

SCIENTIFIC ENGLISH IMMERSION WITH HANDS-ON EXPERIMENTATION ON MICROBIAL PLASTIC DEGRADATION IN VIETNAM

Culminating Activity

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Project Leader 1

Fulbright Alumni Exchange Program
Citizen Diplomacy Action Fund (CDAF)
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CULMINATING ACTIVITY ON AUGUST 10, 2024

Mentors (Dr. Điền Nguyễn, Dr. Nhon Dang, Prof. Meden F. Isaac-Lam, and Dr. Quang Ta Van; left to right) with participants during the culminating activity emceed by staff member Trần Phú Vinh.



CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH CDAF PARTICIPANTS



Team Lead 2 interacted and engaged the participants in a delightful conversation about their week-long in-person experience of the CDAF project at Tan Tao University. Participants (24) present gave positive feedback about their involvement and knowledge gained from the activities. Both mentors and participants alike are thinking about moving forward into the future and what they can do to promote environmental protection and provide alternative solutions to the seemingly insurmountable issues of plastic waste in Vietnam and the world. Participants are bilingual speaking both English and Vietnamese during the in-person activities.

CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH CDAF PARTICIPANTS



Võ Thị Minh Thảo (Biotechnology Center of Ho Chi Minh City) is a unique participant in the group for having already a research experience on plastic pollution. She is part of a team at her workplace to study the effect of plastic pollution on wastewater and on aquatic organisms in the Cần Giờ District (around Ho Chi Minh City). She mentioned that she would like to share results about this plastic project with others in the group who are interested. Her willingness to share knowledge with the other participants fits with the philosophy of CDAF (and the US State Department) in motivating and helping others to resolve current issues affecting the environment and our planet. In this CDAF workshop, she indicated that others are good in English, while others are good in Biology. However, as a team, everyone tries to help each other for the common goal in cleaning up the community. Lastly, she thanked CDAF and the faculty mentors for this project. Hopefully, the Vietnamese students and research scientists would be able to participate and contribute in reducing pollution not only in Vietnam but also worldwide.

CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH CDAF PARTICIPANTS



Student participant Châu Ngọc Khánh Vân (UEH-International School of Business) expressed her sincere gratitude to CDAF for funding and thanked her mentors for guiding the group in this project. As her personal experience, she mentioned that team helped her in understanding the biology aspect of the activities in spite of her background as an International Business student and minimal formal instructions in science. She emphasized that doing business does not mean that money is the only focus, but one has to take care of the effect of the business on the environment. She also believed that researchers and professors are now providing training and education to the university students to make the world a better place.

CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH CDAF PARTICIPANTS



Feedback of the project from participant Bùi Nư Ngọc Yên (Nong Lam University) as her peers and Team Lead 1 listened. She thanked the Project Team for creating a nice environment for the participants. For a long time, she said that she did not practice her English. This project gave her an opportunity to communicate again in English, and she gained confidence that she can follow the workshop. She mentioned that the CDAF mentors are dedicated by putting sincere efforts to make Vietnam clean. She gave Team Leader 1 a gift (a lyophilized yogurt!) produced by her team at Nong Lam University.

CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH CDAF PARTICIPANTS



Nguyễn Thảo Trang (University of Social Sciences and Humanities) said that she was not sure not this project will fit to her schedule this summer. However, much to her surprise, she got more than she expected. Her most interesting experience is that she has a chance to work with many people of different skill and expertise. She can see that everyone will be an expert in his/her own field. She said that her fellow participants do not hesitate to share their knowledge with her.



Nguyễn Trọng Nhân (Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology) expressed appreciation for the professors and organizers of the workshop, and especially Prof. Meden for coming over to Vietnam all the way from the US to work and teach them. He can see all the energy that the Team Leader and staff bring to the project. He also thanked the participants for sharing their knowledge with him and that he learned a lot from them.

CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH CDAF PARTICIPANTS



Team Lead 1 and audience listened to the remarks from Vi Nha Tran (Can Tho University). Lecturer Vi mentioned that this CDAF project is very meaningful for her and that we all need to be aware of solving plastic pollution.

CDAF PARTICIPANTS WITH CERTIFICATES



Participants from Can Tho University (Nguyen Van To Huu, Lê Nguyễn Bình, Phan Thảo Nguyên, and Vi Nha Tran) after receiving a Certificates of Participation, posing with faculty mentor.



Proud moments and all smiles from Nguyễn Thị Ngọc and Lê Kim Ánh expressing appreciation after each received a CDAF Certificate of Participation.

CDAF PARTICIPANTS DURING CULMINATING EVENT

