

Report – Vietnamese Canadian Federation’s Activities

National Workshop *Building Bridges: Empowering the Rising Generation* & Fund-Raising Dinner for the Vietnamese Boat People Museum Project

Ottawa, November 26-28, 2010

On the occasion of the Vietnamese Canadian Federation’s 30th anniversary (1980-2010), a national workshop with the theme *Building Bridges: Empowering the Rising Generation* was held at the Travelodge Hotel in Ottawa in the November 26-28, 2010 weekend. This is a follow-up to the *Passing the Torch* workshop which was also organized by the Federation in 2007 in Ottawa.

"By investing in youth today, we will have a better community tomorrow. The workshop participants are coming from different backgrounds and through their insight and active involvement we will create a Community Priority Plan for youth development with a distinct Vietnamese-Canadian perspective," says **Ngoc Vo** of the Vietnamese Canadian Federation, and Co-Chair of this event.

The workshop featured presentations by several speakers who are currently involved in community activities or youths who have invaluable personal experiences to pass on stories to their peers.

Thuy Duong Nguyen is the Executive Director of Senhoa, which helps to combat human trafficking by helping vulnerable women and children rebuild their lives through education and job training. Thuy Duong was the former Executive Director of VOICE (Vietnamese Overseas Initiative for Conscience Empowerment). She has worked tirelessly to settle the more than 2,500 stateless Vietnamese refugees stranded in the Philippines. Nguyen has helped the last remaining “Boat People” reunite with their families in Canada, the United States, and Australia.

Paul Nguyen is the creator of www.Jane-Finch.com. His ground-breaking website gives residents of this Toronto community a voice and shatters perceptions of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Nguyen’s innovation in challenging stereotypes through Internet journalism has garnered him several awards, among them the 2010 National Paul Yuzyk Award for promoting multiculturalism, diversity and understanding. This award, worth \$20,000.00, was presented to the winner who can donate it to any charitable organization of his choice.



*Thuy Duong Nguyen and Nha V. Tran, President of the Association of Vietnamese In Sherbrooke & A/Representative, Council of Presidents, Vietnamese Canadian Federation
Photo: Quy Luong, <http://graphicq.com/subsite/vn>*



*Paul Nguyen and Can D. Le, Commissioner for External Affairs, Vietnamese Canadian Federation
Photo: Quy Luong, <http://graphicq.com/subsite/vn>*

- **Anne-Marie (Phuong Anh) Pham** of Calgary, Chair of VCF's **Vietnamese Youth Action Committee (VYAC)**, Co-Chair of the workshop, and also one of the founders of the **Calgary Vietnamese Youth Group**, introduced the VCF project "Investing in Youth Today For a Better Community Tomorrow" which was approved for 3 years, 2010-2013.

- **Thanh Tam Truong** of Mississauga, former President of the **United Vietnamese Students' Associations of Ontario**, presented the findings of the national survey on youth needs and aspirations regarding personal development, mentorship needs, and community activities.



Thanh Tam Truong & Anne Marie (Phuong Anh) Pham
Photo: Quy Luong, <http://graphicq.com/subsite/vn>

- **Judy Luu** of **Calgary**, and **Dean** and **Brian**, share with the audience their moving and courageous personal struggles to overcome personal, family and/or socio-economic difficulties to lead normal and productive lives, thanks to the love and support of their families, friends, and community.



Judy Luu
Photo: Ha Quyen

In addition to the workshop, a gala under the theme ***Welcoming the rising generation*** was held under the coordination of **Ai Tran**, Executive Director of the Vietnamese Canadian Federation and Vietnamese Canadian Centre, on Saturday November 27 at the same location.

Lively and professional MCs Thuy Duong Nguyen and Tuan Nguyen brought the audience a rich entertainment program consisting of performances by **Flora Lan**, **Michael Le**, **Kim Tiên** (piano), **Minh Uyên**, **Yến Châu** (violin), **Linh Nguyễn**, **Ái Vy** (songs), the **Vietnamese Association of Nova Scotia** (dance), the **Vietnamese Student Associations of University of Ottawa and Carleton**

University (*Traditional versus Hip Hop* dance), a hilarious skit “An intimate talk between a father and his son, featuring the Presidents of these two associations, and a “break dancing” performance by the **Pulse N’ Limited Group.**

The gala helped bring some significant donations to the Museum project, including \$5,000.00 from Dr. & Mrs. Tri Hoang in Edmonton; \$2,000.00 from the Vietnamese Association of Nova Scotia in Halifax; \$2,000.00 from Dr. & Mrs. John Luong (Terra Nova Engineering) of Ottawa; \$2,000.00 from Scotiabank; and \$1,000.00 from Dr. & Mrs. Ba Ngoc Dao in Montreal. In addition, Paul Nguyen has decided to donate his 2010 Paul Yuzyk Award of \$20,000.00 to the project.



U of Ottawa & Carleton University dancers
Photo: Quy Luong, <http://graphicq.com/subsite/vn>



Vietnamese Association of Nova Scotia dancers
Photo: Quy Luong, <http://graphicq.com/subsite/vn>

In addition to the workshop and the gala, the Federation also held its 15th biennial meeting to review its achievements over the last 2 years and to elect officers for the new terms of office. Following are the results of this election.

Representative of the Council of Presidents: **Dr. Tri D. Hoang**, President of the Edmonton Viet Association

Deputy Representative of the Council of Presidents: **Mr. Nha V. Tran**, President of the Association of Vietnamese in Sherbrooke.

