



# 15 Years

Catch the dream



2023

# REPORT

REACH INSTITUTE  
[www.reach-vietnam.org](http://www.reach-vietnam.org)

## 2023 REPORT

# MESSAGES FROM REACH TEAM

**2023 is REACH's 15th birthday. Now, REACH is heading to its 16th birthday. Let's see what REACH staff share for this special milestone!**

"Being part of REACH has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Since becoming involved in 2008, I have seen firsthand the profound need for our support among disadvantaged individuals. This understanding has motivated us to overcome numerous challenges over the past 15 years. These efforts have been worthwhile, as they have allowed us to create brighter futures for our youth and contributed significantly to REACH's growth, enabling us to aim for greater achievements.

As we enter our 16th year, we focus on innovation and diversifying our efforts into several areas: Thriving Communities, Food Systems and Agriculture, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Climate Action and Biodiversity Conservation, Youth and Education, Health Care and Wellbeing.

We are excited to pilot new initiatives, innovate, and collaborate with partners to deliver value to the next generation in Vietnam."



**Mr. Stanley Jones - Director Strategy & Program Development**



**Mr. Stanley Jones with Hue team**



**Ms. Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen - Vice Director**

"I have been working at REACH for over 15 years. It is a wonderful journey with many memorable stories, activities and memories. When REACH is 16 years old, the team still clings to the inspiration and dream of building a better future for disadvantaged youth across Vietnam.

As a Vice Director at REACH, I will continue to commit to supporting disadvantaged students. I look forward to meeting more new students and helping them pursue their dreams in the 16th year of REACH".

# KEY ACHIVEMENTS

2023 is one of the best milestones of REACH in the 15-year journey.

**SINCE 2004**



Students  
trained

**21,000+**



Students  
with  
disabilities

**1089**



Students  
employed

**80%**

Students  
trained

**1048**

Students  
employed

**87%**

Female  
disabled  
students  
trained ICT

**97**

Students of  
minor  
ethnicities

**227**

Students  
with  
disabilities

**140**

## 2023 REPORT

# Empowering students with disabilities to enter the hospitality industry



In an inspiring initiative to promote inclusivity and empower the deaf community, REACH has recently introduced cooking and bartending classes tailored specifically for deaf students. These classes, typically span one to three months, aim to provide essential skills and opportunities for individuals with hearing impairments to thrive in the culinary and hospitality industry.

Partnering with KymViet, a company with 100% of employees who are deaf, REACH has created a conducive environment for learning and skill development. The collaboration with KymViet offers a professional setting for the classes and opens doors for real-world experience and networking within the industry.

The bartending class accommodates five enthusiastic students and provides comprehensive training in mixology, beverage preparation, and customer service.

Led by experienced instructors who are fluent in

One of the remarkable aspects of these classes is the emphasis on inclusivity and accessibility. Recognizing the unique needs of deaf students, REACH ensures that all instructional materials are adapted to accommodate different learning styles and communication preferences.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that three students from the cooking class have secured employment opportunities with Pepperonis Pizza, a prominent brand under Al Fresco, a well-known culinary brand in Vietnam. This achievement underscores the effectiveness of REACH's training programs in preparing students for successful integration into the workforce fields.

sign language, the course ensures that each student receives personalized attention and guidance throughout their learning journey. From mastering classic cocktails to honing their communication skills behind the bar, participants are equipped with the expertise and confidence to excel in the dynamic field of bartending.

Similarly, the cooking class, enrolling five dedicated students, focuses on fundamental culinary techniques, recipe development, and kitchen management. Through hands-on training sessions and interactive demonstrations, aspiring chefs are introduced to the artistry and precision required in professional cooking. From knife skills to flavour pairing, the curriculum fosters creativity and proficiency in the culinary arts, empowering students to pursue rewarding careers in the culinary industry.



# 2023 REPORT

## Adapting green skills today, building sustainability tomorrow

Green skills is one of the most important content of REACH's programs. With green skills, REACH expects to have students contribute to environmental protection. In particular, REACH mainstream green skills in each area that helps students apply them in their daily work. Some regulations will be used strictly to ensure all content is understandable and applicable to students from different backgrounds.

