Hello again my beautiful VSU members and welcome to a very special edition of Vung Tien Lite. People have been asking me, what’s the difference between Vung Tien and Vung Tien Lite. Well, Vung Tien is your opportunities as members to add to our wonderful newsletter. In here, you’ll find interesting cultural tidbits, funny anecdotes, as well as more pictures! This week, in particular, is a very special edition because VNLC is in the house! Woot woot! Hopefully, this meeting will help you get to know more about our wonderful sister organization, as well as some fun tidbits about VSU as well! So, go, socialize!

What Went Down…

"I’d never seen a beach so nice." - Van Duong

The very violent football game where Daniel and Tina got tackled, many MANY times.

"It was really fun, CAL is rated #10 in the nation" - John, VSU intern

"Overrated!" - Phong, APC Rep
A History of VSU: Part Một

Once Upon a Time in Vietnam...

In April 1975, Saigon fell to the Communist party. Over a million refugees escaped from Vietnam in search for freedom and democracy. Those who immigrated to America became political refugees. Many struggled, facing great difficulties assimilating into a new culture and surviving in a new homeland. Few Vietnamese students enjoyed adequate financial stability to enter college in America. Those who did, however, had to endure their hardships alone in college since there was a lack of Vietnamese student support groups. The situation at UCLA was no different.

1977: The creation of the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA) at UCLA

During the next few years, more Vietnamese entered UCLA, establishing a small community amidst a sea of different cultures. In 1977, students at UCLA formed the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA) which emphasized the preservation of the Vietnamese culture and heritage. It is through their efforts that the organization retained its cultural identity, while producing annual Vietnamese culture shows (also known as VCN, contact Karen for more info). VSA also joined the Asian Coalition, predecessor of the Asian Pacific Coalition (for more info on APC, ask Phong Pham).

1978: VSA establishes its community service program, the Refugee Aid Project, to provide services to refugees.

As waves of refugees continued to flee political persecution into the United States, particularly into the Westwood area, the Vietnamese Student Association initiated community outreach programs. In 1978, VSA established the Refugee Aid Project to ease their difficult life transition, a familiar and recent experience for the Vietnamese students.

1980: VSA and the Refugee Aid Project split up.

That same year, however, tensions arose between the mother organization, VSA, and its committee, the Refugee Aid Project, which was later renamed to the Vietnamese Refugee Aid Committee (VRAC). The nature of the two organizations was different; VSA presented a more localized focus, while VRAC focused beyond UCLA in reaching out to the community. In 1980, the two officially broke off. VSA continued to stay semi-political and worked to improve social and cultural aspects. Café Âm was brought about in 1987 for this reason and still exists to this day.

Did VSA and VRAC ever reconcile their differences? Find out in the next edition of Vung Tien.

UVSA = Union of Vietnamese Student Association

It’s a non-profit, non-partisan, community-based organization, was founded in 1982 a mean for youths to organize socially and politically within the local community. Committed to cultural awareness, educating youths, and community service, the UVSA staff is composed of volunteers including UVSA alumni, young professionals, educators, colleges (including UCLA), and high school students. Encompassing the finest young leaders in the Vietnamese American community, UVSA strives to accomplish its goals of educational, charitable, and cultural programs.

Servicing the Vietnamese American community of Southern California, UVSA works collaboratively with local Vietnamese American youth organizations in the Southern California area. To these ends, we organize a wide range of social, cultural, political, and educational activities to help Vietnamese American youths develop a sense of their heritage and identity.

UVSA organizational goals include:

- Bringing together students from different colleges and high schools to build unity and solidarity between Vietnamese American youths in Southern California, in the United States, and in the international Vietnamese community.
- Representing the diverse and dynamic Vietnamese youth population by encouraging interaction, participation, and activism in the Vietnamese American community.
- Promoting awareness of the Vietnamese culture, language, and history. Encouraging a growth of leadership and service amongst Vietnamese youths.

Why we love UVSA:

"They give us money!" - Daniel, VSU President

"They connect us with other schools around Southern California and because Alyssa’s in it." - Timmay, Fiscal Officer

The crazy UVSA staff. Look, there's Alyssa!
You Know You’re Vietnamese When…

1. You look older than you really are.
2. Your parents think you’re 12 when you’re really 18.
3. When you go out to buy clothes you have to buy them 3 sizes too big for you to grow in and for any younger brother or sister to have for Christmas a few years down the line.
4. At least one of your parents are in a self owned business like Laundromat, Nails, or Apartments.
5. Guests leave their shoes at the door and everyone wears slippers when walking around the house.
6. Your parents think you’re the worst kid.
7. Your family owns a copy of one or all of the “Big 3” videos, “Paris by Night,” “Asia,” or “Van Son.”
8. You watch Vietnamese translated movies that are 30 tapes long.
9. You go to Little Saigon once in a while or every weekend or everyday!
10. While you are in Little Saigon, you always go to Phước Lộc Thọ where you head straight into that Asian Collection music store.
11. There’s Chinese in your family line somewhere.
12. You’re loyal to ALL of your friends.
14. Guys: You either have high spikes or slicked small bangs combed back.
15. You like Durian.
16. Your parents don’t buy trash bags, they use grocery bags from the supermarket.
17. Cao gió, coining your back with Eagle oil, is the perfect remedy for any illness. Heck, eagle oil by itself is the perfect remedy for any illness.
18. You use your dishwasher to store clean dishes.
19. You put soy sauce and/or nước mắm on every food.
20. You show your Viet-pride to the fullest.
21. As you’re reading this, you’re thinking, “that’s so true!”