

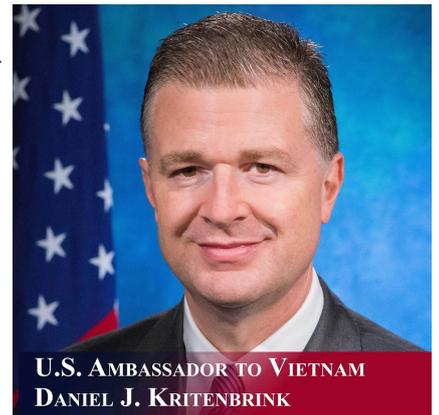
*“Perhaps the greatest power of such intellectual exchange is to convert nations into peoples and to translate ideologies into human aspirations”*  
-- J. William Fulbright

## Welcome Ambassador Kritenbrink

Daniel J. Kritenbrink is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, who has served as an American diplomat since 1994. He was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to be the next U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam on October 26, 2017.

Mr. Kritenbrink has completed multiple assignments related to Asia. Most recently, he was the Senior Advisor for North Korea Policy at the Department of State. Prior to that, he was Senior Director for Asian Affairs at the National Security Council (2015-2017), where he worked extensively on Vietnam and oversaw the negotiation of two Joint Statements regarding our Comprehensive Partnership with Vietnam. At the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, Mr. Kritenbrink served as Deputy Chief of Mission (2013-2015), Minister Counselor for Political Affairs (2011-2013), and as Political Officer (2006-2009). He also served in Tokyo (1994-1995 and 2000-2004), Sapporo (1995-1997), and Kuwait City (1997-1999). In Washington, his other assignments have included

Director of the Office of Chinese and Mongolian Affairs at the Department of State (2009-2011), and Staff Assistant



to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs (1999-2000).

Mr. Kritenbrink earned an M.A. from the University of Virginia and a B.A. from the University of Nebraska-Kearney. He speaks Chinese and Japanese. He and his wife Nami have two children.

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## EAP Branch Chief Adam Meier Visits Vietnam



Mr. Adam Meier - Branch Chief, East Asian & Pacific Fulbright Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the State Department visited Hanoi on December 4th as part of his trip to the region. In Hanoi, Mr. Meier had a morning tea talk with a group of Vietnamese Fulbrighters, listening to their experiences on their growth during and after the Program. He also visited Save Vietnam’s Wildlife in Cuc Phuong National Park, a Vietnamese non-profit organization for protecting endangered wildlife in Vietnam founded by Mr. Nguyen Van Thai, alumnus of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program

on Environment. To understand more about the ETA Program in Vietnam and their living envi-



ronment, he visited ETA Sarah Yan and her host institution, Hung Yen Gifted High School in Hung Yen Province. Mr. Meier also inspired students to participate in the YSEALI program as well as met with some Fulbright alumni to receive their feedback. Finally, Mr. Meier had a consultation meeting with Fulbright team to update on the program in Vietnam.

## Fulbright 25th Anniversary



*Ambassador Kritenbrink gives opening remarks at the Gala Reception*



*Ms. Vu Quynh Nga introduces Fulbright at the Public Workshop*



*Fulbrighters give advice about career orientation to the young people*

### A Year of Celebration – 2017 in Review

The holiday season was upon on us, and that means another year of success has come to a close. With the hustle and bustle of the year’s end, we at the Fulbright Program Vietnam reminisced on all that was accomplished in the year of 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fulbright Program Vietnam.

To commemorate our milestone year, English Teaching Assistants organized an Inter-Province English Conference at Le Hong Phong Gifted High School in Nam Dinh; then Acting Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton had lunch with alumni in Hanoi; Consul General Tarnowka had a series of discussions with Fulbrighters in Ho Chi Minh City; Vietnamese Fulbright Students led a Career Orientation Workshop just before departing for the U.S. to start their Fulbright Journey; and a series of Fulbrighter Profiles were posted on the U.S. Embassy Facebook; and this newsletter also relaunched.

