

# Vietnamese Friendship Association

7101 MLK Jr. Way S Suite #212, Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 760-1573

## Educational Assistance for Student Empowerment After School Youth Tutoring Program 2010-2011

### Program Report and Evaluation



Prepared by:  
James Hong, EASE After School Program Director  
July 1, 2010

## Summary

VFA's After-School Youth Program, with funding support from the City of Seattle, United Way of King County, and Social Venture Partners, served 43 students in grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> from September 2010 and June 2011. The program focused on academic assistance and homework help, cultural enrichment activities, service-learning, college success, and field trips. The majority of students achieved academic gains across multiple domains, including: increasing their semester grades, progressing to the next grade level; and increasing their English language and literacy skills. However, students did not demonstrate significant changes in attitudes toward school, family, or culture. Moving forward, VFA will formally bring an end to the EASE After School Program by September 2011 and instead focus on youth development programs focused on youth leadership and civic engagement.

## Program Design

The Vietnamese Friendship Association (VFA) provides community-based youth tutoring services—also known as the Education Assistance for Student Empowerment (EASE) program—for young people who live in New Holly and nearby neighborhoods. Emphasis is placed on providing Vietnamese youth with culturally and linguistically responsive tutoring services.

During the school year, students work with university and college tutors in small groups on homework, core academic subjects, and test preparation. Fun, educational enrichment and cultural activities are also offered to engage students and develop their creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, self-confidence, and other developmental assets.

It was held at the New Holly Learning Center everyday Tuesday through Thursday, from 3:00pm to 5:00pm.



Students discuss cultural challenges in the Vietnamese community.

### **Tutoring**

Students enrolled in the program received tutoring and homework assistance from college-level staff and volunteers. Tutoring includes topics such as math, reading, world history, essay writing, biology, chemistry, and social studies.

### **Enrichment Activities**

Students were involved in large and small group activities and games intended to encourage students to interact with one another and meet new peers.

### **Recreation**

Weather permitting, students went outside for team sports, games, and activities—including kickball, and a water fight.

### **College Exploration**

High school juniors and seniors were helped on topics that included SAT preparation, scholarship writing, and college application writing, and college visits. Students also had the opportunity to connect with current university students/.

### **Field Trips**

The EASE Program was able to expand its classroom setting to include field trips around Seattle. Field trips included a visit to the University of Washington waterfront activity center and arboretum, PopCap Games, and downtown Seattle.

### **Service-Learning**

In the Fall Quarter, VFA partnered with the Community Learning Center at Van Asselt to provide service-learning opportunities for high school students in our programs. They spent one day a week tutoring children at Van Asselt Elementary, and another day in a discussion and planning seminar.

## Demographics of Clients Served

The program targeted Vietnamese youth between the ages of 10-19 who live New Holly and the neighboring areas. Students were recruited through a variety of methods, including:

- contacting and meeting with faculty and staff at area middle and high schools;
- visiting students during their lunch and club hours at school;
- sending announcements out to our community partners;
- advertising through a local Vietnamese newspaper;
- and promoting online using social-networking and email.

In 2010-2011, a total of 43 students registered in the after school program.



Students celebrate during the end of the year BBQ.

### Free/Reduced Lunch Status

79% ( $n = 26$ ) of registered students qualified for free/reduced lunch; 21% ( $n = 7$ ) did not qualify. 10 students did not report their free/reduced lunch status.

### Sex

59% ( $n = 25$ ) of registered students were female; 40% ( $n = 17$ ) were males. 1 student did not report their sex.

## Grade Level

The majority of registered students were high school juniors (42%).

Grade	Number of Students
unknown	3
3rd Grade	1
4th Grade	1
6th Grade	2
7th Grade	1
Freshman	5
Junior	18
Senior	7
Sophomore	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>43</b>



A student hangs out at the UW arboretum during a field trip.

## School Attended

The majority of registered students attended Franklin High School (47%).

Grade	Number of Students
Unknown	2
Ballard High School	1
Cleveland High School	4
Franklin High School	20
Garfield High School	1
Ingraham High School	3
Mercer Middle School	2
MLK Elementary	2
Nathan Hale	1
Roosevelt High School	1
Seattle Academy	2
Van Asselt Elementary	1
Washington Middle School	1
West Seattle	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>43</b>

## Partnerships

Vietnamese Friendship Association—Design, implementation, and evaluation of program.

City of Seattle Human Services Department; City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods; United Way of King County, and Social Venture Partners provided funding; and Solid Ground’s MLK VISTA Program provided a full-time staff to develop partnerships with other agencies, and focus on best practices and program models.

South Seattle Community College—Space donation of classrooms at the New Holly Learning Center.

Community Learning Center at Van Asselt Elementary to working with VFA to coordinate the service-learning program.

PopCap games for hosting our students in a field trip to see their office and games development programs.



Getting trained on how to work with children and tutoring.

## Program Evaluation

### Student Academic Performance

VFA asked registered students to provide access to their academic records through Seattle Public School’s “Source” webpage. Parental consent was obtained for students who agreed to release their records to VFA. The Source provides information such as student class schedules and scores, attendance records, and results of standardized assessments. Of our registered students, parental permission and access was obtained for 21 students.

- 76% increased their semester grades in at least one core subject as measured/documentated by school records;
- 100% progressed to the next grade level as measured/documentated by school records
- 70% increased English language and literacy skills as measured/documentated by standardized pre/post tests<sup>1</sup>.