In 2023, REACH had a big step in implementing green skills in the daily life. One of the biggest effort was installing the solar panel system to provide solar electricity for the Hairdressing class. The students used this source of electricity to wash hair for people. According to the statistic software, REACH saved about 300 KWh of electricity. This number was equal to 9,01 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>, 33,37 liters of coal. Thanks to this, they contributed to a greener life considerably.



### Revenue & Savings

Today	This Month	Total
0 VND	44929.5 VND	584102.95 VND

### Environmental Contribution

 Plant	 CO <sub>2</sub>	 Coal
0.5 trees	9.01 kg	33.37 liters

According to some students, they found that green skills were not difficult to implement but their benefits were huge. Specifically, F&B students had to learn how to save ingredients, choose organic ingredients, clean equipment and maintain a high standard of hygiene in the working area. It was novel knowledge with many bartenders because most of them believed that the main task of bartenders was making beverages. However, bartenders were not only assigned to create beverages but also responsible for keeping a healthy environment for their customers. Therefore, they had to learn how to comply with hygiene standards and have appropriate attitudes towards customers and managers.

Regarding 2D or 3D students, their green skills are associated with computers and machines. Specifically, IT students had to control the amount of electricity consumed. They had to save water, and electricity as much as possible to contribute to saving costs for their companies. It was an advantage that REACH students can offer businesses and the environment in general.

## 2023 REPORT

# BridgeFest 2023: Bridge the gap, develop the human economy



*Mr. Dung Tran - REACH Hue Manager joined the joint speech*



*REACH's booth at BridgeFest 2023*

The BridgeFest 2023 was a momentous occasion that brought together music lovers and advocates for social change from all walks of life. Held as a free, inclusive festival, it served as a platform for renowned artists from across the world to share their talents alongside local Vietnamese performers. Adding to the festival's richness was the participation of 40 social organizations, each bringing their unique missions and causes to the forefront.

Among the sea of attendees, REACH, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering disadvantaged youths through education and vocational training, stood proudly as it celebrated its seven-year journey. For REACH, the festival held a special significance, symbolizing not only its commitment to fostering positive change but also its deep-rooted connection to the community it serves.

This year, REACH made its presence felt at BridgeFest by sending a dedicated team from its Hue Center to represent the organization. For the members of the local team, this marked a significant milestone as they stepped onto the festival grounds filled with a mix of nervous excitement and pride. As they navigated through the bustling crowds and vibrant performances, they found themselves immersed in a whirlwind of unforgettable experiences and meaningful interactions. One of the standout moments for REACH at the festival was when Mr. Dung Tran, the esteemed manager of the Hue Center, took to the stage alongside leaders from co-organizers such as the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the United States Mission to Vietnam, and representatives from prominent embassies and charitable organizations including Oxfam and ECUE. Standing shoulder to shoulder with these influential figures, Mr. Dung Tran shared REACH's inspiring journey and its tireless efforts to empower youth and create positive change in society.

As the sun set on BridgeFest 2023, leaving behind echoes of laughter, music, and camaraderie, the spirit of unity and hope lingered in the hearts of all who had come together to make the festival a resounding success. For REACH and its dedicated team, the memories and connections forged at the festival would serve as a beacon of inspiration as they continued their journey to empower youth and build a brighter future for generations to come.

# 2023 REPORT

## A year full of inspiration and cultural learning

In September last year, the United States Embassy of Vietnam orchestrated a series of impactful events featuring Christine Ha, aimed at inspiring local communities and promoting Vietnam's culinary heritage on a global stage. Among the esteemed stops on Master Chef Christine Ha's itinerary in Vietnam was REACH.

Many students at REACH eagerly anticipated Christine Ha's cooking demonstration. During the event, some of the students at REACH, particularly those facing disadvantages, were intrigued by Christine Ha's journey

as a visually impaired chef. They raised questions about the challenges she encountered and how she overcame them, finding inspiration in her story. Among the attendees were deaf students who were especially moved by Ha's demonstration, quickly idolizing her as a symbol of resilience and possibility.