President: **Ms. Tuyet Lam**, Calgary

Vice-President: **Mr. Ut V. Ngo** (out-going President), Edmonton

Treasurer: **Mr. Phuong Lethebinh**, Ottawa

Internal auditors:

Mr. The Son (Antoine) Nguyen, Calgary

Mr. Dong V. Tran, Saskatoon



*Delegates attending the 15th Biennial Meeting of the Vietnamese Canadian Federation
Photo: Ha Quyen*



The new and former Representative of the Council of Presidents, Executive Committee, and Internal Auditors with other delegates to the 15th Biennial Meeting of the Vietnamese Canadian Federation:

From row (new terms of office): from left to right, Antoine Nguyen, Internal Auditors; Binh Phuong Le-The, Treasurer; Ut V. Ngo, Vice-President (out-going President); Tuyet Lam, President; Tri D. Hoang, Representative of Council of Presidents; Dong V. tran, Internal Auditor

Second row (past terms of office) : Danh Lam Forsythe (#6), former Internal Auditor; Ngoc N. Vo (#8), Treasurer; Danh T. Nguyen (#10), Vice-President; Nha V. Tran (#12), A/Representative of the Council of Presidents, (new Deputy Representative)

Photo: Ha Quyen

The workshop ***Building Bridges: Empowering the Rising Generation*** and the fund-raising gala for the Museum Project were great successes, thanks to the initiative and active participation of youths in the Vietnamese communities across Canada, in keeping with the ***Passing the Torch*** concept put forward by the Federation in 2007. The momentum from these events will help the Federation carry out the remaining tasks of the project ***Investing in Youth Today for a Better Community Tomorrow*** that Citizenship and Immigration Canada has approved for the Federation for the next 3 years.

More pictures of the workshop and the gala can be seen on the following websites of our volunteer photographers Quy Luong and Khoi Nguyen:

http://www.pbase.com/kmnguyen/building_bridges

<http://graphicq.com/subsite/vn/>

Acknowledgement

Workshop

The Vietnamese Canadian Federation would like to acknowledge the following organizations and individuals for their roles in the organization of the workshop ***Building Bridges: Empowering the Rising Generation***:

We thank Citizenship and Immigration Canada for funding the ***Investing in youth today for a better community tomorrow*** Project. We hope that thanks to the continuing support of the government, the Federation will be able to develop strategies to help youth at risk in the Vietnamese community in Canada lead a normal, productive life.

We thank our keynote speakers **Thuy Duong Nguyen** and **Paul Nguyen** for sharing their invaluable experiences in leadership with our youths.

We are grateful to **Judy Luu, Dean,** and **Brian** for sharing their rich personal experiences with our workshop participants.

With deepest admiration and appreciation, we would like to thank **the Calgary Vietnamese Youth Group** for their partnership and collaboration in the organization of the workshop and the development of the survey for the ***Vietnamese Youth Community Involvement: Fact Finding Exercise***.

We thank the **United Vietnamese Students' Association of Ontario** for their participation in developing the questionnaire of the survey, promoting it, and analyzing its findings.

We note with appreciation the efforts undertaken by the **Vietnamese Friendship Society of Fraser Valley**, the **Vietnamese Association of Nova Scotia**, the **Vietnamese Youth and Culture Group of Ottawa**, the **Vietnamese Student Associations at the University of Ottawa and Carleton University**, member associations of the Vietnamese Canadian Federation, and other organizations and individuals for promoting the survey.

We thank the **Vietnamese Student Association of the University of Ottawa** for taking the lead in organizing the ice-breaking social networking gathering of the workshop.

We thank the members of the **Workshop Coordinating Committee**, including **Anne Marie Pham, Ngoc N. Vo, Thanh Tam Truong, Christine Nguyen-Le, Michael Luu, Binh Phuong Le-The, Ha Quyen Nguyen, MC Dennis Nguyen**, photographers **Quy Luong** and **Khoi Nguyen**, all the facilitators, note takers, and volunteers in Workshop Logistics Working Group for their roles in the conduct of workshop.

We are indebted to Quy Luong and Khoi Nguyen for taking and putting on their websites wonderful pictures of the workshop and the gala.

The creativity, dedication, and leadership demonstrated by the above individuals and groups are the key contributions to the success of this event.

Last but not least, we thank all the participants for their interest in the workshop.

Gala

The Federation also expresses its appreciation to the following individuals who have contributed to the gala *Welcoming the Rising Generation*:

MCs **Thuy Duong Nguyen** and **Tuan Nguyen**;

Performers: **Lyann Nguyen, Anh Thu, Flora Lan, Michael Le, Kim Tien, Minh Uyen, Yen Chau, Ivy O, Vietnamese Association of Nova Scotia, Vietnamese Student Associations of University of Ottawa and Carleton University, and the Pulse N' Limited Group**;

Silent auction contributors: **Phu H. Nguyen, An Nguyen, Quyen Phan, Tien V. Dao & Ngoc N. Vo, Phuong Lethebinh, Mrs. Ha, Paul & Thao Schulte, Alice Swann, Quang D. Nguyen, Liem T. Duong, Hung T. Vu, Huong N. Duong, Tu T. Chu, and Song Vu video.**

Gala Coordinating Committee: **Ai T. Tran, Van Quyen Nguyen, Ngoc N. Vo, Katherine Van Nguyen, Dung Q. Nong, Phuong Lethebinh, John Nguyen, Howard Nguyen, Michele Nguyen, and numerous other volunteers.**

Photographers: **Quy Luong, Brandon Yip**



Participants of the workshop "Building Bridges: Empowering the Rising Generation"
Photo; Quy Luong, <http://graphicq.com/subsite/vn>

Ha Quyen, Phuong Anh, Yen Xuan
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www.vietfederation.ca