



CET Vietnam Agency Placements

Union Suite 2416 • CB#5210 • (919) 962-0902 • fax (919) 843-9685 • www.unc.edu/apples

US Consulate – Public Affairs Section: Institute of International Education

Your main responsibilities would be advising Vietnamese high-school and college students about the college application process in the US, and assisting them as they navigate that process. In addition, you would also have opportunities to participate in or pilot projects related to IIE's long-term educational goals, such as: developing presentations and discussions related to the US education system or topics about US culture, society, and history; compiling lists of educational and financial aid resources for Vietnamese students; or working on the format and content of educational brochures and other handouts. Not only would you have the chance to positively impact Vietnamese students' lives and educational careers, but you'll also have opportunities to talk to these students about their own dreams, goals, hopes, and the Vietnamese educational system. It will be both a learning experience, and a chance to mentor local students. Your supervisor will be American; co-workers will be Vietnamese who speak English well.

Peace Village at Tu Du Hospital

This is a center for children with Agent Orange related afflictions. Volunteers at this location will most likely work together as a group together with Vietnamese volunteers organizing games, art activities, and possibly group outings for the children and teenagers living at the center. Opportunities would also be available to mentor kids one on one over the course of the term (think Big Brothers Big Sisters...). This site is great for students who like working with kids, enjoys working with the differently-abled, and have lots of creative ideas for activities. Your project supervisor would be American, while all other staff at the hospital are Vietnamese, with little or no English.

From the site supervisor: "The group of teenagers is about 11 or 12 to 15 years-old. There are only 3 girls and the rest are boys. This is a difficult age as they are approaching puberty and are encountering identity and self-esteem issues. The boys especially are becoming more curious about their bodies and their female friends' bodies. It is especially hard because now they are aware of their disabilities, when they are in school with non-disabled children, or when they are out in public. They know that they are markedly different and there have been times when we have gone out, only to be bombarded with stares. These children need to be taught basic sex education and gender issues and need to understand acceptable and appropriate behaviors and social interactions."

ENDA

ENDA stands for "Environment and Development in Action." This organization is an internationally-based but locally-run NGO concerned with integrated community development and environmental projects. ENDA works in mostly small communities in the central highlands, coastal central Vietnam, and several poor urban districts in HCMC. This placement would be suitable for a student who has some background in environmental initiatives, poverty-reduction or micro-credit programs, and community-based development projects. Also ideal for anyone considering a career in international NGO/development work.



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This placement may tend towards office work more than hands-on work in the community, due to the permissions required for foreign volunteers/staff to work on location; however, there will still be opportunities for you to “observe” in the field. Examples of possible project assignments include: revise and edit reports, update the website, revise and/or write newsletter articles, reorganize the resources library, organize and facilitate a discussion group for local youth about environmental issues... in short, what you will be allowed to take on at this site is only limited by your time, interest level, and ability! This site will require a high level of initiative and the ability to work independently with periodic “check-ins.” Your supervisor will be the NGO director, a local Vietnamese fluent in English; co-workers are all Vietnamese with varying amounts of English proficiency.

Triangle Center

The Triangle Center is a French-based NGO linked with the local Vietnamese Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs. The Center works with disadvantaged youth (many former street kids from local shelters,) teaching them waiting, restaurant management, and cooking/baking skills. There is an on-site restaurant where the students practice their newly learned skills. The Center is interested in hosting volunteers willing to teach contextual English and customer service skills. Opportunities would also be available for the volunteer to develop group-based activities and discussion groups, or even do some PR for the organization. Your supervisor would be Vietnamese, while co-workers are a mix of French and Vietnamese.

Sao Mai and Thien Am Schools for the blind

There are two teaching English possibilities that I think would be extremely rewarding. One is with the Sao Mai Computer School for the Blind, and it would be teaching conversational English to blind teenagers and adults. This computer school is a drop-in center for blind persons, where they can come learn IT and use IT facilities that are designed for their use. The second school is in the same vein, the Thien Am shelter for Blind Students, which is the permanent home for a group of blind teenagers from the north of Vietnam. They would also really love a volunteer to come and teach conversational English and English songs. The project coordinator for both of these schools said the students were really wonderful, very enthusiastic about new learning opportunities, and that she thought the experience would have a lot of positive impact. Your supervisor would be Vietnamese; all persons associated with these two schools have limited English proficiency, so this placement would be most suitable for a student willing to work along with a roommate in a team-teaching situation.