As the highlight of a year-long anniversary, we celebrated with more than 350 new friends at the Fulbright Workshop and nearly 200 Fulbrighters and Fulbright’s counterparts at the Gala Reception. A great time was had by all.

Thank you for helping and joining us to celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. And thank you for being a part of the history of the Fulbright Program Vietnam. We are looking forward to the next 25 years.

Happy Holidays and wishing you all much success and happiness in 2018.

Warm regards,

Vu Quynh Nga, Fulbright Director





## Here and There: Holidays in the Air



*Van Tran watching American football*



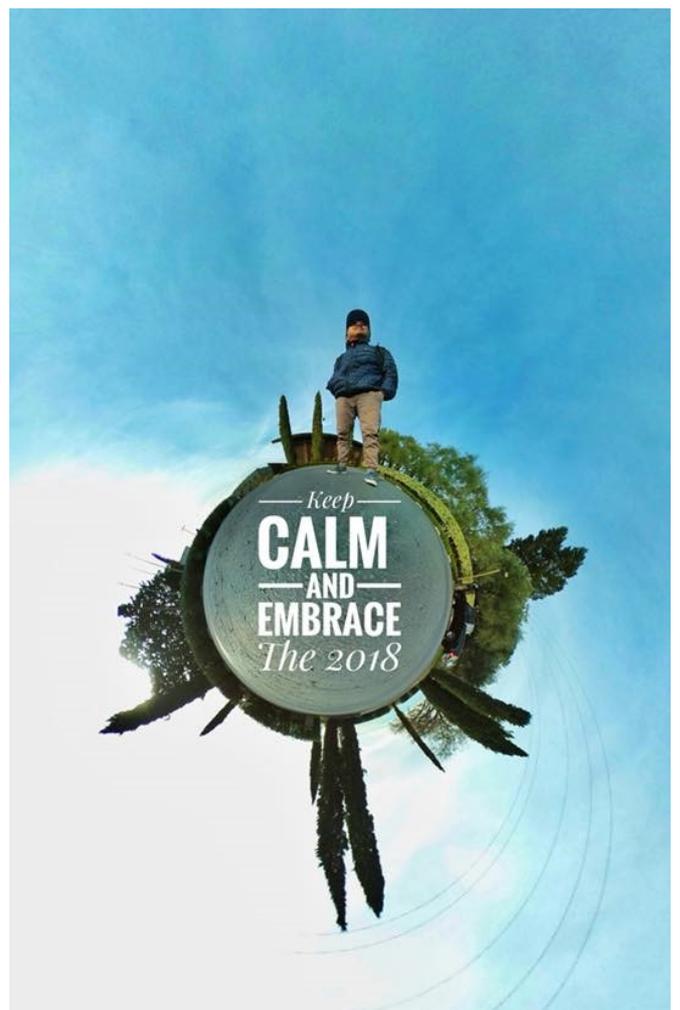
*Reunion of Fulbrighters at Michigan State University*



*Thùy Dung visiting Earnest Hemingway Home*



*My Linh, Hieu Linh and Ha Pham at the Death Valley*



*Thang Le in Napa California*

## Highlights

### Mid-year Enrichment Seminar for Fulbright ETAs

As an indispensable part of the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Program, Fulbright Program organized the Mid-year Enrichment Seminar for seventeen English Teaching Assistants (ETA) on December 14 & 15 in Dalat. The ETAs

shared about their work and life at their host institutions during the first half of their grant. They discussed successes and challenges on

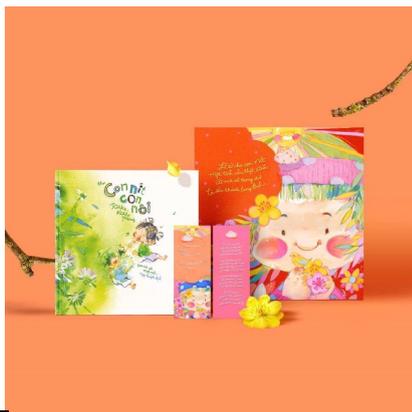


their accommodation, working schedule, classroom management, safety and security, relationship with the host institution, etc. This was also a great chance for ETAs to learn from their fellows and share advices on any problems they have faced so far. Their feedback will also help the Fulbright Program to provide timely support and guidance to the ETAs to make sure that they are all doing well at their host institutions and have a memorable experience.

