



From the Director

CHIA continues to be a very dynamic environment. We were very spoilt last year, to have benefited from the presence of three highly skilled long-term professional volunteers through Australian Volunteers International (AVI), and a long-term self-funded Occupational Therapist volunteer. AVI recently notified us that they cannot provide the volunteers we need until August/September 2010 at the earliest. This may be partly as a result of the world economic crisis, but it seems that AVI have also changed the focus of their support away from Health and Education. We are now reviewing the way we utilise and resource volunteers, but it is already obvious that we need new strategies for attracting key long-term volunteers to continue our commitment to capacity-building our organisation.

We have been aided in this reassessment process, by the presence of Mr. Yves, who came to us in February as a self-funded highly experienced HR Manager from the medical sector in Canada. Mr. Yves hoped to volunteer at CHIA long-term, but since learned that in order to retain his social security entitlements, he must spend at least 6 months of each year in Canada.

I did not foresee these challenges arising this year, so this is significantly changing our current development. Thankfully, we are blessed with a young, vibrant team, who each give their best to their work.

We are also even more grateful than usual, for the volunteers who continue to help us despite the current economic climate. Pat Rainnie, a Physiotherapist with 35 years of experience with children with cerebral palsy, volunteered with us from March until May, quickly followed by Donna Hipgrave, a Physiotherapist with 18 years of experience with children with cerebral palsy. Gabi Neave, a highly qualified nurse has been mentoring our medical team from May to July, and her husband Roger has been providing daily English language training to CHIA's staff, as well as helping with a myriad of other communications functions. Volunteers with the right mix of experience and adaptability, bring a welcome injection of vitality and skill into CHIA, for which we are hugely grateful.

We have received three new staff members this year. Mr. Vuong joined us in February as the Interpreter/Translator for the Physio Team. Ms. Chau joined us in March as CHIA's Accountant. Mr. Hai joined us in June as an Assistant to the Medical Team, whose primary tasks will be interpreting, translating and administration.

Each and every CHIA staff member inspires me to have the greatest of confidence in future of CHIA.

Robyn Morley
Founding Director

Introducing CHIA's newest staff



Mr Vuong

I worked in tourism but recognized that this job is not suitable for me. In March, 2009, I began working at CHIA. From then to now, I mainly worked with the Physio team which helps children who have a disability. I found it is my pleasure and I am very happy to get this job at CHIA, a job in which I can contribute to help children who have difficult conditions. Through out my time of working here, I can understand that children who came to CHIA, all of them have unlucky lives, but CHIA is bringing them a better life in helping them to join communities easier and more self-confident and restoring their hope for a bright future.



Ms Chau

The first day, I started work I was like a fish out of water and worried because this was a new working environment for me. A week later, I felt more confident because everyone is very helpful. Being an accountant at a charitable organization is different to a profit business. My main task here is to manage finances, however like everyone else at CHIA, I am a social worker if required. During my time working at CHIA, more than a normal job I looked forward to the work I am doing. For me, is very meaningful and I have the chance to be together with my friends at CHIA in the effort of bringing a better life to disadvantaged children.



Mr Hai

During university, I took part in many social activities and learnt many things about life and I met people who had unhappy lives, especially children living with disabilities. After university I have the chance to continue my favorite job, when I joined CHIA. With friendly, enthusiastic, and deeply sympathetic staff, CHIA gives new hope and a brighter future for children. After 1 month working at CHIA, I have learned many important things, especially about sharing and empathy. I try to understand some of the difficulties the children encounter. I will aim to contribute my abilities to CHIA and lighting hope for the children.



Celebrating children

In Vietnam, "International" Children's Day is celebrated annually on 1st June. This year our staff and families joined together for some hours of fun which included a performance by the children of CHIA's Special Education class, activities for all of the children attending, some light refreshments and karaoke. Even several hours after the last of the children had left, the staff continued with karaoke, so I'm not sure whether the karaoke was primarily for the benefit of the children or the staff. Great fun was certainly had by all. For CHIA's children, celebration days such as this, are a rare opportunity to socialize with their peers, and for their parents to realize that they are not alone.

