



## UPCOMING EVENTS

June 4th  
VIA 2020 launch party in San Francisco

June 18th  
VIA 2020 launch party in Palo Alto

June 25th  
Cliff's Farewell Event

For more details about these events, please visit our website at: [viaprograms.org](http://viaprograms.org)

## WHAT'S INSIDE

After 5 years at the helm, Executive Director Cliff Chan announces his departure (back page)

VIA is planning for the future: Check out our vision for VIA 2020 (page 2)

Inaugural Social Innovation Educator Exchange (page 3)

Visit Myanmar -- sign up for our next study tour (back page)



# VIA In Myanmar – Celebrating 10 Years

**VIA supports a developing civil society in Myanmar, seeking out innovative educational institutions that provide young people with the skills to become leaders in rebuilding their country.**

Thanks to an introduction brokered by Dwight Clark, VIA's founder, VIA began quietly sending teachers to Myanmar in 2006, long before the country opened up. We started at the Pre-Collegiate Program of the Diplomatic School, Yangon, which was one of the only institutions offering a bridge to study in the U.S. at the time. In 2012, we expanded with a generous three-year grant from the Henry Luce Foundation.

Currently, there are four fellows working in schools and NGO's in Yangon, Mandalay and Inle Lake:

- 1) A vocational training center that trains village youth so they can find employment in the growing tourism sector around Inle Lake
- 2) A bridge program for promising students

that helps them get into college, run by a monastery in Mandalay with a range of service programs that led Dwight to call it one of the most effective community organizations he has seen.

- 3) At International Rescue Committee in Yangon, where the fellow assists with project reports for water, sanitation and health projects and other international communication

- 4) At Kant Kaw, a training program that brings together students from many of Myanmar's provinces for a one year curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking and service to train students to go on for university study or return to their hometowns to teach and start community projects.

<continued on page 3>



# VIA 2020: BUILDING A GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF CHANGEMAKERS

The world has changed. Issues like climate change and poverty are more complex and urgent. Everything is more interconnected. And instead of building walls, VIA's life-changing cross-cultural experiences help to replace fear with empathy, and we need it now more than ever!

Our vision for VIA 2020 is to continue delivering international service and leadership development opportunities for emerging 21st Century leaders. People coming to VIA want to develop skills for creative problem solving and working in cross-cultural teams so they can make a meaningful difference. And our Asian partners are telling us they want these same things as part of a growing NGO scene that is powered by local innovators.

We have launched the VIA 2020 plan with three ambitious goals:

1. **Deepen Our Programs:** We are building leadership and creative problem solving skills into all our programs in the US and Asia. We have taken the bold step of eliminating the participant fee for the long term program and given it a new name: the Global Community Fellowship. The 14-month immersion into a local school or NGO community starts with a month of training where the fellows are also part of the leadership team for VIA's summer programs. Global teamwork, leadership and creative problem solving skills will empower them to lead the way in tackling social challenges!

2. **Expanding Our Impact:** We plan to grow our programs bringing Asian students to the U.S. by 70% so that there are 500 students coming from Asia by 2020. We also want to send more U.S. university and high school students to summer programs in Indonesia, Myanmar, China and Vietnam for internships at nonprofits and study programs with themes like sports for social change and environmental protection. Those programs have already doubled and will increase to over 200 participants by summer 2018.

## DEEPEEN PROGRAMS



Leadership Development



Cross-Cultural Competence

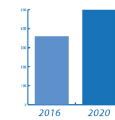


Creative Problem-Solving

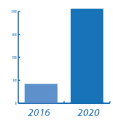
## EXPAND IMPACT



Increase short-term & custom program opportunities in Asia and Silicon Valley



Increase Silicon Valley Programs participants 70% to 500 by 2020



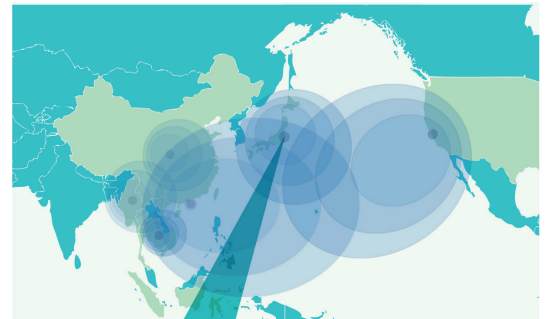
Increase short-term Asia program participants 6 times to 216 by 2020

## CREATE AN ECOSYSTEM OF SUPPORT

PREVIOUS VIA MODEL - ASIA-US EXCHANGE



VIA 2020 - AN INTERCONNECTED GLOBAL COMMUNITY



### NEW GLOBAL COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP MODEL



#### ALEX • VIA GLOBAL COMMUNITY FELLOW

As a VIA Global Community Fellow, Alex will...

- Teach at and support VIA partner, International School of Asia, Karuizawa (ISAK)
- Connect Japanese VIA alumni with ISAK students through mentorship and social impact projects
- Encourage and support ISAK students who apply, participate in, and return from VIA programs
- Strengthen alumni efforts to build community of changemakers in Japan

**3. Create an Ecosystem of Support:** During VIA's first 50 years we focused on a two-way exchange, enabling many Americans to enter an Asian community in a culturally sensitive way and creating opportunities for Asian students to visit the US for life-changing cross-cultural experiences. Now, at the beginning of the next 50 years, we want to expand the network of globally engaged change makers. In doing so, there will be hubs in Asia and the US where activity can radiate from all of them to promote the sharing of skills and ideas that will inspire a lifetime of civic engagement.

