

Providing Educational Opportunities for Vietnamese Youth through Art and Music



ROCK - PAPER - SCISSORS
Children's Fund



Letter from the Director



Dear Friends,

2014 was yet another 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 300 children could not have been accomplished without you. Thank you.

I want to share a blog post with you from one of our volunteers this year. He and his partner traveled to Vietnam and volunteered for us in Cam Duc for the month of November.

"This week included an art class held at a primary school in Son Tan, a poor minority community about 30 minutes northwest of Cam Duc. Carla and I, along with a group of students and teachers from Cam Duc, led an art project for the 80 or so students at the school. Each student decorated two circles either in all warm colors or all cold colors, and then we put them all into two giant circle murals. It was definitely a bit hectic, but the kids had a great time and were proud of the final product they put together.

Although activities like these certainly stand out as highlights of our time here, really what has struck me the most over this past month is the close knit community the staff and kids have cultivated here in Cam Duc. Carla and I were really struck by this from the very beginning, noticing how familial and welcoming the group felt. When Nhu, Carla, and I were scheduled to go visit a student's family, the handful of kids who were at the schoolhouse at the time all came along for the visit without a second thought. When some of the older kids and teachers were headed up Highway 1 for a soccer game, nearly the entire program tagged along to watch and hang out, even those who weren't planning on participating.

Within the walls of the school the culture that has been cultivated is even more striking. Though the students range in age from 7 to 17, there amazingly seem to be minor if any social divisions. There are no cliques, and everyone is welcome to every conversation and every game. Carla and I have both spent many summers working at camps and have experienced a lot of youth social dynamics. We can honestly say the dynamic of this student culture is unique in a really powerful way.

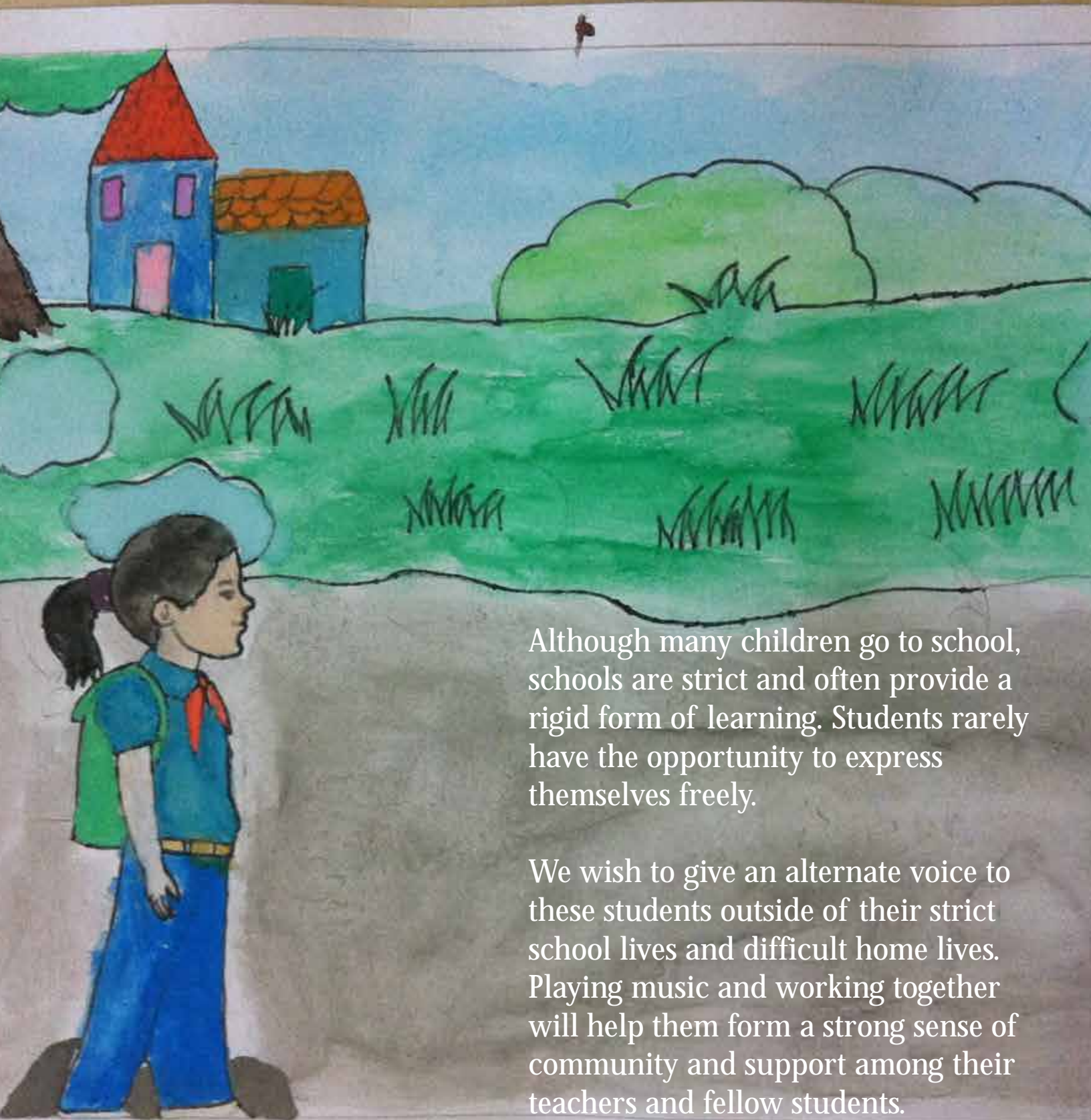
The RPS schoolhouse represents an amazing opportunity as a place, outside of normal school and home, where students can come to learn, play, interact with other students of different ages, and feel safe. It is the exact type of community that inspires confidence and creativity and provides positive role models when kids need them most.

