

2009/10 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Kraus Family Foundation Spotco Award



LONG TRAN
Fashion
Sophomore
Columbia College Chicago

I am very proud to have recently become a citizen of the United States after living here for five years. My parents have always valued an education. When I was 4 years old, my parents sent me to live with my uncle so that I could have access to more opportunities than in my smaller village. I lived with him until I was 13 and then my parents could come to immigrate to America from my hometown on the coast of Vietnam. Even though my parents did not want to leave their homeland, they saved money, gave up their jobs and left behind their families so that we could move to America. I feel a sense of duty to finish my education and to be successful. This motivates me to be the very best I can be.



Although I have lived in America for five years, I am still learning English, as well as many cultural things. Living in rural, western Kansas is not the most inspiring place for some of my futuristic fashion ideas. Because of my gregarious personality, I



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am able to present my ideas and not be discouraged by what others think of a guy that wants to design clothes. Now, I am a freshman in Columbia College Chicago. This will be a beginning place of my journey.

In the future I see many opportunities and successful projects that will change my community. Looking back, I see my parents working hard from sunrise to sunset and barely making it home to tuck me into bed. I also see racial slurs, "Hey, Chink!" yelled in my direction as I walked home from school alone. Though these have caused great strife in my life, they have also inspired me to rise above the obstacles and help others in my previous position. With my fashion design company I will try to help local students with an after-school program revolved around teaching them the business aspect as well as the technical design aspect of the fashion industry. However, fashion might not be for everyone, so the program will be based around art design in the community in addition to important life lessons such as achieving goals. Though fashion is my number one obsession, I feel it is immensely important to give back to my community that has turned me into the man I am today.



I have just barely stepped into the fast-paced high-fashion industry, working part-time as a boutique seamstress. Already, I can't get enough of the adrenaline rush from working on a deadline. I am just a freshman, but that is not keeping me from applying to numerous internships because I believe it is the key to any successful career. Someday, when I work my way up the fashion hierarchy, I will use my connections wisely to enable my designs to become mass-produced and advertised. There are always obstacles in my way, but I never give up. I think positively and find other ways to solve problems. After finishing a project, I love to hear critiques from my mentors, so I can continue improving and growing. As I continue to grow from the seeds my parents planted so long ago, I begin to see clearly the dreams I set for myself. With pride in my community, my family and myself, I will challenge the boundaries of the fashion industry and cultivate a fresh beginning for the new generation.

