

marina vsa newsletter

Vietnamese Student Association
at Marina High School



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Hội Học Sinh Việt Nam
Trường Trung Học Marina

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The Future Ahead

by Arthur Tran, President

You've probably heard from your senior friends -- or maybe just around school -- that March is the month of college admission decisions. Some might think of it as the "moment of fate" that determines your future job, spouse, and existence. Well, first of all, *relax*, because it's not.

That isn't to take away from the value of a college education, because, simply put, achieving success is very difficult without a degree. Yes, of course, a school with better name recognition will earn you more ooh's and ah's than a lesser known one, but in the end, it's what you make of your college experience.

For now, those of you who are underclassmen, focus on doing your best: acing those tests, taking the most rigorous courses available, participating in club events, building those leadership skills, finding your passion... Focus on the *now*, not on the *what if* or *what will*, and, in the end, everything will fall into place. Plan for the future, but don't let it eat you alive.

Come senior year, you'll have three years of rich experiences and knowledge under your belt that you can pour into college applications. As long as you've built a rich portfolio of academic, extracurricular, and personal endeavors, your essays will flow naturally and speak for themselves. For me, I cannot express in words how

instrumental VSA has been in my personal growth during my time here at Marina. Four years ago, I never would have imagined myself as president of anything, yet here I am today, a college-bound senior writing to you.

Think of college acceptances as a culmination of your high school career -- your successes, your ups, your downs. And this is what causes emotional instability in some, but don't let it get to you -- maybe you weren't meant to be at the school that rejected you. Rejection hurts, but acceptance is wonderful. Bask in the glory; rest assured that your future is bright, no matter where you go. No one can ask for more than your best.

As admission decisions finish trickling in, share in our joy, and don't be afraid to ask us any questions! We've applied to all sorts of schools -- public, private, Ivy League, art, you name it -- and we're ready to share some words of wisdom.

On a similar note, our interns have completed the strenuous process of interning, applications, interviews, and elections. The current board members, along with Mr. Nguyen, have selected our successors, who will be announced weekly. The pool of applicants is particularly strong this year, and we are confident that VSA will be in good hands next year.

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Fundraiser Recap

by Lynn Lam, Treasurer

A huge thank you to everyone who was able to attend our in-store Zero Degrees Italian Ice fundraiser!

On Valentine's Day weekend, we were fortunate enough to host a fundraiser at Zero Degrees in which we got 20% of every purchase with the flyer. We were able to raise a total of \$35. This money was donated to La Lanh Dum La Rach, an organization that helps fund money for the less fortunate children in Vietnam.

\$35.00

donated to La Lanh Dum La Rach, helping less fortunate children

Also, we just purchased more Tastea Fun Cards! Come purchase them before we run out again! We have many more fundraisers planned for the month of April/May, so stay tuned!

\$601

raised for charities and causes in our community

So far this year, Marina VSA has fundraised over \$601 towards charities and causes in our community. We thank you for your support and dedication; it is our hope to reach \$1000 by the end of the school year.

January & February in Review

by Yvan Tran, Vice President and Brian Pham, Historian

January and February is one of the most important times for VSA and the Vietnamese community because of the Tet holiday.

On January 10, we made Valentine's Day cards for the elderly. Because many elderly people live alone or in nursing homes, even a small card can brighten up their day! We made lots of colorful, heartfelt cards for a great cause.

Because January 21-24 was Finals Week, we did not have any events during that time.

To usher in the new Year of the Horse, we had a first ever Tet Celebration during our meeting on January 30. We served traditional Vietnamese foods such as banh chung, mut, and cha lua; passed out li xi envelopes filled with lucky money; and had a game of bau cua ca cop going! As you can imagine, it was a fun socializing experience!

This year UVSA hosted their Tet Festival at the OC Fairgrounds from Friday, February 7 to Sunday, February 9. With the new location, the festival was a huge success as it attracted more people, especially non-Vietnamese attendees, thus allowing a greater audience to experience Vietnamese culture and Tet festivities.

Along with the festival, on February 8, VSA participated in Marina Food For Thought's Food Packing Event. We contributed to pack over 25,000 meals to help the hungry in Uganda. It was a great experience, and we had a lot of fun too!

From February 14-16, Valentine's Day weekend, VSA had a fundraiser at Zero Degrees Italian Ice. We raised \$35 to help the less fortunate children in Vietnam, all while enjoying some delicious Italian ice and snacks.

Lastly, on February 23, our wonderful interns planned a beach cleanup event and social. We cleaned up around the Huntington Beach pier, and after, we had a wonderful time bonding and socializing at Ruby's Diner.



check your volunteer hours!

go to marinavsa.weebly.com and click under 'members'. while you're there, view the calendar of events too!

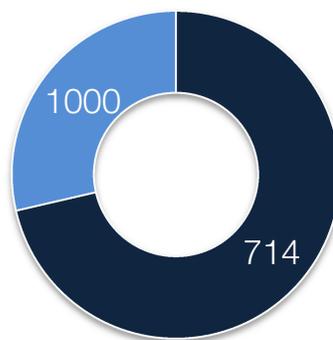
Volunteer Hours

by Tracy Nguyen, Secretary

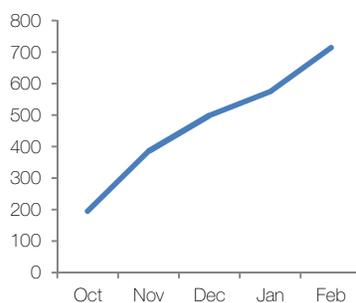
[Tracy Nguyen is our new Secretary for 2014-2015. Please welcome her as she takes over for Pauline!]

In January and February, our VSA members have served a total of 215 hours! Thank you to everyone who dedicated their time with VSA and the community. Special thanks to Nha-Quyen Nguyen (15 hours), Tracy Nguyen (13 hours), Cathy Nguyen (12 hours), and Joseph Nguyen (12 hours) for being our top members of January and February. Everyone's hard work is appreciated! Keep up the good work!

Our most popular event was the beach clean-up/social. Everyone met up on the pier and split it up into three groups. The three groups went their separate ways to pick up trash around the beach. After hours of hard work, the whole group went to Ruby's for a social. Members made new friends while keeping the old. There will be more upcoming events for you members to enjoy!



■ Progress So Far
■ Goal for 2013-2014



VAHSA Corner

by De Tieu Nguyen, VAHSA Rep

VAHSA has been quite active recently! They had a Zero Degrees Italian Ice fundraiser on March 14-15 to raise money for Spring Formal.

Marina participated in VAHSA's Friendship Games on March 8. Although we didn't take home the gold, we won first place in one event. It was a lot of fun and we met a lot of new people -- over 120 people from VSA's all over Orange County came to participate!

VAHSA's Spring Formal is on Saturday, March 29. It will be an amazing night with a seven course banquet, performances by bands, a DJ, dancefloor, and photobooth! For more details, check out vahsaspringformal.weebly.com.

Currently, VAHSA is also having an OC Register Fundraiser! If your family doesn't already have a subscription, you can sign up to receive a year's worth of Sunday newspapers for FREE. (Technically, it's 10¢, but we'll cover that for you!) VAHSA will get funds for each person who signs up.