Economic Times' *Guide Magazine*

Interested in journalism? The Guide Magazine is a local publication in English targeting tourists and ex-pats. They're interested in opening an internship for a CET student. Work could be editing, doing small market-research surveys (or reader surveys), dealing with distribution, or even writing articles for the magazine (assignments would depend on the student and their interests). Your supervisor and co-workers would be a mix of local ex-pats and English-speaking Vietnamese.



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Thao Dan Center

This shelter is a shelter for street children – all boys, ranging in ages from 7 – 16. The boys here are very energetic and will keep you on your toes! They are very excited to have visitors and love to play games. This shelter focused on short-term intervention, and tries to reunite street boys with their families. Thao Dan also has intervention projects on the street; it may be possible for volunteers to participate in some of these activities.

A second possibility at Thao Dan would be to contribute to their ongoing arts-in-development project: “Street Children’s Art Program.” You would have the opportunity to teach visual art classes to street children at the shelter as a way of exploring mental hygiene issues and to give the kids a chance to express themselves artistically. Plan on teaching 2 classes a week, and developing detailed lesson plans for these sessions. As the kids know little English, this placement would be most suitable for a student willing to work along with a roommate in a team-teaching situation.

Action Aid Vietnam

Action Aid Vietnam is an internationally-based, locally-run (almost 100% localized) NGO that specializes in public health and educational initiatives throughout the country. There are several possibilities for students interested in volunteering at this organization – one of these would be to participate in an HIV/AIDS project that Action Aid is administering. In brief, the project has two components: assisting with the reintegration of HIV-infected drug users with their families after they’ve gone through a drug rehabilitation program, and an arts-in-development program aimed at 14-18 year olds that is aimed at education and prevention. The project supervisor thinks that it’s important for students to be involved in a really hands-on way, not just sitting in the office and crunching numbers! Students with a bit of experience in public health and HIV/AIDS prevention education would be a great asset to the project. Your supervisor would be Vietnamese, fluent in English; all other co-workers speak only Vietnamese. Because of the very local nature of this organization and the people that the projects work with, this placement would be most suitable for a student willing to work along with a roommate in a team-volunteer situation.

Phap Hoa Pagoda

This pagoda operates a free traditional medicine clinic on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. This placement is good for students interested in observing traditional medicinal practices in Vietnam. Interested students would have to be willing to work either with a Vietnamese roommate, or through a translator, as the doctors and monks here only speak Vietnamese. This is a pretty fascinating location, suitable for anyone who has an interest in alternative medicine or Buddhism and related service/charity, and who doesn’t mind “observer” status and having to put quite a bit of effort into communicating with their supervisor and co-workers!

Friends For Street Children

FFSC is a Catholic-based organization affiliated with the local Association for Religious Affairs. They have projects in many local shelters for street children, as well as running an IT center and drop-in



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English classes for disadvantaged youth. Lots of possibilities exist for students at this organization to choose and create the kind of work they are most interested in doing.

Green Bamboo Shelter

The Green Bamboo Shelter is a shelter for boys aged 7-18, who are either former street children or come from extremely disadvantaged families, under the auspices of the Ho Chi Minh City Child Welfare Foundation. The shelter assists the boys enroll in local schools, get vocational training, and when appropriate will try to re-integrate them with their families. Past CET interns have organized weekly activities for the boys, taught classes in reproductive health and personal hygiene, and developed conversational English classes for the older youth at the shelter.

Little Rose Shelter

This shelter is dedicated to rescuing young women who are either at-risk for, or have already experienced, sexual exploitation. The shelter assists in psychological rehabilitation, vocational training, and the girls' re-integration with society. Past CET interns here have organized conversational English classes for the shelter's permanent staff, and have organized self-esteem building activities for the girls.

Project Future

Project Future is a project office dedicated to assisting street children and children from especially disadvantaged families. In addition to health check-ups and psychological counseling, they also run a year-long Basic English class. Volunteers here teach conversational English, do capacity building and training for the local Vietnamese student interns, and assist the local staff to develop/revise project proposals or annual evaluations in English.