



The William Colenso College Vietnam connection



Following are comments by former Colenso students from Vietnam.

NGUYEN THIEN NGAN (*Catherine*)

I've been in New Zealand one year for studying. Since I came here, I've had many new challenges in a new life. But I'm glad to learn all these things. That makes me independent to live and study.

New Zealand is a nice and friendly environment for living and studying. Napier city is not too cold in the winter like other cities in New Zealand. I'm studying in William Colenso College. Here, I enjoy studying the subjects I like to learn. The Teacher Aids are very helpful to international students. They help me when I don't understand the second language. They are also good friends to share some things with students.

I went to another city in New Zealand with the international group. That was a great trip for me and I will never ever forget it. It wasn't like a school trip in Vietnam where you just stay in the hotel, eat in restaurants and sit in the car. This was an adventure. I can't describe how great it was. I have Outdoor Education on my list of subjects. That's the one I like best. I learn many skills for surviving in emergency and have many adventures. I have many feelings when I study this subject – scary – happy – scream – silent – tired - excited...etc.

I have lots of international friends from everywhere in the world. They're friendly and funny. We have many beautiful memories at school. William Colenso College is a good school for anyone who wants to improve English. I enjoy my life here!

(Catherine achieved University Entrance and went on to study at Victoria University in Wellington).





NGUYEN NGOC THANH PHUONG (*Keiko*)

Hi – I'm Keiko Nguyen. I'm studying at William Colenso College. I have found many new and interesting things here. William Colenso College gives a chance for every student to study. Your parents will be pleased if they send you to this school because they always care and help you like a member of the family. Napier is a peaceful place. It is not crowded like big cities and I enjoy it. There are not many Asian or Vietnamese people, so it is a good place to practise your English.

William Colenso College is a big international family. There are Chinese, German, Malaysian, Thai, Japanese ... They are very nice and awesome. Teachers in this school are highly educated and friendly. They help you any time if you don't understand. You can even share your life with them. They always sit down, listen to you and give you the best advice like a second parent. I enjoy my life in Napier. I will be very sad when I leave. I will have good memories which will stay in my heart through my whole life.

(Keiko passed University Entrance and went on to study at Victoria University in Wellington)



NGUYEN BA LINH CHI (*Maggie*)

Time has flown. I cannot believe I have been here for more than two years. If you ask me what the most wonderful thing I've done was, I wouldn't know where to start. During my time here I have experienced a lot. From a sixteen year old immature girl to being a young woman is a real journey.

My first year in New Zealand was quite difficult because it was the first time I lived away from my family. My homestay family was very nice, but they could not replace my real family. But for me it was like escape from prison. It felt great to have freedom which I never had in my home country. In the second year I felt a lot better because I had more friends. I love them so much. It's not only about having fun when you have friends, it's also a chance for me to care for people. I love to see people happy, even more when the happiness comes from me.

Education at Colenso is very exciting. We can choose a lot of subjects. I am taking subjects which I had never known before, but I caught on quickly and enjoy them because of the creative style in each lesson. I am studying English, Film, ESOL, Design, Photography and Music.

It's hard to say exactly what my feelings are about living in a different country, but life is exciting. Thank you Colenso for giving me the knowledge and love I now know.

(Maggie completed her University entrance at William Colenso College and is now studying Fashion Design in Italy.)



PHAN THANH VINH

Making your own decision to study abroad is very tough, especially when you don't know which country to go to. But when I came here I thought I had made the right choice. New Zealand educational qualifications are internationally recognised. New Zealand government provides a hospitable environment for international students.

At William Colenso College I chose Calculus, Statistics, English, Physics, Chemistry, Computing and Barista (which is making coffee – one of the most interesting subjects). I have improved my English skill under the teacher's instruction so much. From an illiterate boy I started enjoying reading English novels and can spend hours discussing political issues with the teacher.

I realise the difference between the Vietnamese and the new Zealand education systems is that in New Zealand they are concerned about how you can apply the knowledge in the real world. I have carried out chemistry and physics experiments which were fun and improved my confidence.

In the break time I usually play badminton or basketball with my friends. We also talk about computing and future careers. New Zealand has naturally beautiful scenery which is absolutely suitable for us to visit and camp overnight. Here, I also make friends with Kiwis and learn from them a lot of Maori culture.

I will not forget about the amazing time in Napier because it helps me to be more mature.

(Vinh passed University Entrance and went on to successfully complete his studies at the University of Auckland)





NGUYEN THIEN AN (*Mark*)

'DUX' 2010 – a Colenso International Success Story.

"A practise makes perfect attitude" - I always bear in mind that my own resolution to succeed is more important than any other. Achieving my personal goals and being successful in my life are two things that motivate me to study.

By studying at William Colenso College since 2008, school prepared for me a strong background of knowledge and provided for me an opportunity to pursue my dream. After two years, I found Mathematics and History are really useful in many aspects of my life so I decided to specialise in Law and Finance when I get into University.

There are some factors that affected my decision to study at William Colenso College (WCC). First of all, William Colenso College's senior courses are based on NCEA Qualification which is the main qualification for secondary students in New Zealand. Therefore, WCC ensures all students will have a qualification which is internationally recognised and mostly respected, in order to advance to tertiary education. Secondly, one of the things I like about WCC is its high quality and educational standards such as excellent library, computer system and science labs. Furthermore, I can have strong support from the enthusiastic teachers in WCC and they all have a high expectation of their students. Apart from the books' information, the lessons which were taught by the teachers are the most important knowledge throughout two years at WCC.

