning of 2014.

Supporting Girl's Education~ through Bikes



Getting to School

Working with our local partners, we identify girls who are poor and at risk of dropping out of school because of the time it takes to travel to school. By having a bicycle a girl can save 3 hours each day for every 10 miles she walks. Bikes save time and energy.

Safety

A major issue in Vietnam today is the trafficking of kids to the garment industry and the sex trade. Girls that walk long distances to school are at high risk of being kidnapped. Bikes provide a faster and safer way home and are the first simple answer to improving both safety and access to education.

Supporting Girl's Education~ through Bikes



Bike Maintenance and Training

All girls receive a bike pump and extra tire tubes. We return to the villages 4-5 months later to check on the condition of the bikes and provide repairs. In 2014 we plan on providing bike repair training and tools for girls in each area.

In the Future

We are developing a project with a US-based biking organization that trains underprivileged girls in the United States in bike repair and plans to provide them with the opportunity to travel to Vietnam to train the girls who receive bikes as part of our Bikes for Girls program.

Supporting Girl's Education~ Their Stories



Lu Thi Lieu

This is Lieu, she is from the province of Daklak. Lieu's family is too poor to send her to school so Lieu was sent to live in the Pagoda and become a Buddhist nun.

Lieu said she was very happy to have a new bike. Having a new bike makes it easier and more convenient for her to go to school. Every day she rides another child on the back of her bike to the nearby elementary school and then rides to school 16 km one way.

Supporting Girl's Education~ Their Stories



Ngo Thi Hoai Men



Men lives with her parents, her younger brother and her grandmother in a small house built by the government. Her father is a fisherman, a hard job in Vietnam and her mom doesn't work because she has severe epilepsy.

Men is one of the top students at her high school. She is a good example for her class because she always tries her best although she is poor. Men and her family were very excited about her having a new bike to help her get to school safely. The bike has also helped her family because Men can now take her mom to the hospital easily on the back of her bike.

In 2013 Rock~Paper~Scissors~

✓ Provided instruments and lessons 3 times a week to 25 students in our music program and initiated our weekly art program in Cam Duc, Khanh Hoa province



✓ Taught art to over 100 kids living at the Hoa Yen Community home for kids

✓ Established an agreement with the officials of Hai Hoa Commune, Quang Tri Province to establish a second music program in 2014



✓ Purchased additional violins and cellos to add to our program, along with music, chin rests, music stands, spare strings and tuners for the kids



✓ Signed a one year lease for a beautiful, open-spaced building in Khanh Hoa to hold music and art classes, completed repairs and furnished it



✓ Provided scholarships for 1 year to support 12 of our students for their academic schooling in their local schools



In 2013 Rock~Paper~Scissors~

✓ Provided weekly professional violin lessons to our Khanh Hoa music teacher to help advance his career as a musician



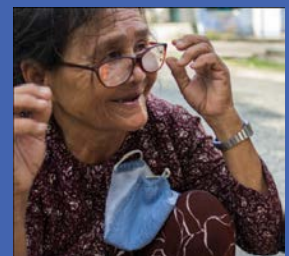
✓ Raised funds to purchase and distribute 150 bikes for girls. Distributed 85 bikes to girls along with backpacks, school supplies, bike pumps and tire tubes, 65 more bikes ready to distribute in early January 2014.



✓ Provided new school uniforms and shoes to the 100 students attending the Son Tan Elementary School, in the small ethnic minority village, Son Tan, Khanh Hoa Province.



✓ Collected donations of 315 pairs of reading glasses in the US and distributed them in July-August 2013 to women sewing in factories and the elderly.



✓ Developed an agreement to help support 44 orphaned children living in a shelter in the province of Lang Son. Following the establishment of the new music program in Quang Tri, we will establish a music and art program for these children.



Rock~Paper~Scissors~

Statement of Activities

For the year ending December 31, 2013

Support and Revenue (FY13)	USD
Individuals	\$5,970
Grants	\$21, 400
In-Kind Donations	\$2,445
Total Support and Revenue	\$29,815
Expenditures (FY13)	USD
Music and Art Programs	\$5,086
Bikes for Girls Program	\$4,759
Teachers, Support, Training	\$4,018
Equipment	\$268
Fundraisers	\$410
Administration	\$1,158
Other Programs (School Uniforms/Shoes/Glasses)	\$1,611
Total FY13 Expenditures	\$17,310

Rock~Paper~Scissors

Board of Directors and Vietnam Teachers and Staff

Board of Directors

Sara Nerone, Board Chair
Patrick O'Brien, Board Co-Chair
Betsy Rosengarden, Secretary
Dana Filippini, Member
Luu Thi Phan, Member
Mariah Hays, Member
Bao Tran, Member



Vietnam Staff

Huỳnh Thị Quỳnh Giao, Vietnam Program Coordinator
Ngo Van Tai, Vietnam Part-Time Support Staff
Cao Xuân Anh Tuấn, Music and Art Teacher



