

## Học Mãi Foundation Medical Student Scholarship Recipients

For each of us the Vietnam experience had its different highlights. From becoming budding neurosurgeons, to colorectal surgeons, nephrologists, obstetricians, pediatricians and emergency medicine doctors, each of us were touched by the doctors that took time out of their days to teach and inspire us. Through their eyes we were able to learn about health care in Vietnam; to engage in discussions about diagnosis, management and the intricacies of the Vietnamese health care system.

To us, the relationships we forged with the Vietnamese doctors and students embodied the notion of Học Mãi: forever learning. We found a real willingness amongst the Doctors and medical students to engage in an exchange of professional and cross-cultural knowledge. Whilst we felt that we ultimately benefited much more from the experience and the teaching, in a small way we were able to contribute through participating in and helping to facilitate English clubs at some of the hospitals we visited. This was a great experience for us – amongst the doctors, nurses and students that attended there was a genuine interest in each of us individually, life in Australia and often most importantly our experiences whilst in Vietnam.

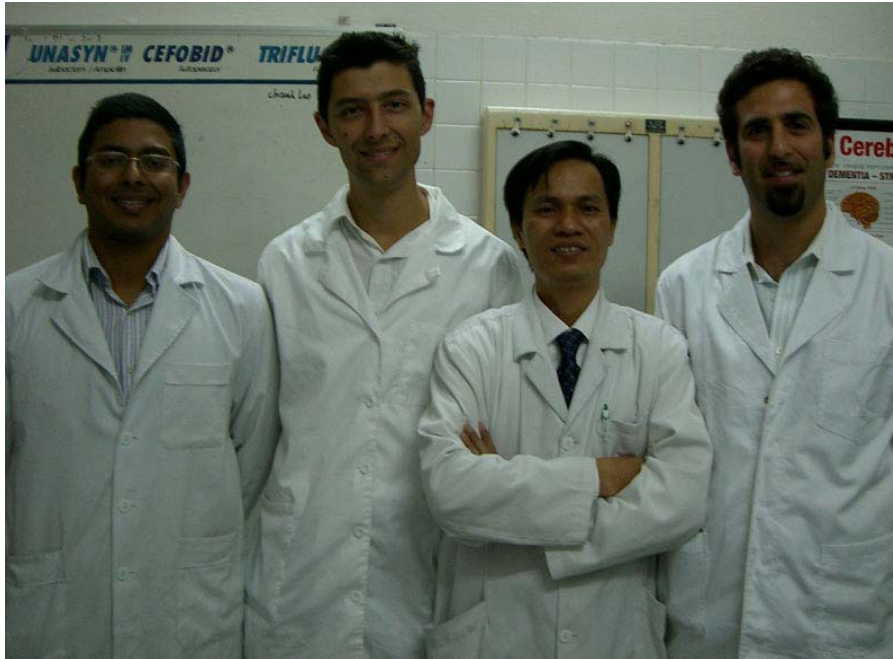
In terms of medical education, our time in Vietnam gave us exposure to a wide range of disease and pathology that is rarely seen in Australia. We were able to participate in surgery, ward rounds and clinics, all of which provided a great opportunity to put into practice the teaching we've received over the past 2 years of medical school. For medical students about to embark on the clinical years, it was invaluable. We all left with an increased confidence and enthusiasm for the year ahead.



Phoebe Loxton, Christine Verdon, Sophie Kerle

One of the appealing aspects of the program was to gain exposure to another health system. Whilst the standard of care that we experienced in the Vietnamese hospitals was excellent, it was common for patients, particularly from rural areas, to present late with advanced symptoms that required specialist care in the city. From a comparative health perspective, it highlighted the differences between our two systems, particularly the value of primary health care, and showed us the benefits of the exchange of knowledge that the program promotes.

The trip also offered us the opportunity to immerse ourselves in life in Hanoi and Danang, to travel parts of the country and to experience all it had to offer. Throughout our time in Vietnam we were touched by the richness of the culture, the friendliness of the people, the beauty of the country and its culinary delights.



Ranjan Arianayagam, Daniel Simpkins, Dr He Van Dang, Fred Hersch

The Học Mãi Foundation program has provided us with a fabulous opportunity to grow both medically and personally. We thank the Học Mãi Foundation and its supporters for giving us this opportunity. We look forward to a continued involvement in the ongoing development of professional relationships and friendships with our colleagues in Vietnam.

**Thank you.**

Học Mãi Foundation Scholarship recipients, 2007

*Northern Clinical School*