Regarding the extracurricular activities, students had a chance to visit the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology. This activity encouraged students to study minor ethnicities because many of them were ethnic people. This trip was expected to be an occasion to strengthen the solidarity among REACH students and help ethnic students integrate into the new environment better.

Apart from visiting the museum, students also joined team-building games which allowed students from different classes to make friends with each other.

In September - October 2023, REACH's students had a chance to join the Green Wind Choir. They had a performance at "The Circle of Green Choral Concert 2023" in Hanoi with meaningful songs. These songs encouraged the life justice and peace for all disadvantaged people.

As disadvantaged youth pursuing vocational training programs at REACH, students were proud to join a social event. They had an opportunity to befriend people from similar backgrounds, which consolidated their confidence to face hardship.



## 2023 REPORT

### Nguyen Minh Chau: I never stop trying for my dream and believe “What will be, will be”



REACH believes that its students are special in many ways. They are strong enough to overcome hardships, confident enough to conquer challenges, and optimistic enough to believe in new opportunities. Nguyen Minh Chau is special like that. Enrolled in the 2D class, Batch 7 of the REACH centre in Ho Chi Minh City, he has fostered a dream to pursue a higher education institution. However, at the time, Chau could not orient himself on what to do next because

he had to find a stable job to support his family. As a result, he focused on studying and set his passion aside. It was a wise choice because Chau proved that he was one of the best students of this batch and he was more confident to conquer higher goals, including studying university .

Accidentally, Chau learned that REACH partnered with RMIT University to offer full scholarships for disadvantaged youth. It was a turning point for Chau because he was determined to apply for the scholarship which was considered the key to opening a new door for him. Therefore, Chau put a lot of effort into preparing documents. Also, he paid for an IELTS course to improve his English speaking. According to Chau, it was, at that time, a huge investment because he just started his career. But he paid off, this investment helped him to pass the interview round successfully.

Becoming the winner after many intense rounds, Nguyen Minh Chau appreciated this chance very much. He understood that he had to pay for it with more effort than his classmates so he promised himself that he could



continue working hard to prove that he deserved this great opportunity. In particular, he still accompanies REACH in many activities of the alumni community and supports other disadvantaged people to realise their dreams like him.

REACH has many students who became owners of the RMIT Scholarship in the past few years and each of them was a great example for REACH’s students and disadvantaged youth in general to follow. It was also one of the goals motivating REACH to cooperate with RMIT University to launch this scholarship.



## 2023 REPORT

# Overcoming Silence: Ta Thi Chinh's Journey from Adversity to Culinary Success

Ta Thi Chinh, born on November 29, 2003, hails from the rural area of Dong Xuan, Soc Son, in the vibrant city of Hanoi. Her story is one of resilience and determination, as she overcomes personal and familial challenges to carve out a brighter future for herself and her loved ones.

Growing up in a family with modest means, Chinh's mother works tirelessly as a labourer, earning a monthly income of around 5-6 million VND. Her father supplements the family's income through farming and occasional construction work. Life is not easy for the family of seven, which includes Chinh, her two younger siblings, and her elderly grandparents, who are no longer able to work. Chinh, born deaf and mute, faces additional challenges, but her spirit remains unbroken.



Despite the difficulties, Chinh's determination to learn and grow never wavered. She discovered REACH, an organization dedicated to empowering young people through vocational training, through a friend who also faced similar challenges. This discovery marked the beginning of a transformative journey for Chinh.

Enrolling in a Cooking class at REACH, Chinh found herself in an environment that was both nurturing and encouraging. "I am very happy and excited because I can make my favorite dishes," she shares. The teachers, known for their friendliness, enthusiasm, and dedication, made the learning experience enjoyable. Her classmates, equally supportive, created a harmonious and joyful atmosphere. Thanks to this, Chinh had a great time at REACH with colourful experiences and good friends.

Chinh's hard work and passion paid off when she secured a position as a Pizza kitchen assistant at Alfresco Group. This opportunity not only provided her with valuable professional experience but also brought her closer to her dream of financial stability. With a stable job, Chinh hopes to support herself and alleviate some of the economic pressures on her family.

Ta Thi Chinh's story is a testament to the power of perseverance and the impact of supportive educational environments. Her journey from a challenging upbringing to finding joy and purpose in her work serves as an inspiration to many. As Chinh continues to grow in her career, she remains committed to helping her family and paving the way for a brighter future.