### Ngoc Huyen's three books released in December

1. The News Literacy Handbook (Độc giả thông minh) by National University Press.
2. A collection of short stories, Vol. 2 (Đồng khuya thương nắng) by General Publishing House, with a special illustration by OU artist Peilian Wu.
3. A collection of children poems (Kiddie Kiddo) by AnBooks.

*Ngoc Huyen is a Fulbright student in 2010. She earned a Master degree in Communications from Ohio University. She's now pursuing her Ph.D. in the U.S.*



### Dr. Tran Duc Anh Son Featured in the New York Times

Check out the work of one of our Vietnamese Fulbright Scholars, featured in this New York Times article. In 2015, Dr. Tran Duc Anh Son spent 10 months at Yale University to conduct archival research on the Paracels and Spratlys. Since 2009, Dr. Son has served as the Deputy Director of the Danang Institute for Socio-Economic Development. His research is featured in numerous papers and publications. We're delighted to see his work recognized by a leading U.S. newspaper!

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/25/world/asia/vietnam-south-china-sea.html>



### Peer Review Panel

Fulbright PRP for the Vietnamese Visiting Scholar Program AY 2018-2019 was held in mid-December 2017. The peer review process ensures that applicants are evaluated on academic, scholarly, and professional criteria. The review members begin their review approximately one month before their committee meets to discuss the applications, where reviewers come to consensus on whether applications are recommended for further consideration.



### Mid-Year Enrichment Seminar for U.S. Scholars and Students

In December 2017, the Fulbright Program organized a Mid-year Enrichment Seminar for all U.S. scholars and students who started the grant in the fall. The purpose of the enrichment seminar aims at providing scholars and students an opportunity to share and discuss their lecturing/research progress. At the seminar, grantees discussed about the challenges of working in Vietnam and the relationship they have developed with their host institutions. Also, grantees shared their different ways of becoming a successful cultural ambassador.

## Greetings from the West Coast

*From Nguyen Duc Chinh, Fulbright Vietnamese Scholar*

I am Nguyen Duc Chinh, a lecturer of language teacher education at the University of Danang, Vietnam. In the academic year 2017-2018, I am proud to be one of six Vietnamese scholars awarded the Fulbright grant. Being a Fulbrighter is a milestone in my life as I am able to conduct my postdoctoral research on teacher education at the University of Washington, a leading institution in educa-



tional research. I am very happy to live in Seattle, a beautiful city on the West coast. In addition to academic engagement, I have a great chance to enrich my intercultural experience by exploring all ‘the corners’ of this amazing city. In spite of being busy with my research project, I will visit as many places in the U.S. as I can. While typing this story, I am preparing for my trip to California tomorrow in order to join the Enrichment Program for international visiting scholars. I am also looking forward to my outreach lecturing trip to North Dakota in March 2018. Through a lecture series on teacher education, I hope to promote academic disciplines and cultural understanding between me as a Fulbright visiting

scholar and host institutions there. My Fulbright scholarship has brought about a



profound transformation in my life and career. I am eager to share more Fulbright stories and my experiences in the U.S. with others.

