



## **Paediatric Speech Therapy Students complete 3rd Term**

The 33 students enrolled in the 10 month paediatric speech therapy training program at the University of Medicine Pham Ngoc Thach (UPNT), Ho Chi Minh City have almost finished their 3<sup>rd</sup> Term. At the start of Term 3, students were fortunate to have had Speech Sound Disorders taught by Ms Phạm Thị Bền from Hanoi, who is undertaking a PhD in assessment of speech sound disorders in the Vietnamese language with Prof Sharynne McLeod at Charles Sturt University in Australia. Ms Ben was assisted by Vietnamese speech therapist Mrs Lê Thị Thanh Xuân who is a graduate of the first two

year program at UPNT and is also involved in research into speech sounds in Vietnamese.

Other subjects in this term have been taught by a mix of Australian volunteer lecturers and Vietnamese speech therapists who are graduates of the 2 year programs; as follows:

- Language Disorders – Associate Professor Diane Jacobs from Australian Catholic University in Melbourne and Ms Đỗ Thị Bích Thuận from Children’s Hospital No 3 HCMC.
- Analysis of Language Samples - Dr Lê Thị Thanh (who is now retired)
- Alternative and Augmentive Communication - Ms Libby Brownlie, a former long term AVI volunteer and program coordinator at UPNT and Mr Hoàng Văn Quyên from Children’s Hospital No 1 in HCMC.
- Autism Spectrum Disorders - Ms Judy Griffiths from Canberra and Mr Hoàng Văn Quyên from Children’s Hospital No 1 in HCMC.
- Paediatric feeding - Mr Damien Roberts from The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne and Ms Đỗ Thị Bích Thuận from Children’s Hospital No 3 HCMC.
- Cleft Lip and Palate - Ms Janella Christie, a former long term AVI volunteer and clinical coordinator at UPNT and Ms Đỗ Thị Bích Thuận from Children’s Hospital No 3 HCMC and Dr Nguyễn Hoàng Oanh from National Hospital of Odonto-Stomatology Hanoi.

The students very much enjoyed learning from the Vietnamese and Australian speech therapists working together. They loved the practical activities built into each subject.



*Top photo: students with Pham Thi Ben and Le Thi Thanh Xuan*

*Above: Students displaying AAC resources, with Damien Roberts, with Diane Jacobs  
and practicing Key Word Signing*

## **Spotlight on Scholarship Student Ms Hà Thị Thanh Nhi**



I work at a Special School for Children with Disabilities in Long An Province. The school has Special Classes and Early Intervention program, for children including those with Hearing loss, children with Delayed Development, children with Language Disorders, children with Speech Sound Disorders and children with Autism.

I am currently attending the Paediatric Speech Therapy Training Program so I can assist these children. I will apply the things I have learnt: about the importance of positive interactions between parents and children; the importance of play to learn, develop and achieve objectives and the strategies of waiting, modelling, repeating and expanding.

I am looking forward to applying Augmentative and Alternate Communication models to assist children with delayed development, delayed language development and autism as well as applying my new knowledge to assist children with Speech Sound Disorders.

I want to share my learning with other teachers at the school and use my classmates, graduates and lecturers to assist me in the future to gain more skills and I hope to run parent training groups.

My big dream is one day to establish a special centre with a multidisciplinary team including a speech therapist, paediatric psychiatrist, physiotherapist and, psychologist to assist children with special needs particularly those with communication difficulties.

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## Grant Reaps Rewards

In July 2016, Dr Oanh and her colleagues from Hanoi were successful in obtaining a Trinh Foundation Australia Service Development Grant to support the establishment of a "Playing Club". This project aims to develop a small toy library, where parents can borrow and exchange toys. Dr Oanh had noted that many families did not have the resources to buy toys for children, or they were unsure what toys were appropriate. Alongside the toy library, parent coaching sessions are being developed. These sessions will be shared online. The goals of the sessions will cover topics including how to

set targets for children, how to choose suitable toys, how to play with children. The online resources demonstrating play activities and language stimulation skills will mean that families who are unable to attend the direct face to face sessions can still benefit from the playing club.



Dr Oanh has been very pleased with the project's progress to date. In addition to weekly hands-on coaching for three families, several workshops for parents and teachers of children with special needs have been completed in Hanoi, Vinh City and Vinh Phuc City. In each workshop between 30-70 participants attended and positive feedback has been received. The project's Facebook page has over 500 likes, indicating the details of the project are being shared far and wide. We look forward to the next update from Dr Oanh, including recommendations of how the project could be replicated in other areas of Vietnam.