### Student Attitudinal Assessment

Student attitudes were measured by a four-point Likert scale survey that VFA developed in partnership with Social Venture Partners. This survey measured a variety of student attitudes, including feelings about school and learning, pride for their home culture, and relationship with parents. Each question asked students rate their level of agreement on a four-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Surveys were given to students at the beginning of the program, and again after the program ended.

---

<sup>1</sup> If pre/post tests data were not available, term and semester scores were used to assess progress in English language

## Regarding School

Four questions assessed student attitude toward school.

- It is important to me that I do well in school
- In my classes I enjoy sharing my ideas
- I get excited about learning new things
- I see connections between what I learn in school and my life.

Responses to these questions were averaged into an aggregate *school score*. Results from the survey indicate that there were no significant differences ( $p = .40$ ) in students' attitude toward school from pre-test ( $m = 3.42$ ) to post-test ( $m=3.53$ ).

## Regarding Culture

Seven questions assessed student attitude toward their culture.

- I talk to other people about Vietnamese culture
- I am proud to be Vietnamese
- I like to go to Vietnamese cultural events, activities and holiday festivals
- I think that my Vietnamese culture is an important part of American culture
- I would like to learn more about my Vietnamese culture
- I want to continue speaking Vietnamese
- I understand what is the same and different about Vietnamese and American cultures

Responses to these questions were averaged into an aggregate *culture score*. Results from the survey indicate that there were no significant differences in students' attitude ( $p = .25$ ) toward culture from pre-test ( $m = 3.39$ ) to post-test ( $m=3.57$ ).

## Regarding Families and Parents

Five questions assessed student attitude toward their culture.

- I talk with parents about how I am doing in school
- I talk with my parents about things other than school
- I talk with my parents about how things are going in my life
- If I had a problem, I feel like my parents would help me
- I like to spend my free time with my parents and family members

Responses to these questions were averaged into an aggregate *family score*. Results from the survey indicate that there were no significant differences ( $p = .99$ ) in students' attitude toward families and parents from pre-test ( $m = 2.87$ ) to post-test ( $m=2.87$ ).

## Discussion

Results indicate that the majority of students involved in the EASE program demonstrated academic gains across a variety of measures.

Unfortunately, students' attitudes towards school, culture, and family showed no significant change over the course of the program.

Regarding attitude toward family, this year, the VFA as an organization underwent changes in our Parent Advocacy Program, and as a result the EASE Program did not directly work with parents and families on a continued basis. The reduced services in the Parent Advocacy Program could explain this result.

Finally, in regard to student academic record, VFA was unable to obtain release forms for all the students registered in the EASE Program. One reason may be that the release forms are written in English, and many of the parents have limited English ability. While VFA did provide a translation of the release form, parents were not permitted to sign the form in order to grant access to their child's academic record. As a policy of Seattle Public Schools, release forms must be signed in the English version of the document.



Canoeing at the University of Washington Waterfront Activity Center

## Problems Encountered

The program was successful at recruiting and attracting students to the program. We use a variety of methods to outreach, including doing school visits, newspaper announcements, word of mouth, reaching out to parents, and attending community events and meetings.

However, we experience challenges recruiting New Holly and Seattle Housing Authority specific residents for a variety of reasons. First, because our contract was not through the Seattle Housing Authority, we did not have access to contact information in order to reach out to these youth and families. Second, changing demographics meant that some of the families we have served in the past were no longer in the area.

Finally, this year VFA also forked the EASE After School program at New Holly to two different sites: the Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center (SBOC); and at New Holly. The intention behind this was to provide more appropriate and tailored services for our English Language Learners at their school, leaving New Holly to focus more on Vietnamese-American students. Though our enrollment of

Vietnamese-American students increase this year from previous year, overall enrollment was lower because we split the programs.

## Next Steps

In 2006, the Vietnamese Friendship Association (VFA) opened the Educational Assistance for Student Empowerment (EASE) program, in partnership with the City of Seattle Human Services Department and the Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center. The program supported middle and high school youth living in the New Holly neighborhood through academic assistance, leadership, and cultural enrichment programs, serving over 100 students each year. Over this time, many of our students have made academic gains across a variety of benchmarks, including increasing semester grades in core subjects, progressing to the next grade level, increasing English language and literacy skills, as well as developing self-confidence and leadership skills.

After assessing our students' needs, the changing demographics of the New Holly community, and VFA's strategic priorities for the next three years, we have decided to close the EASE after-school program at New Holly Learning Center. Moving forward, VFA will be focusing on developing service learning, civic engagement, leadership, cultural enrichment, and experiential learning programs. Depending on funding and partnerships in the future, VFA's programs may take place at New Holly.

For the 2011-2012 school year and forward, VFA will continue partnership with the Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center to support new-comer students through two programs: 21<sup>st</sup> Century after-school program, in collaboration with Refugee Women's Alliance, and Saturday English School. During the summer, we will work with SBOC and other partners to implement the Summer Science Academy, and continue serving youth academically through our Summer Youth Program.

In the last five years, VFA has developed strong partnerships with South Seattle Community College, Seattle Housing Authority, Atlantic Street Center, Horn of Africa Services, East African Community Services, Van Asselt Community Center, Van Asselt Elementary School, Aki Kurose Middle School, Cleveland High-School, and many other wonderful organizations working to empower the youth in our community to succeed in school and life. VFA would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to all our partners. While we are closing the EASE after-school program, we hope to continue and deepen our collaborations through other programs and projects.