## Reflection of a current Fulbrighter

*By José David Méndez, U.S. Student Researcher 2017-2018*

Over the course of my life, memorable experiences have profoundly influenced my interests, defined my relationships and community, and changed in significant



This is how I arrived to Fulbright, a program that I believe embodies all of these values. This is how I arrived to Vietnam, a country that is driven by a dynamic demographic, rich history, and fascinating science – and I get to call it home for the next several months. My interest in research of infectious diseases came from the same life-trajectories that have brought me to Fulbright. The complicated epidemiology of prevalent and emerging infectious diseases planted a small seed of curiosity in me that in some way has transformed into an urge to understand them, in an effort to help others that are affected by these diseases. Attempting to understand

What excites me about the Fulbright opportunity is that I get to do the work that I love, while attempting to connect threads in our human relationships and global interactions in compassionate, meaningful, and productive ways. I am motivated for this journey to immerse myself in situations of inter-cultural dialogue, scientific discussion, reflection and Vietnam’s functional chaos and mind-numbing beauty, amidst working in a setting that has intention in the scientific community and a profound respect for effort and hard work. I cannot wait for the ongoing transformation of the people that surround me, and myself, into instructors, educators, mentors, guides, teachers, and friends, that will live to discover the boundless exploration that the multitude of cultures in this planet have to offer.

ways the manner in which I perceive and interact with the world around me. Meaningful cross-cultural engagement has been one of those experiences that has touched and transformed my education. It has made me realize that there is an immense value in traversing cultural boundaries that aid in our understanding of unfamiliar elements, that teach us to be unafraid to err, and to push ourselves out of our physical and mental comfort zone.

how these biological processes function puts into perspective our role and responsibility as engaged human beings in a complex natural planet. In attempting to understand this, we force ourselves to think about a topic from multiple scientific points of view. It is a day to day filled with constant theorizing, experimentation, big questions, failing and spontaneity that inspires me.





Here's another star Vietnamese Fulbrighter getting media attention in the U.S. recently! Check out this San Francisco University article about Huynh Nhu Ai, a Fulbright student at San Francisco University pursuing a master's program in entrepreneurship and small business operation. The article was written by Lonny Wysard, and was featured on the San Francisco University's website at: <https://www.usfca.edu/management/news/improving-public-health-one-sink-time>.

Ai Huynh MBA '19 is the co-founder of HappyTap, a company that makes hand washing devices more accessible to the general public in Vietnam.

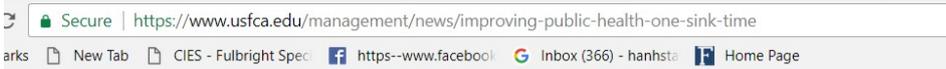
Ai Huynh full-time Master in Business Administration student '19 is the co-founder and former managing director of HappyTap Co. Ltd.--a company that produces portable sinks to promote better hygiene in Vietnam. The product is specifically called "LaBobo" which Huynh explained stems from the French word "lavabo" which means "washing sink."

Poor hygiene is the main influence to public health issues in Vietnam. Lack of handwashing is one of main causes of communicable diseases. In rural settings in Vietnam, it is popular that the water source is located outside of the home; the main constraint is people don't have a convenient handwashing tool in their house.

HappyTap is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), "I notice that such foreign aid, like USAID, is very limited and it is precious for a small enterprise like us to take benefit and speed up to be independent." She explained that she frequently reflects upon her successes and mistakes throughout the development of her business.

Huynh previously held the position of managing director but chose to leave the role to broaden her knowledge in business. In order to do so, she decided to attend USF to pursue her MBA through the Fulbright Foreign Student Program.

While at USF, Huynh took professor Kimberly Connor's Ethical Decision Making course. Huynh said,



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STUDE

## Improving Public Health One Sink at a Time

BY SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT • POSTED MON, 11/13/2017 - 09:24



Thanks to the readings that professor Connor provided, I have a better understanding of ethical assessment in qualitative and quantitative methods.

It also gave her further insight on ethical business in Vietnam: "Multinational corporations tend to have standard professional guidelines to develop an ethical climate for the team, while local small and medium enterprises don't," Huynh explained. "I, like many leaders of small and medium enterprises, used to put things like product development and operation, and financing on the top of the priority list, instead of ethical climate." In Connor's course, she realized the initial asset of small and medium enterprises: "It's not the product, but the people."

