

Vietnamese-American School Kid Folds A Thousand Paper Cranes To Raise Funds For Children Affected By Haiyan

RAISE FUNDS FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY HAIYAN

PRESS RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—A Vietnamese-American school girl spearheaded the folding of one thousand paper cranes not only to convey her message of hope but also to raise funds to help Filipino children affected by Typhoon Haiyan.

Tenth Grader Francis Nguyen along with friends Chieu Le, Teresa Do, and Kali Gabriel got their families, neighbors, and friends to fold one thousand paper cranes for Filipino children in typhoon devastated areas in the Central Philippines. A dollar was donated for each crane made.

"Cranes symbolize hope, health, happiness, and longevity. People need something to hope for and smile about when they believe there isn't much to look forward to in their future," said Nguyen who turned over to Ambassador Jose L. Cuisia, Jr., the paper cranes and the \$1,000 she was able to raise for typhoon victims.

"The Crane Project, which seeks to bring hope after devastation, was inspired by the Japanese myth that if one folded a thousand cranes, his or her wish would be granted," Nguyen told Ambassador Jose L. Cuisia who expressed his gratitude for the teenager's efforts.

"I would like to thank you for your kindness, generosity, and prayers. The children in the Philippines, especially those orphaned by the typhoon, need those things you mentioned—hope, health, happiness, and longevity—as we move from the relief phase to the rehabilitation phase," said Ambassador Cuisia who also received at least \$18,000 from representatives of the Vietnam Buddhist Center and the Tu Bi Foundation.

Nguyen, who first folded paper cranes following the earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan in 2011, said she hopes that the money she helped raise from the cranes made can help with post-typhoon recovery efforts.

"We think of it not as helping victims but helping friends and family," said Nguyen as she recalled how thousands of Vietnamese found friends and family in the Filipino people during the migration of the boat people starting in 1975.

"I was twelve years old when we arrived in Manila on Christmas Eve of 1978. We spent two months on the boat and five months in a camp. We were welcomed by Filipinos, and we were never asked to leave," said Le.

"I believe The Crane Project is important because it teaches people to have a heart," said Le who along with Nguyen and representatives of the Vietnam Buddhist Center and Tu Bi Foundation, expressed their sympathies to Ambassador Cuisia for those who lost their lives, homes and loved ones during Typhoon Haiyan.

"We comfort each other in the face of enormous tragedy and loss of life, which reminded me of the massive migration of the Vietnamese boat people fleeing Vietnam to find freedom in 1975 and landing in the Philippines," said the Venerable Thich Nguyen Hanh, Abbott of the Vietnam Buddhist Center.

"We are in debt to our Filipino friends. No words can express my gratitude and appreciation for what you had done for us, your support, your extraordinary generosity, kindness, heroism, and never-ending grace which comforted us through the most difficult time in our nation," he said.

The paper cranes and funds raised were turned over by Ambassador Cuisia to Feed the Hungry, Inc., a Philippine-based, volunteer organization aimed at uplifting the spirit and well being of the poor through feeding, community and economic development, gift giving, education scholarships, classroom building, and calamity relief and emergency medical assistance programs.

<http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org/news/3795/300/VIETNAMESE-AMERICAN-SCHOOL-KID-FOLDS-A-THOUSAND-PAPER-CRANES-TO-RAISE-FUNDS-FOR-CHILDREN-AFFECTED-BY-HAIYAN/d,phildet/>



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Symbols of hope. Francis Nguyen, Chieu Le, Kali Gabriel, and Teresa Do turn over 1,000 paper cranes to Ambassador Cuisia as a symbol of hope for the children affected by Typhoon Haiyan. (Philippine Embassy Photo by Majalya Fernando)



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Love and compassion. The Paper Crane Project, Tu Bi Foundation ("love and compassion"), and the Vietnam Buddhist Center, represented by Venerable Abbot Thich Nguyen Hanh raised almost \$20,000 for rehabilitation efforts in Haiyan-affected areas. (Philippine Embassy Photo by Majalya Fernando)



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Family helping family.

The Paper Crane Project encouraged friends and families to fold cranes as messages of hope to Filipinos affected by the typhoon. According to 10th grader Francis Nguyen, for participants of the project, it was like helping family. (Philippine Embassy Photo by Majalya Fernando)



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Hope, health, happiness, and longevity.

Ambassador Cuisia thanked the Vietnamese-American Community for their contributions to post-Haiyan rehabilitation efforts. Their wishes of hope, health, happiness, and longevity are much needed by those rebuilding their lives and homes in Haiyan-affected areas. (Philippine Embassy Photo by Majalya Fernando)