

## Traditional Reunion of War Comrades at DTU

War has receded far into the past, after 40 years of peace in Vietnam. Those glorious times have passed, but the memories, victories and the scars left in each battle will be burnt into the minds of the brothers-in-arms forever. On March 28th, the former revolutionary soldier known as Le Phuong Thao, now DTU President and Provost and Distinguished Teacher and his comrades organized a traditional reunion of the youth, students, academics and artists who fought together in the patriotic movement from 1954-1975 in South Vietnam.



*Distinguished Teacher Le Cong addresses the reunion*

Coming from Hue, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Lam Dong, and even from Ho Chi Minh City, the one-time youthful patriots made their way to Duy Tan University for the reunion, looking back on the road they travelled together and reminiscing about those times of “Stand Up and Go!” There were strong hugs and emotional tears of joy flowing because comrades who had fought together side-by-side were all meeting once again, after 40 long years of separation.

Distinguished Teacher Le Cong Co delivered an emotional and beautiful welcoming speech. He said: *“Today is an especially meaningful and happy day as we, old friends and brothers-in-arms, meet again and look back at that long road we traveled. The war caused so much pain and loss that many of our friends died young, in order to win independence and freedom for our country. The current generation is must strive to make Vietnam ever wealthier and more prosperous, elevating the spirit of our people to bring our country up to the stature of the world’s greatest powers. I retired at 51 and participated in the construction of Duy Tan University. Our attendance is now 20,000 a year but that is but a minor stroke of the pen in the whole picture of our country’s education. The lecturers of DTU are fully dedicated to graduating our youth into talented citizens who will contribute to the building of Vietnam, following in the footsteps of their fathers.”*



*The audience of one time youths, students, academics and artists of the patriotic movement from 1954 to 1975 in South Vietnam*

Distinguished Teacher Le Cong Co established the Le Phuong Thao Family True Heart Fund, with the aim of helping comrades of the movement who are now going through difficult times and to visit them. Furthermore, he suggested establishing a Board of Directors to maintain contact with comrades and organize some worthwhile activities, such as this reunion. DTU also plans to award more scholarships to the children of comrades of high achievement who wish to study at the university.

The meeting hall was filled with the sounds of heroic melodies praising the homeland, heroic songs of the young shock-troops on the battle field, and moving poetry calling all patriots to battle, reviving fond memories of their glorious struggle in the minds of the comrades and of the long, perilous roads they journeyed together.



*Attendees pose for pictures at the reunion*

“Forty years ago was the most beautiful time of our youth,” said Mr. Do Phap, Chairman of the Danang Student Association. *“Thank you Mr. Co for giving us this opportunity to once more sit together and reminisce about our young friends, who died for their country but live forever in our hearts and, together with us, can still recall those bygone years of fighting. Today’s reunion is really an important milestone in our lives, not only to express our feelings but also to bring us comrades for life back together. We are old now and our health is failing, but the flames of enthusiasm and aspiration of our youth will always burn bright and be kept alight by future generations, following in the footsteps of their fathers in order to live even more beautiful lives tomorrow.”*

*(Media Center)*