Without your support, such rare and important celebrations would be denied these children.

Sincerely yours,
Robyn Morley
Founding Director



Children's Day 1st June

Children's day was a very wonderful afternoon at CHIA. 'It is a great time for my son Nhan and I today. It is a rare opportunity to socialize and have fun with other children with disabilities. And for me to meet and share my feelings and exchange experiences in looking after our children with other parents, said Nhan's mother.

Children at schools or kindergartens consider this day as a special day in which they are acknowledged and praised by the adults for their performance during the past school year. Each year's children's day reserved a meaningful and positive memory in every child's childhood.

It's our aim to create something special on children's day for our children who suffer from a range of physical and intellectual disabilities. Most of the children do not attend mainstream education since schools here in Vietnam just don't widely accept children with Cerebral Palsy (CP), Hydrocephalus and other severe disabilities. These children, therefore, haven't really experienced the joy of children's days in their lives.

The CHIA staff worked as an amazing team and created a celebration of entertainment, games, a feast of food and drinks. No party in Vietnam is complete with out karaoke which was enjoyed by all. The effort made by staff was worth every minute. " She hasn't been happy like she is today for quite a long time and I am happy to see my daughter enjoying her time here with other children. Thank you to CHIA and staff," Duyen's mother commented.

The party room (our converted physio room) was fully occupied with smiling faces, laughter and happy voices. Children played and chatted with others while cake and drinks were served. Parents benefited by talking with each other. All of this gave us encouragement for the work we are doing with our kids.

The children's Day happily ended up with a rewarding ceremony. Children were excited receiving their awards and parents were proud of their child's progress. We are all at CHIA very happy that we are at least giving them another opportunity to improve their own life. CHEERS! **Mr Binh**, Operations Manager



How to make a donation

No matter where in the world you live, you can help CHIA by making a donation by one of the following methods:

From Australia

(tax-deductible receipts available to Australian donors for donations of \$2 and over)

Deposit into CHIA's bank account:

Bank: Bendigo Bank
Branch: Corrimal, NSW, Australia
Account name: Children's Hope in Action
BSB: 633 000
Account number: 1275 43924
BPay biller code: 342 949
Swift/IBAN code: BENDAU3B

Post a cheque / money order to:

Children's Hope in Action
PO Box 7360
East Brisbane, QLD 4169
Australia

From the USA

In order for donations from US citizens to be tax-deductible we have partnered with Global Development Group USA.

Please stipulate that your donation is to go to "Project J156 - CHIA's Quang Nam Project Vietnam".

Donate online:

www.globaldevelopmentusa.org

Post a cheque to:

Global Development Group USA
1314 Longwood Oaks Boulevard
Lakeland, Florida 33811
United States of America

From anywhere in the World

You can donate to CHIA from anywhere in the World using details provided in the 'From Australia' section. While we will provide you with an official record of your donation, at this time we are unable to offer tax-deductible receipts outside of Australia and the USA. Alternatively you can donate through PayPal.

Donate through PayPal:

www.paypal.com

Volunteer corner

Newly retired from work and wanting to volunteer, Children's Hope In Action is the One "charity" that gave me the opportunity to realise that dream. It came to me as a "gift" while I was back home for the Christmas period last December. A friend had previously given me the information that CHIA might be searching for a HR manager as another volunteer was leaving. I sent an email and CHIA replied to me and from then it was the start of a great "adventure"!

This pleasant adventure was from the end of February until the end of June. Developing policies and procedures, supporting CHIA's young staff members and mentoring them while doing their work as young managers or members of an important charity organisation in Hoi An. The staff at CHIA's are dispensing important support and services to young children and their families, who, in many cases, wouldn't be able to have access to these services being financially not able to afford these or, in many cases, simply because they do not know how to gain access to similar services.