It really is a family here at RPS, and Carla and I have been honored and humbled to be a part of it. Thank you to the students and the staff for being patient with our Vietnamese and sharing your knowledge and games with us, and thank you to all the people that help support this program. Beautiful music and big smiles are happening here everyday.

-Grady"

Thank you everyone for helping us to build these great programs!

Sara Stevens Nerone (Founder/Board Director)



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



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.

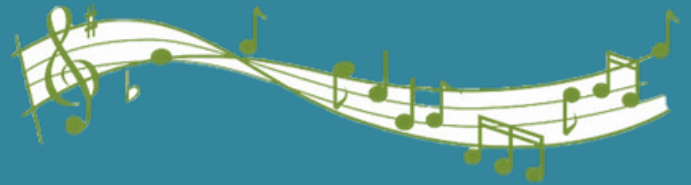


Music Education

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.



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.



Supporting Youth~ through Music

Rock-Paper-Scissors
2014 Annual Report



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 and 3 teachers.

Method

The students are taught using a modified Suzuki method. The students receive both semi-private and group lessons weekly, and in the summer with the help of volunteers from the U.S. the kids learn to play in an ensemble.

Supporting Youth~ through Music

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Career Growth for our Teachers

Our goal is to support the community by hiring local musicians and providing them with professional training opportunities. This year we were able to hire two new teachers, Huy and Hieu, who started in November 2014. Huy was one of our first violin students back in 2011. We now provide Hieu and Huy professional music lessons twice a week in the city of Nha Trang. Both take 2 four-hour lessons weekly.

Supporting Youth~ through Music

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New Music Program



In 2014 we attempted to open a new music program in the Province of Quang Tri. Although we had established an agreement with the local officials of the Hai Hoa Commune for the new program, we were unable to find a someone in the community who could be a teacher. We also could not find someone from the city who was willing to travel to the rural village to teach.

Instead we have chosen to open the program in the city of Hue, where the Conservatory of Music is. We are currently searching for a program manager and teachers there.

Supporting Youth~ through Music

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Volunteers

In 2014 we hosted a number of volunteer musicians from the U.S. to teach during the month of July. Joining us this year was a young man from California who had been adopted from Vietnam as a baby. Zachary is one of the top young violinist in California at the age of 15. We also hosted Hannah Beekman, a violin teacher and co-owner of a string shop in Rhode Island. Kaitlin Pothier, a high school student and violinist from Rhode Island joined us, as well the Sophie and Phoebe Nerone, both talented string players, and the daughters of Sara Nerone, the found of Rock-Paper-Scissors Children's Fund.



Art Education

Supporting Youth~ through Art

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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 and it helps them share their thoughts and life circumstances with others. We provide lessons, 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. High schoolers work on their technical skills in order to apply to college.

Dream of Art Project

We have brought art to over 300 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

Rock-Paper-Scissors
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2014 Art Program Update-Cam Duc

This year we were lucky to receive a grant to help support and grow our music and art programs. In November 2014 we hired a part time art teacher. His name is Thang. Thang is very talented and the students love him very much. He is able to work with our older students on their technical drawing skills which is particularly important for some of them who wish to go to architectural school. Thang currently teaches four, two classes every weekend. We currently have 28 students attending art classes in our Cam Duc program.

Supporting Youth~ through Art

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Volunteers

In 2014 two volunteer artists from the U.S. traveled to Cam Duc for the month of July to work with our students and teach our art classes. The photo above is an example of a collaborative student Van Gogh collage that they did with the students. They also made marionettes that the students performed with at our summer day camps.

Supporting Youth~ through Art

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2014 Update-New Art Program-Son Tan Village

In addition to our art program in Cam Duc we returned to the small, ethnic minority village called Son Tan to teach art and English to a select group of 20 elementary school kids. We love these children very much, and have spent time building a relationship with their school principal who has provided us with a room to use at the school on the weekends. Our art teacher and some of our students from Cam Duc travel out to the village on Sunday mornings every other week, to teach the kids English through art. The class is 2-3 hours and we provide the kids milk and sandwiches for themselves and their families. We would love to expand this program to include more children, but currently we are only able to support 20-25 kids.