The world has changed but VIA's values are still the same - VIA continues to provide rich cross-cultural learning experiences in the US and Asia that bring people together, transform lives, and strengthen our global community. VIA's greatest asset is YOU, the VIA community. Your ongoing support is critical to grow our capacity, deepen learning and connections within programs and build an ecosystem of social impact.

## VIA holds first Social Innovation Educator Exchange



Panelist Shugo Yanaka, Associate Professor at BBT University in Japan, discusses launching one of his many social businesses.

Thanks to the support from the Japan Foundation, VIA held its first exchange program for Japanese educators teaching social innovation in February 2016. The program included visits to our Social Innovation & Global Leadership programs, and presentations in San Francisco and also at the AshokaU Exchange for social innovation educators at Tulane University in New Orleans.

At Stanford University, VIA and the Haas Center for Public Service co-hosted a panel discussion on social innovation across cultures. Educators from Stanford and Japan shared their experiences on effective ways of teaching social innovation and exchanged ideas on the role of experiential education and social innovation outside the classroom. Video of the panel discussion can be accessed from <http://tinyurl.com/gn9pof6m>.

We were so inspired by the passion, vision, and creativity of all the educators and are excited to support even more of their students to become global changemakers!

## VIA in Myanmar <continued from front page>



Students from our post at the Inle Heritage Hospitality Vocational Training Center

**HISTORIC ELECTIONS:** In November 2015, VIA fellows were on hand to witness the historic elections in Myanmar that handed the presidency to Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party. From their vantage point embedded in schools and NGOs, the VIA service fellows were able to hear from their colleagues and students their hopes and fears surrounding the election.

Pre-election tensions ran high - some citizens who posted satirical critiques of the military on Facebook were arrested. Kara Eusebio, posted by VIA at International Rescue Committee's office in Yangon, reported that, "As the results began to come in, the feeling in the air was one of disbelief. Our Myanmar national and international staff alike kept refreshing and refreshing our browser screens (slowly and painfully, after all, this is still Myanmar internet), not sure if the count was right—it didn't seem possible that NLD that getting so many votes."

**TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY:** As Myanmar opens to the outside world following decades of military rule and international sanctions, it faces a critical shortage of qualified people to work in the international NGOs that are expanding in the country. With the education system crippled by years of severely limited funding, the need for teachers with a strong background in critical thinking and English language is acute.

VIA is supporting rigorous educational programs that have emerged to prepare students for a changing workforce, a dynamic social sector and higher education both at home and abroad. We also work with NGOs that promote community development and access to clean water.

Investing in education in Myanmar is one of the most important ways to prepare young people to meet the many challenges the country faces in this time of transition. VIA fellows engage students in balanced discussions of ethnic diversity, one of Myanmar's most pressing issues given longstanding civil wars and controversial policies affecting minorities. They support student-led service projects that build a culture of civic involvement.

We have sent more than 20 Americans since 2006 to work with our partners, recently expanding beyond Yangon, the capital city. We remain committed to offering the best and brightest in Myanmar a chance to become leaders who work for social good, regardless of economic, ethnic or religious background.

# E.D. Cliff Chan bids VIA farewell



It has been an honor to serve as VIA's executive director for the past five years. As I leave VIA at the end of June to move to western New York where my husband is now working, I am grateful for the engagement of so many people who make it possible for VIA to connect cultures and change lives!

I'm really proud of our tremendous staff and board members who over the past five years have increased VIA's budget by \$1 million and expanded the number of participants by 60%. It has been rewarding to work with a team so dedicated to inspiring a new generation of globally-minded leaders.

VIA is well-positioned for continued growth as we begin the second year of VIA 2020, our strategic impact plan. There's incredible commitment to deepening VIA's educational impact, increasing the number of participants and making VIA more financially sustainable. I am confident that VIA remains in good hands!

Without a doubt, VIA's greatest asset is our supportive community of remarkable alumni and friends. I truly appreciate your friendship and unwavering support! Without you, VIA would not be thriving at age 53!!

A search is underway for VIA's next executive director. Please direct any interested people to the job description at [www.VIAprograms.org](http://www.VIAprograms.org)

It has been incredibly rewarding to serve on the VIA staff for 22 years. I look forward to remaining an active member of the VIA family and hope to see you at a future reunion!

Sincerely,

*Cliff Chan*



## VIA Study Tour: See democracy emerging in Myanmar

The world's newest democracy is emerging in Myanmar, and you have a chance to see it in person in October on VIA's fifth Myanmar study tour that will focus on political changes, civil society and grassroots development. The itinerary adds multiple stops in Shan State, Myanmar's largest state and home to many non-Burman minorities.

After the momentous political changes following Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) landslide win in the November 2015 national election, travelers will have a chance to assess what democracy looks and feels like in Burma. Your trip leaders experienced Burma's military police state on our first visit in 2009, under Dwight Clark's gentle but eye-opening leadership. It will be exciting to see the changes.

In addition to talking to journalists, political activists, civil society forces and other Myanmar stakeholders in Yangon and Mandalay, the itinerary will include VIA's customary contacts with innovative NGOs, VIA fellows/volunteers and inspiring people in Myanmar.

Myanmar veterans Tim and Mia Clark will co-lead the trip. The trip fee, which covers all meals and hotels and transportation in Myanmar, is \$4,800, which includes a \$1,000 tax-deductible donation to VIA. That cost does not include airfare, but Avia Travel has obtained a very favorable group rate of \$1,135 round trip on Cathay Pacific, but those reservations must be made by June 24, 2016, and altering travel dates or destinations may be difficult. Questions? Contact [tclark@factpoint.com](mailto:tclark@factpoint.com) or (650) 854-2861.

**Program Dates:** Sept. 29-Oct. 16, 2016, leaving from SFO

**Group Airfare Deadline:** June 24, 2016

**Final Application Deadline:** August 1, 2016