Some of the essential things she has learned in class, which are part of her plan to progress her business, are producing an organizational climate survey, "to collect general data about the existing level of satisfaction of employees;" conducting individual interviews that allow employees to speak more in depth with a supervisor about their concerns and ideas that were not addressed in the

survey; creating an ethical guideline for HappyTap based on employee feedback; and finally, communicating the company's ethical practices through the media in order to inspire others.

Huynh said these plans will be put to practice in the fourth quarter of this year, and during her winter break, she will be able to travel to Vietnam and lead significant activities with HappyTap.

"Ethical climate enhances the satisfaction of the internal team so they can be energized to do their best work," she said. "I also personally think a company is more of a second home. In the last few years, I interact with my team more than 9 hours a day.... Therefore, I want it to be a caring environment, so that it can be worth the time and effort people invest into it."

**By Lonny Wysard**

<https://www.usfca.edu/management/news/improving-public-health-one-sink-time>

## 2017 FLTA: Half Year in Review

The Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program (FLTA) is sponsored by the United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). This program is aimed at cultivating Americans' awareness and knowledge of foreign cultures and languages by supporting teaching assistantships in over 30 languages at hundreds of U.S. institutions of higher education. In return, the program offers educators from over 50 countries the opportunity to develop their professional skills and gain first-hand knowledge of the U.S., its culture and its people. This year, 5 Vietnamese educators were granted the scholarship and following are their stories after one semester working and studying at various institutions in the US.



From left to right: Phung Hai Chi – Trinh Thi Diep – Nguyen Thi Thu Thao – Ly Truong Thanh Tam – Dang Thi Cam Tu.

### Phung Hai Chi – FLTA at University of Hawai'i at Manoa



America journey for me is both adventurous and exciting to not only delve into the diverse culture of the country but also to challenge my self-limit and explore the innermost of mine. In fact, Hawaii is not my very first choice. Yet now Hawaii is like my second loving home thanks to the wonderful international friendship, the stunning nature, and the valuable enlightenment that I gained from American studies courses. I've learned shared cultural aspects within Asian countries and between the East and West. I am blessed with love, care, compassion from smart and passionate friends who I just met.

They energized me and motivated me to do what I've never dared to do before with memorable trips to the magnificent places of Hawaii, i.e. hiking, camping near the beach, travelling alone. More than that, I have hands-on experience with a diversity of nature and people in America. While Hawaii is a place half way between Asia and America where the East and the West meet with laid-back people full of Aloha spirit, East coast is more of the old British style with ancient architecture. The Midwest is attractive with the wild nature of Grand Canyon, deserts, vast steppe and cowboy spirit which is warm and casual. America and its people are still mysterious that make me so curious. For me it's not a melting pot but a colorful quilt with so many cultural mosaics in which each community still has their own identity. They are still struggling every day to have a better life and live in

harmony despite hardships they are going through. Believe it or not, in school I'm not taught to worship America or to give it fancy names like rich or liberal but to think critically and criticize contemporary problems of America in a straightforward way. We learn about politics, racism, feminism, inequality, wars in America. I feel I love Vietnam more and appreciate what I have in our home country. The very first semester is truly rewarding since I have become more patient, more independent, more compassionate and surely knowledgeable.

### Trinh Thi Diep – FLTA at Michigan State University

To be honest, I have never thought that I would feel this extremely happy to be here in Michigan. It's because Michigan State University (MSU) is not just a host institution where I do my teaching; it is a home where I could feel the love of people for me and for each other. I don't think I'm a guest. Instead, I am a member of MSU family.