Seeing how dedicated CHIA's young professionals are to the children they are helping just adds to the impression of the necessity to support CHIA in any way possible. CHIA's team is young but has already a "lot" of experience with children presenting health problems, living with disabilities or needing educational support. CHIA's team is not big but is doing a lot for the children they are looking after. With no doubt, they are "changing and broadening" the future of many young Vietnamese.

For a moment, being part of the CHIA team makes you forget your "volunteer role" and realize you are indeed a privileged person to have had the chance to work alongside these incredible people. Volunteering for CHIA has been a great experience for me. I still feel that I don't have "merit" as everyone at CHIA has made it so easy for me. To the team at CHIA you will understand that "I can't help remembering you.!"

I wish to extend personal and warm thanks to everyone at CHIA. **Mr Yves, Human Resources Volunteer**



Health benefits of volunteering According to Make A Difference Day Survey, ICM Research 2004:

- nearly half of all volunteers (47%) say volunteering has improved their physical health and fitness; · 25% of people who volunteer more than five times a year say volunteering has helped them lose weight (20% overall); · half of people (48%) who have volunteered for more than two years say volunteering makes them less depressed. 71% of volunteers who offer their professional skills and experience say volunteering helps combat depression; · 63% of 25 to 34-year-olds say volunteering helps them feel less stressed. 62% of over 65's say volunteering reduces stress; · almost 1 in 3 (31%) 18 - 24 year olds say they have taken less time off work since volunteering.



News from the therapy team



During the past 3 months The Therapy team has extended our services to Duy Xuyen, a neighboring district of Hoi An. We visited 14 countryside communes to assess all the children who have disabilities.

We plan to support them with different types of equipment which may help them with exercising and having a better life. We continue to provide physiotherapy to children in Hoi An who need physiotherapy to improve their body as well as their activities.

In addition, we continue home visits to our children who are unable to come to CHIA for physiotherapy together with checking and repairing their equipment.

We are planning to develop the Special Education program and include Conductive Education. We have carried out assessment for some children who have Cerebral Palsy to see whether or not they are suitable for the special class in the near future.

In May, we took 8 children to Da Nang Orthopedic and Rehabilitation Center to see the doctor there.

As a team we continue to provide love and care to the children of CHIA

Mr Vuong, Ms Phuong, Ms Van
Therapy Team

Have wheels, will travel

Nhan is a bright boy who has Cerebral Palsy. He is 12 years old and he has one younger brother. His family's economy condition is quite poor, his father has to stay at home to care for him. The family lives on the mother's income from selling soya bean milk in the early morning.



Before coming to CHIA, Nhan could not stand or walk. After a long time of exercising combined with well care of his parents as well as the hard work of the physiotherapists at CHIA, he can stand and can take a few steps. Though Nhan can only walk for a short way, he is sociable and he wants to meet other children outside his house, so we have supplied him with a tricycle.

The tricycle helps him to join in community activities. On the tricycle, he can go with his mother to the park and the market for shopping. He likes it so much and considers it as his friend. Nhan participates in our special education class, he hopes to study his best to become a useful person for society in general and for his family in particular.

A new beginning

Born in 2006, Na is the smallest girl of three children in an extremely poor family. Na has congenital Cerebral Palsy. Because she finds it difficult to move, she usually cries a lot. Just three years old, she has to bear a lot of pain.

Her mother always stays beside her to look after her. Because of her discomfort, she can not sleep well at night; her parents must carry her in shifts. Hearing about CHIA, Na's mother came to ask for help. The Physiotherapist team decided to give her treatment at home because her parents are unable to bring her to CHIA.

In addition to that, we also supplied a *kidsfirst* wheelchair and some other equipment which are necessary to prevent complications which can be caused by Cerebral Palsy. CHIA also supported Na's sister to attend school. Also, to help the family, CHIA employs Na's mother as a cleaner. Her family feels very happy to receive help from CHIA.





