



Stories of a Girl

Empowering Youth to End Human Trafficking

Photo Exhibit | April 4 – May 23, 2013
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library | San Jose, CA



**PACIFIC LINKS
FOUNDATION**



Scenes of where we were born"

- Trafficking survivors' collective expression

About PALS

Pacific Links Foundation (PALS) launched **An Giang/Dong Thap Alliance for the Prevention of Trafficking (ADAPT)** in 2005 to combat human trafficking.

ADAPT leads counter-trafficking efforts at the frontiers of Vietnam by providing access to education, shelter and reintegration services, and enabling new economic opportunities.

Pacific Links Foundation

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Photography Credits: PALS beneficiaries, staff and volunteers

No likeness of trafficking survivors is shown in this document to protect their privacy.

About Stories of a Girl

Dear Friends:



We are proud to bring you this exhibit that documents in part our journey to prevent human trafficking since 2005.

Thanks to your continuing support, we have reached more than 10,000 people in at-risk communities to sound the awareness bell, to provide support for survivors of human trafficking, and above all, to bring a brighter future to the youthful faces of girls in the remote border villages of Vietnam.

Part of this exhibit is to showcase the amazing voices and talents of the survivors. We gave them cameras as microphones to document their beautiful voices. This is the evidence of their incredible talent and of beauty, which would have been lost to our connected humanity if these survivors had not risked their lives for their freedom. Their courage and their talent fuel our resolve on this journey to protect.

Your support is the strongest encouragement that these young girls need and deserve.

Stop Human Trafficking Now. Join Us!

Diep Vuong

President
Pacific Links Foundation



Worldwide Human Trafficking At a Glance

- ◆ **20.9 million** are presently victims of human trafficking at any given time
- ◆ The most common form of trafficking is **sexual exploitation** (79%)
- ◆ **79%** of victims are **women and girls**
- ◆ The majority of victims are **18—24 years old**
- ◆ **\$32 billion** estimated global annual profits made from exploitation of victims

For a Bag of Coffee

...Here, in this urban chaos of business and motorbikes, you will sometimes meet someone, either a foreigner or Vietnamese, and he will ask you what you do. In response to your saying that you work on anti-trafficking along the borders of Vietnam, he will say knowingly, "Yes, I hear so many of these poor parents sell their own children for a few dollars, or a bag of coffee or something."

You will respond with, "Actually, from our experiences with trafficking returnees, the girls are most often tricked by acquaintances of the family, or perhaps even a relative, usually because the girls were looking for a job. The parents often don't have enough money to send their children to school, so their children will often quit school early and try to find work to help out, which leaves them vulnerable to being tricked and sold."

Usually, this person will nod absent-mindedly, look away, and then change the topic. What you don't get to say is, "What kind of parent do you think being poor makes you?"

...[Living] on 25 cents a day...They must balance what school means as an investment in their children's future, decades in the distance, when they are sometimes uncertain what the next few months will look like from the shallow bottom of a rice bowl...

- Recollection by PALS Volunteer



This is a memory I am making

A twenty-minute walk from the shelter will lead to a path where one can see, across the river, to China. Here, on this side of the border, the shelter girls were children, they worked in the fields with their parents, they believed the trusted family friend who said they would be paid to be dish washers and restaurant workers and cinnamon dryers. There, on the other side of the border, they were still children when they were instead sold to be wives and prostitutes...

This is a memory I am.

I spend much of my last few days at the shelter beading with the girls. We sprawl around the large conference table, loose beads scattered across the table... We sit in a circle, and sometimes the girls sing, in Hmong or Vietnamese, their voices high and slightly off-key and haunting. A girl's eye smiles as she smiles... And in the midst of that quiet, that gentle slowing of time, there is nothing more than that moment, nothing remaining except to listen to young girls sing of love and loss, their hearts breaking in their mouths, and to bead these pearls one at a time onto a string I will carry with me always.

This is a memory.

Sitting around a circle, we share affirmations of our strengths. One of the girls remains in silence for several minutes when it comes to her turn; she can't come up with anything positive to say about herself. Last year, she had been sold so far across the border of China that, after she escaped, she had to be flown back to Vietnam. She told me that, as she was running away from her captors, in the middle of the night, she would run close to the cliffs of the surrounding waterfalls, so that, if they found her, she could kill herself by jumping off the edge. She whispers her one positive trait to a nearby girl, but we ask her to say it aloud using her own voice. When she finally does, a barely audible, "Sometimes I try to help people," her voice breaks, under the strain, the newness of what it means to believe that there is good in her.

This is.

A girl asks me, "Do you remember the last time you visited, one day there was a double rainbow?" I say, "I do." "It was so pretty, wasn't it?" I agree that it was indeed.

- Recollection by PALS Volunteer, 2012



Voices of Trafficking Survivors

Courage is the hallmark of the inspiration we garner throughout our work with trafficking survivors.



Healing Journeys

Young residents at our shelters receive support services (vocational training, emotional support, art and dance expression sessions) aiming to help regain self-confidence and establish self-reliance.



Hands of Encouragement

It takes the support of people like you to encourage the trafficking survivors towards a future that they deserve.

Will to Succeed

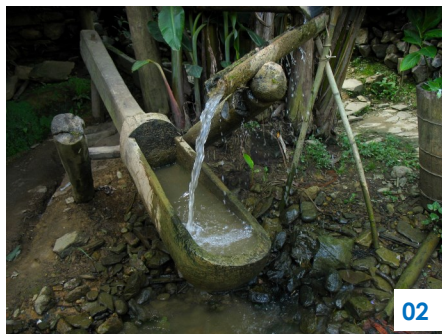
During her escape from the monsters who trafficked and kept her captive, she suffered severe scratches throughout her whole body, a huge foot infection that did not want to heal, thirst and hunger to the point of complete exhaustion. Hugging the young, shy and little girl who burst into tears when recalling her ordeal, I felt in my arms a person of immense greatness.

- Recollection by PALS Staff



A photo taken by a trafficking survivor...

to affirm your commitment to safeguard their beauty and talents

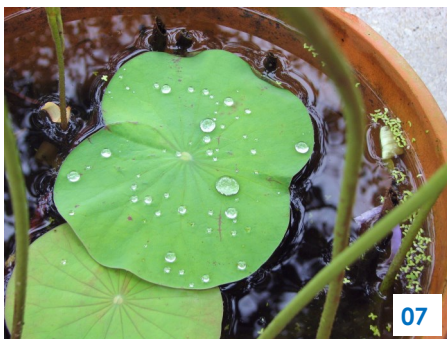




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06



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Gift Levels

\$ 50

8x10 Print

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plus \$5 for shipping & handling per address

01 Water Stream

02 Changing Landscape

03 Buffalo Boys

04 Lotus Flower

05 Girls Walking

06 The Bird

07 Lily Pad

08 Field and Banana Leaf

Visit www.pacificlnks.org or send check with note of photo selection to receive gift with donation (see back cover for address).



\$60

provides a month of food to a trafficking survivor in residence at our shelters

\$100

supports an initial care package to trafficking survivors upon return to Vietnam

\$600

provides vocational training for one young woman in beauty/cosmetology



Donate

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Pacific Links Foundation
Sobrato Center for Nonprofits
534 Valley Way
Milpitas, CA 95035

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www.pacificlinks.org

Join Us

- ◆ Invite friends to the exhibit (April 4—May 23)
- ◆ Share the stories
- ◆ Purchase a photo
- ◆ Volunteer to fundraise