## Benefits of Long Term Volunteering



*This is an extract from a report Rose Beeching wrote after volunteering for approximately 3 ½ months in Vietnam.*

I am a Speech Therapist from the UK with a background in working with adults with neurological conditions. I embarked on my trip to Vietnam on 5 September 2016 and found myself still there, as the Lunar New Year celebrations or 'Tet' festival approached at the end of January 2017. I started my volunteering with 3 weeks in Lam Dong Hospital in Bao Loc City, located two hours from Ho Chi Minh. I was then based in Hanoi volunteering at Hanoi Rehabilitation Hospital and The National Geriatric Hospital.

A large proportion of time was spent providing clinical supervision, supporting professional development and increasing knowledge relating to assessment and management of acquired communication and swallowing disorders. I think the most daunting challenge for me was delivering a weeklong dysphagia-training course in my first week volunteering in Hanoi. I had not realized that people would be attending from hospitals as far away as Ho Chi Minh!

The rewards have been huge, both in a professional and personal sense. Professionally I have gained experience in clinical mentoring and teaching within a cross-cultural setting. It has been a pleasure to work with the patients and their families who have been equally welcoming and grateful for any support that we have been able to offer. I have also had the chance to live and work in an amazing country, learn about Vietnamese culture and attempt to learn the language!

I left with wonderful memories from my time in Vietnam and will always remember it as a very enriching and exciting experience. I would highly recommend volunteering with Trinh Foundation to anyone thinking about doing voluntary work, it will be an unforgettable experience!

*To see Rose's full report, see our webpage. We are extremely grateful to Rose for the knowledge and dedication she has provided during her time in Vietnam.*

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## **A Lifelong Dream being Achieved**

Achieving a scholarship has always been my strong lifelong dream so I am greatly honoured to receive a scholarship at the University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia. This dream would not have been achieved without the support from my family, directors and colleagues at An Binh Hospital, the Speech Therapy Club and the Vietnamese government. This enabled me to commence a new life as a student in Australia but leaving my family in Viet Nam has not been easy. During the first 6 weeks in Newcastle, one of the biggest challenges for me was missing my family, especially during the Lunar New Year. I have therefore frequently called and talked with my mother, wife, two children, and elder brother.



Furthermore, another factor which helps me balance my mind is my lifelong commitment developing speech therapy and rehabilitation in Viet Nam. It is not just a responsibility but a duty as a one of the pioneer speech therapists in Viet Nam. I deeply appreciate the invaluable scholarship to undertake a Research Masters Degree from the University of Newcastle and Trinh Foundation Australia (assisted by a generous Australian Sponsor). I am grateful for my supervisors – Dr Sally Hewat and Dr Nicole Byrne, Mrs Christine Sheard and other Australian experts.

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## **Fundraising Initiatives to be Launched**

**TFA will be launch its two major fundraising initiatives for 2017 at the Speech Pathology Australia Conference in Sydney. The initiatives are:**



1. **Sponsor a Student** - where donors have the opportunity to make a regular donation to support the ongoing education and training of a graduate student
2. **Build a clinic** - where donors have the opportunity to buy a piece of furniture, equipment or a brick to support the construction and establishment of a speech therapy clinic in HCMC



We will be hosting a stall each day of the SPA conference to share information about our work in Vietnam. There will be puppets, cookbooks and scarves available for sale at the stall.

We will also be hosting a restaurant night at a local Sydney venue to raise awareness and funds for the foundation.

Please stay tuned to our social media outlets for more information on these initiatives leading up to the event.

Hope to see you there!

## Welcome Diane Jacobs to the Board



Diane Jacobs with Ms Quyen, Ms Duyen and Ms Ashley

Associate Professor Diane Jacobs has been invited to join the Trinh Foundation Australia (TFA) Board for a 12 month period from March 2017, to provide academic input and advice to the Board regarding the development of speech therapy resources for Vietnam and future speech therapy training programs in Vietnam with TFA partners. Di has been a dedicated volunteer lecturer for language disorders, assessment and intervention in each of the 3 programs run at UPNT to date. She is Course Coordinator for the Speech Pathology Course at Australian Catholic University, Melbourne.

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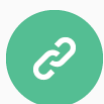
## New Scope Global Volunteer



Welcome also to Ms Sarah Day, who commenced as the new Scope Global long term volunteer at UPNT in mid-March this year oversaw preparation of the students for their final clinical placements in term 4.

The clinical placements in term 4 will be supervised by 3 local Vietnamese speech therapists and 13 Australian volunteer speech therapists supported by Trinh Foundation Australia.

We hope Sarah and her family have a successful, fulfilling and enjoyable 12 months in Vietnam.



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Our mailing address is:

Trinh Foundation  
5 / 210 Wattle Tree Road  
Holgate, NSW 2250  
Australia

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