Supporting Youth~ through Art

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2014 Update-New Day Camps for Ethnic Minority Children

This year we piloted half day art and music camps in three ethnic minority villages in Khanh Hoa province. We did this with our volunteer group who traveled with us during the month of July from the U.S. The camps included a musical performance by our volunteer musicians, rhythm games, an art project each morning such as collage or watercolors, and parachute and other games. This year we had 250 children attend the camps. We also supplied the kids with meals each day.

Also, to encourage awareness of the ethnic minority groups and the severe poverty they endure, we asked our year-round students from Cam Duc to join us as counselors. The outcome of this simple program has turned into something that none of us imagined. Right away our students started telling us that they had no idea that the villages even existed so close to their homes, and that they had not been exposed to such terrible conditions the minority kids were living under. Bonds formed between the kids, and it became clear that this had made a huge impression on them.



Bikes for Girls

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



Bikes for Girls Program-2014

This year we provided 200 girls with new bikes

How can Bikes help?

- Bikes save commuting time to and from school
- Bikes provide access to health care, education, and other economic opportunities for a family

Supporting Girl's Education~ Their Stories

Kieu



10-year-old Kieu is one of 9 brothers and sisters. Four years ago, when she was six, Kieu's father died, leaving her mother, Hien the lone supporter of the large family. Hien, works making \$2-\$4 a day selling snails she catches on the nearby shoreline.

Kieu's three oldest siblings have all dropped out of school and traveled to different provinces, far away to find work to help support the family. Each month they send home whatever they can to help their mother with school fees and food for the rest of the children.

Kieu and her family were overjoyed when she received the bike. As much as her mother worries daily about her children, Kieu's new bike offers a small respite, knowing that her daughter is more safe now going to and from school.

Supporting Girl's Education~ Their Stories



Thoa

Before we met Thoa, the 8-year-old was about to quit school. Her father Hieu, 36, a fisherman, and her mother Thao, 35, a restaurant worker, could not afford a bike for their daughter, and the 10 km distance to school was too far for her to walk.

Thoa's father's job requires him to be on the water anywhere from weeks to months at a time. His earnings vary, depending on the catch, and frequently he will come home after months away with only \$50 -\$100. Her mother earns a small salary each month working everyday at the restaurant. Thoa's 14-year-old brother goes to the restaurant after school and works all night only to return home in the morning to make it in to school. When Thoa comes home from school in the afternoon, she is alone in the house until 10 p.m. when her mother comes home from work.

"Looking at Thoa's cute face and her bright eyes, we felt really moved," our program director said. "At her young age, she has no way of thinking how difficult her life is going to be in the future. She deserves more love from people and a good education for a better future."

In 2014 Rock-Paper-Scissors~



•Hired three new part time teachers, 2 music and 1 art teacher



•Provided professional violin lessons to our music teachers 2 days a week and provided funding for them to travel to the city for their lessons



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

•Provided art classes to 53 students weekly (28 students in Cam Duc and 25 students in Son Tan)

•Provided summer day camps for 300 children in the ethnic minority villages of Cam Phuoc Tay, Suioi Cat and Son Tan, in the province of Khanh Hoa



•Provided scholarships for 1 year to support 10 of our students for their academic schooling in their local schools

•Provided new Bikes to 200 girls

In 2014 Rock-Paper-Scissors~



ü Provided meals to our 25 Son Tan students twice a month. Meals to 300 children attending our camps along with notebooks and school supplies

ü Provided 100 sweatshirts to the children of Son Tan Elementary School.

ü Provided a \$25 gift along with food and supplies to 10 elderly "Mothers of War"



Rock-Paper-Scissors~

Statement of Activities

For the year ending December 31, 2014

Support and Revenue (FY14)	USD
Individuals	\$7,727
Non-government grants (RI International Rotary Club, RI Returned PeaceCorp Club)	\$2,450
Porticus Asia Limited Grant	\$34,324
Global Giving Grant	\$21,864
Interest	\$61.00
Total Support and Revenue	\$66,426
Expenditures (FY14)	USD
Music Program	\$5,456
Art Program	\$5,824
Bikes for Girls Program	\$10,782
Summer Music and Art Camps	\$2,152
Other Donations (sweatshirts, school supplies, tuitions, food)	\$925
Administration (additional program support included \$482)	\$3,792
Total FY14 Expenditures	\$28,931

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
Huỳnh Thị Quỳnh Như, Program Support
Cao Xuân Anh Tuấn, Music Teacher
Nguyễn Trung Hiếu, Music Teacher (Hired Nov 2014)
Nguyễn Đoàn Minh Huy, Music Teacher (Hired Nov 2014)
Nguyen Anh Thang, Art Teacher