Study (and travel :-) tour

A study and travel tour (Hanoi, the study part and Sapa the travel part) was recently arranged for all the CHIA staff. It took us some time to organize the tour as we worry about being away while knowing that the CHIA children and their families still need our help. Everyone was filled with different emotions about the trip. Some just could not wait for the departure. Others were anxious about not having enough energy for the long journey. But all were looking forward to this study tour since this was the great opportunity for all of us to experience things and learn from other organizations. This was also the first time for many of the staff to travel out of Hoi An and to visit Hanoi and Sa Pa.

All with heavy backpacks we stepped on the bus in a very good mood. It was a long and tiring journey from Hoi An to Ha Noi but we were all making efforts and very well looking after each other on the way. Despite tiredness and hunger when arriving in Hanoi early in the morning, everyone just wanted to discover Hanoi immediately.

Blue Dragon Hanoi has been operating longer than CHIA, and we were able to visit them to learn from their experience. Each staff was able to talk directly with Blue Dragon staff working in the same field. This arrangement enabled us to even better exchange our specific skills and knowledge. There are some differences in CHIA and Blue Dragon programs. Blue Dragon works with a smaller number of disabled children and works mostly with street children. This is important part of Blue Dragon's program, they help integrate these children back to community and become good citizens by providing assistance with education and vocational training. As for my own experience, I got the chance to talk with the accountant and learn a lot from her.

We also visited Vietnam Friendship Village, which is a centre for children and war veterans affected by agent orange located 20 km from old town of Hanoi. It is very well equipped centre which includes not just a good clinic for health care but also sufficient facilities for academic education and vocational training. Some children from the Village have been doing well at school and university and this is a good thing for society in general and for the Village in particular. Being there at the Village, I can't hold myself from getting so emotional when knowing there are some women who spend most of their time volunteering at the centre caring for disadvantaged children.

Since working at CHIA and getting to know other charities, I realized that humanity is so kind-hearted. There are people quietly helping others with unfortunate and miserable lives. I even more admire friends from other country coming to Vietnam doing charity work with all of their heart.

Thank you Blue Dragon (www.streetkidsinvietnam.com) and Vietnam Friendship Village for opening your hearts to us.

Ms Chau, Accountant



Exploring Blue Dragon Children's Foundation drop-in-centre



Vocational training at Vietnam Friendship Village

On the left Our glamorous crew on location in Sa Pa



News from the health team

The medical program has made full use of visiting doctors from the Hoi An Foundation to run clinics at CHIA. 44 children were able to be seen and as a result, 29 children were sent to Pacific hospital, Da Nang General Hospital and Hue Hospital for further testing including Echo, blood tests and CT scans. We have sent 6 children to Da Nang General Hospital for Catheter intervention and open heart surgeries. Children have also been to Da Nang Orthopedic Rehabilitation Hospital for leg surgery and to Da Nang hospital for eye surgery.

Miracles do happen!

The world works in miraculous ways and our medical team have experienced the joys of 3 miracles during the past few months. Three, yes 3 children with ventricular septum defect (hole in the heart) have all been taken off the surgery list due to the fact that their holes are spontaneously closing. The news is incredible for everyone at CHIA and especially for the children who no longer need to undergo grueling surgery and recovery.



Miracle 1, Quan



Miracle 2, Thien



Miracle 3, Dai

Quan (far left), was born with a hole of 5mm in his heart. Quan often feels tired and finds it hard to breath, his parents tried to get him to many hospitals for treatment. In Hue hospital, he was asked to be re-assessed every 3 months but Quan was only able get there twice because it costs time and money for the family with their limited income.