Finally, WCC is located in Napier, which is one of the most beautiful cities in New Zealand, comprising of a busy harbour, hills and forests, which encircle the main city. It is also the celebration point for festivals such as ART DECO which are held each year. In my opinion, Napier is a great place to balance my daily routine between study and leisure time.

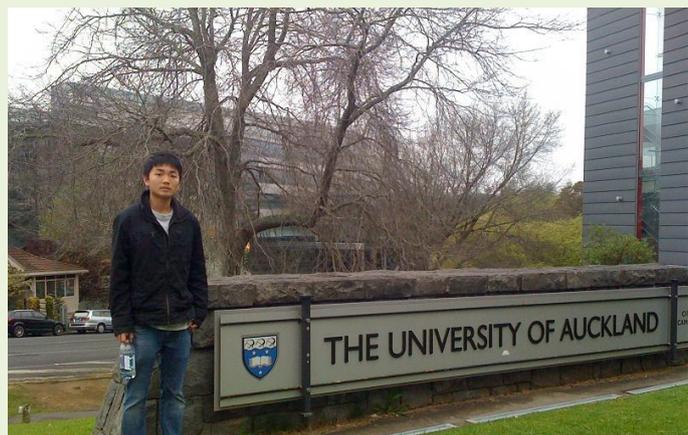
"Nothing is impossible." I realized my ability in Mathematics and fell in love with it in year 11. At William Colenso College, I was taught how to think logically, apply knowledge, skills, understanding and ideas to complex situations and problems. By working very hard this year, I am hoping to achieve NCEA level 3 with endorsement and am trying my best to gain Scholarships in Mathematics with Calculus and Statistic and Modelling. I also participated in the badminton team. Our senior badminton team won the tournament competition.

I have a dream of being Finance Minister in Vietnam and playing an important role in Vietnam's economic system. I have the discipline to work hard and complete my tertiary education. As a result of hard work, I was awarded Dux of school which is the most prestigious award in New Zealand secondary schools.

William Colenso College has prepared me really for my tertiary education. I would like to thank all the supports from the teachers as well as great help from the staff in the International Department. William Colenso College has provided me with my first steps to succeed in my life.



Mark tries out his host mum's kitchen.



Mark went on to study Finance and Economics at The University of Auckland.



NGUYEN NGOC MINH TRI

A bit longer than one year ago, I arrived in Napier, New Zealand to start a new chapter of my life. A chapter which has been incredible so far for me with so many experiences that I wouldn't expect to have before. Napier is such a small city compared to Ho Chi Minh City. This means that it was quite different for me to live in.

I was so used to be in energetic vibe of a big city where people are always rushing to their workplace, school places. Then suddenly, I came to this little town where people are just so chilled with their life.



The air is way better than Ho Chi Minh City. You can breath and feel that green, cool air and it is just so much better. I can go to school without suffering any traffic jam or all the smoke from vehicles. I think Napier city is just a healthier city to live in because of the size of it. I went to William Colenso College and I am a Year 13 student now. The school and education here is so much different than where I am from. Students go to school at 8:40 and go back at 3pm and there are no extra classes. Having been in an education that makes students study from 7 am to nearly 8pm sometimes, I feel like the school here is much more comfortable and the time period is just better.

I don't have to wake up at 5:30 AM to prepare for school and I have way more time at home to do my hobbies or study. Less time at school doesn't mean the quality is not there. While Vietnamese school made me study more than 14 subjects, Kiwi school only makes me choose 6 subjects to study. 14 is heaps more than 6 but do I really need all 14 subjects that they made me study? No, I don't. I only need 6 main subjects that will help me do well in University not 14 subjects that have nothing to do with my degree. When you study 14 subjects, the workload is just way heavier and because there was so much of it, I couldn't focus on what I wanted to learn. Studying only 6 subjects that I have chosen help me to focus on what I really need.

The teachers here are great too. They are all really friendly and they make me feel like they are my friends. The way they give us the knowledge is in a more practical way as we are always doing assessment and not just studying theories although theories are still important. More freedom of speech in kiwi classrooms is also very noticeable for me as I can ask as many questions as I want. I really like how they work here in the Kiwi classroom. Friends and family is one thing international student like me miss the most when we go far away. However it is not so bad because the friends here are just so friendly. They are no different than my friends in Vietnam. They are funny and I can joke and tell them anything too. I have heard Vietnamese students complain about lonely times in foreign countries when they didn't try to make friend with the local people. They didn't know that these kiwi friends could be even better than their Vietnamese friends. Not just kiwi friends but you can have friends from other countries too. Germany, Belgium, Brazil, Japan,... it is just diverse here. You can find friends everywhere. Just don't be shy and don't stick to your Vietnamese group. I had a German best friend and we had fun just like with any of my Vietnamese friends. My kiwi friends helped me to get my English going much stronger and the best thing is that I can learn some accent and slang words from them which makes my English skill more unique compared to other Vietnamese. My host family now is so great. They are so friendly and they care so much about me just like my real parents. They cook the foods that I like to eat and they even bought a smart TV for me and my host brother to use. I talk with them about my day so I won't be missing home anymore. Sporting here is great as the young people here are just so energetic.

They helped me to pick up new sports too. My German mates got me into bodybuilding and keeping in shape. I snowboard for the first time here in New Zealand and it was literally the best thing I have ever done.

The scenery on top of the mountain was the best thing I have seen so far. I played football and table tennis at lunch time and after school.

I have to say life here is just as good as life in Vietnam for me and I really feel like having a second home here. I don't know how I will feel when I leave this place in December as I love this place so much. I will definitely come back as I will go to AUT in Auckland and its quite close to Napier.