Although Michigan is super cold in this winter, I don't feel cold at all because of the way people here treat me. Secondly, my Vietnamese course in MSU will be the online course for the whole of the US. I am happy to contribute to keeping Vietnamese alive in the US, which makes America a land of diversity with a variety of cultures and languages. Even though I have faced some challenges in my teaching especially tensions



among Vietnamese community, I finally overcame all of them. It is said that most Vietnamese people living in the US are refugees from the South Vietnam who don't like Northern teachers with Northern accent, which made me really worried at first. However, I then realized that true love could eliminate all the tensions. If you treat them well with a warm heart, they will treat you well. Finally, by taking two courses about America women and special education, I hope to help promote gender equality and support students with special needs when coming back to Vietnam.

**Ly Truong Thanh Tam – FLTA at University of Michigan**

Passionate about teaching and working with people, I find my host institution a welcoming and vibrant environment which fosters



one's professional growth and exploration. Ms. Thuy Anh Nguyen, my supervisor at UMICH, is more than a friend – she is the elder sister that I just found here. With ten-year experience in teaching Vietnamese and promoting Vietnamese culture in the US, she makes highly constructive feedback to my lesson plans and together, we organize a number of meaningful exchange activities which engage the students academically and culturally. She was also the one who introduced me to the elegance of my college town – Ann Arbor, which has so much to offer as a historic town. We had a whale of time partaking in volunteering activities, exploring bookstores, museums and theaters or simply wandering around tree-lined and snow-covered streets. From my supervisor and the courses that I attend which portray Asian Americans' lives in the US, I also formed connections with professionals in

my department and others as well. What I find interesting from all those activities and courses is the way Vietnam with its people, history and culture is viewed from the American perspective. That gave rise to my decision to host a series of cultural meetings to share stories about Vietnam's history. I also cherish what I believe will become my lifelong friendship here. I befriended four FLTAs from other language programs and those memories from working together or sharing our life stories and goals to even orchestrating some “plandid” photos will definitely be held dear in my heart. The FLTA scholarship is obviously a gratifying experience, which enriches my life culturally, professionally and personally.

**Nguyen Thi Thu Thao – FLTA at University of Notre Dame**

I'm proud to be one of the five Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTA) of the year 2017-2018 teaching Vietnamese at Notre Dame – the biggest Catholic university in the east coast of the US. It's an amazing experience being a teacher of Vietnamese in the US, as well as taking role



as a cultural ambassador to promote my unique culture among my international friends and bridge the relation between Vietnam and America. I feel blessed since Notre Dame is one of the greenest and most beautiful campuses with great facilities for learning, researching and extra-curricular activities. Having a chance to work in Center for Studies of Languages and Cultures (CSLC), I have met and worked with great scholars, colleagues and active students from all over the world, who have supported me effectively to adapt in my moving in and complete my teaching and studying. Taking the role of the only primary instructor for Vietnamese courses means I have

to take charge for syllabi, material, course design, weekly language tables; however, I have successfully overcome the biggest challenge and well completed the Fall semester. In terms of community service contribution and cultural emersion, I also have a chance to collaborate with Perley Fine Arts Academy - a local community school in order to share about Vietnam traditions, celebrations and language with the fourth graders. Thanks to Fulbright FLTA program, I have transformed both in terms of personal development and perspective about the world.

**Dang Thi Cam Tu – FLTA at University of Wisconsin-Madison**

During the FLTA program, I have been deeply involved in Vietnamese classes at UW, introducing the Vietnamese culture to students in Madison and pursuing academic studies in language teaching and teacher professional development.



The FLTA program is a great opportunity for me to experience the American culture and challenge myself in new roles as a cultural ambassador and a teaching assistant at a US university. Yet, what I can learn from the program is much more than the experience. The greater benefits I have reaped are the professional networks for future collaboration, and the chance to self-train my working etiquette. As I believe that “a great building will never stand strong if you neglect the small bricks”, I always feel aware of the need to build up strong small bricks—one by one—for myself. And the FLTA year proves to be a great milestone which helps hone my skills, both socially and professionally, and prepare academically for my further strides in the future career pathway.



*Performing “Trống cơm” at FLTA cultural fair*



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