To close the hole it would cost approximate 27million VND (approximately \$2,000 AUD). Quan's parents could not afford to cover this cost. Therefore Quan was living with his illness for a long time till the mother heard about CHIA. We took Quan to Da Nang hospital for surgery right after he was assessed by our visiting doctor. Quan spent 10 days waiting for surgery in hospital, however was then informed that he was not to have surgery anymore because the hole in his heart was closing spontaneously.



Duy, 4 years old has a hydrocephalus disease. When Duy's mother was pregnant, the doctor discovered that her child's development seemed unusual, and advised her that she should not keep this child. With all mother's love for her child, however, she could not do this.

It made life more difficult when Duy was born. He does not have a father; Duy's mother has to take on everything in family. Duy lives together with his 76 year old grandparents. Duy's mother works in a noodle stall and the monthly income is very low, so she has never dreamt about medical treatment for her child. Although he is 4 years old, Duy is not responsive to his environment, is unable to walk, can not speaking and is unable to reposition himself.

CHIA met Duy by accident when doing home visits in Duy Xuyen. Duy was taken to Hue Hospital by CHIA's staff for a health check in the hope that surgery was possible, however, his health is too weak. CHIA's staff is caring and supporting milk for Duy to improve his health situation.

Facts from the heart



- In one day, the heart pumps nearly 2,000 gallons of blood. In a 70-year lifetime, it pumps about 51 million gallons.
- In the average lifetime, the heart beats 2.5 billion times.
- The human heart is fully developed about eight weeks after conception, when the embryo is only about one inch long.
- In ancient times, the heart was given special importance. The Chinese considered that happiness originated in the heart, and the Egyptians considered the heart to be the source of intelligence and emotion.



News from our education program

The 2008/2009 school year ends and children are getting ready to start a new year in September with many wishes and hopes. During the last school year, CHIA was only able to help over 20 children, however thanks to the support of generous donors we have increased our support to helping 60 children in the coming school year.

June is a busy time, as we do a home visit to every student and collect the school report. Receiving the support and encouragement from CHIA, most of the children continue attending school and have shown better results, according to the school card report.

The summer holiday is here and it is a great time for the children to relax after a hard year studying. However, the children don't have a true "holiday" as they still attend summer lessons. In Viet Nam, due to the education structure, children must attend extra class during school year and summer vacation. These classes are "optional" but for the majority of cases this is the only way they will learn all the information required to pass the exam. This again put the children from poorer families at a disadvantage and increases financial pressure on the family.

Thanks to the generous donation from all donors! With your support the children's education program can meet the needs of the children. Also, you giving them a chance to rise out of the poverty cycle and have a brighter future.

Ms Anh, Education Program Coordinator



Thuy is so happy to receive a school reward

Meet To

Every one will be moved to tears if they had the chance to meet To's family. The family has 5 people, but 3 of them are disabled, and they have to rely on a little pension from the government. To's father is blind and has only one arm left. The mother has one eye left, and the eldest sister has cerebral palsy and spends her lifetime sitting in the wheelchair, needing constant care. They are all affected by the agent orange during the war. Luckily, To and his older brother have normal health and learn very well at school.

Because of the disability, To's parents are not able to have normal jobs, no one wants to hire them to do anything. To and the older brother miss out on a lot because the family wants to focus on the nutrition and care for the CP sister. Without assistance, the family's circumstances will continue to decline. A good education for To and the brother is the best chance for this family to rise out of poverty.

To is a cute and shy boy, who is studying in grade 3 and had a good studying result in the last school year. He is also an active boy, who is excited to participate in activities and contributes ideas during class time.

Thanks to the kind donation from Ms.Lavinia Basen. You continue to ensure To's education needs are met and we collectively provide him with the best chance of a brighter future.



To and his family

Help us help more kids like To and Thuy

USD140 pays for a child's school education needs including school fees, extra tuition, text books, uniforms and stationery for one year. Education is crucial in breaking the poverty cycle.

Contact us at

education@ChildrensHopeInAction.org