## 2023 REPORT

### Alumni spotlights: Continuous dedication for REACH's development

In the framework of the 15th anniversary, REACH established a logo designing competition for alumni students. This contest was expected to strengthen the bond between alumni students and REACH. In particular, this contest allowed alumni students to release their creativity in response to REACH's 15th anniversary.

Therefore, this activity attracted various alumni students who had a passion for graphic design. After the announcement of the contest was released, many students submitted their products which reflected REACH's inspirits through 15 years.

Specifically, the alumni students were invited to design logos to celebrate REACH's 15th anniversary. In response to REACH's expectations, many alumni students sent their designs to compete. It was an honour for REACH because it proved that REACH had an important position in alumni students' hearts. Also, it indicated that they were willing to support REACH whenever REACH needs.



In addition, alumni participation in teaching at REACH plays a crucial role in supporting disadvantaged youth. These former students bring a unique perspective and a wealth of experience that deeply resonates with the young individuals they mentor. By sharing their personal journeys and success stories, alumni provide relatable role models and inspire students to persevere despite challenges.



Their involvement extends beyond academic instruction, as they often offer guidance on career development, life skills, and emotional resilience. This mentorship helps bridge the gap between education and real-world applications, fostering a supportive community that empowers disadvantaged youth to reach their full potential. Through their commitment, alumni significantly enhance the impact of REACH's programs, creating a lasting positive influence on the lives of the students they serve.

## 2023 REPORT

### Ngo Van Quyet: “I hope my students are like sunflowers, always facing towards the sun and striving forward”

A teacher needs to have a compassionate and empathetic heart towards students, but one who shares the same circumstances, having walked the path the students are currently on, is even more valuable. Ngo Van Quyet is such a teacher. Unfortunately born with osteogenesis imperfecta, Quyet was aware that he would face many challenges on the path of learning and his future career. Worries and anxieties are unavoidable, but Quyet did not succumb to them. When faced with the depths of loss, his inner spirit rose stronger than ever.

"My life has encountered many difficulties that others perhaps cannot imagine, but because of this, I have no other path than to strive diligently." With this belief, Quyet gradually conquered the path to becoming a professional photo editor. The IT industry is fiercely competitive, demanding expertise, technique, patience, and perseverance. With his strong determination, Quyet completed his course and successfully entered the IT industry as a photo editor at Pixel company.



*The US Ambassador visited Quyet's class in 2021*  
After many years of working, Quyet made a decision full of humanity, which was to return to REACH but in a new role - as a teacher. Unlike in the past, Quyet came to REACH to learn, but now he has become a teacher, directly igniting the flame for generations of disadvantaged students, providing them with additional motivation to pursue their dreams and build their lives as they desire.



At the beginning of 2024, Quyet guested the “Love Station” program on the VTV1 channel, Vietnam National Television. He had an opportunity to talk about his journey, family and memories while working as a teacher at REACH. With Quyet, everything is valuable and consolidates his expectation to support more disadvantaged students so they can be sunflowers who always face the sun, successful in the IT industry as well and rely on themselves to build their lives.

# 2023 REPORT

## Special thanks to donors and business partners

REACH sincerely thanks our generous donors and valued business partners for your unwavering support. Your contributions have been instrumental in helping us achieve our goals and make a meaningful impact on disadvantaged youth. Your partnership and commitment inspire us to strive for greater success, and we are incredibly thankful for your continued trust and collaboration.



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## About REACH

REACH is a Vietnamese non-profit organization specializing in research, vocational training, career advice, and job placement services for disadvantaged Vietnamese youth.

We TARGET YOUNG PEOPLE WHO suffer from poverty or discrimination, such as human trafficked survivors, victims of domestic violence, those living with HIV/AIDS or disabilities, street children, migrant youth, school dropouts, and ethnic minorities.

Over 15 YEARS, we have educated over 21,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 30. Of those, we have placed more than 80% in decent employment. As such, REACH has contributed to achieving Vietnam's SDGs and national development strategies for youth development.

# MORE ABOUT US



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