

# 2010/11 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Young Photographer's Alliance



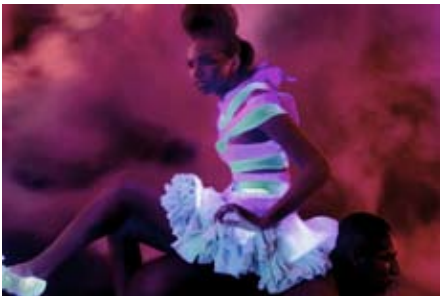
## LONG TRAN

Photography  
Sophomore  
Columbia College



I grew up in a quaint, ocean-side village called Saigon in Vietnam. Race was not an issue in my youth; I grew up surrounded with people that looked just like me. Everyone spoke the same language; nothing was foreign to me. When I gave a thoughtful goodbye to my class of twenty before leaving for America, I noticed a classroom full of monochromatic faces staring back at me. No thought was given to the fact of how different America was going to be. In Saigon there was no prejudice. This did not reflect the reality the plane waited to take me to.

Skyscrapers, city lights on every block: this was my perception of what I thought Garden City, Kansas, might look like—like an American big city. I may not have lived a cosmopolitan existence, but I sure did feel like a model off the runway when I first arrived in America. Needless to say, the first words out of my mouth were, "Oh barracuda, this cannot be right!" There was not one thing that made me feel comfortable about my new home. My expectations were so much greater. Where was this land that I fantasized over for years, the people I envisioned meeting?



Worldstudio  
FOUNDATION



the professional association for design

## LONG TRAN

Photography



Looking back I can see the clear distinction between my roots in Vietnam and the hopeless prejudice I encountered when immigrating to a white-washed Kansas. Despite the pessimism created by that experience, I was lucky enough to visit an oasis of tolerance and diversity here at Columbia College Chicago. As a sophomore in college, I am really ambitious. I've applied to every scholarship I can, tried my best in class, and worked on my own collection from home. After receiving the Worldstudio AIGA Scholarship last year, I have more ideas about how to help my community. I want to become a successful designer and help the next generation at what I am good at: art.

With the fashion design company that I plan on creating, I will try to help local students with an after-school program revolved around teaching the business as well as the technical design of the fashion industry. Vietnam is not a fashion country; I want to use my power to make it happen. It will be a big challenge, but I can do it.

Fashion might not be for everyone, so the program will be based around design in the community in addition to important life lessons such as achieving goals. I feel it is immensely important to give back to my community that has turned me into the man I am today. I hope to eventually fund scholarships for talented students to cover their tuition for college. I also want to return to Vietnam to promote the arts in Vietnamese education. I want to change the way Asians think so that they can appreciate inspirations the world provides and can understand and value their fashion statements. I want to help make my country a role model to others about fashion. In this way, I am able to express my pride for my heritage and home nation.

