

In Loving Memory to Dinh Luu



Dinh T. Luu Memorial Scholarship

Established and funded by her colleagues, friends and family, the Dinh T. Luu, Memorial Scholarship memorializes EOPS counselor Dinh T. Luu's 27 years of dedicated service to GCC students. Awarded annually, this scholarship honors any EOPS student with a minimum 3.0 GPA majoring in Social Work or related Human Services showing financial need.

Mr. and Mrs. Huyen Luu vowed that they would see their children finish high school -- a lofty goal for any family of that time. In a poor warring country where basic needs were hard to come by, education was a luxury, predominantly reserved for male children. Yet the couple persevered, running a small noodle and sundries stand and teaching their children that hard work, dedication and integrity will open their lives to happiness and opportunity. They succeeded, seeing all four of their children complete high school.

Their third child, Dinh, became the first in the family to attend university. After earning a baccalaureate in English at Da Lat University, she furthered her studies in New Zealand as a Colombo Plan scholar. She returned to Vietnam planning to pursue a career as an English teacher. But these dreams, as with most dreams, changed as a result of war.

In 1975, newlywed, Dinh and her husband, an officer of the South Vietnamese Army, escaped in one of the first waves of "boat people" to flee the Communist take-over of Vietnam. They worked their way East, across the Pacific Ocean via Guam, arriving in Los Angeles in the Summer of 1977 with two young children. Working full time and raising children, Dinh and her husband attended university in Los Angeles with English as their second language. In the Spring of 1982, Dinh graduated from UCLA with a Master's degree in Social Work. In Fall of the same year, she started her career at Glendale Community College, EOPS. For the next 27 years, she dedicated her knowledge, time and heart. She touched and inspired many lives; recruiting at high schools, advising the GCC Vietnamese Student Club, counseling students, and adding two more children to her family. Even after her retirement in Dec 2009, Dinh continued to counsel at GCC part-time.

As a refugee, working mother of four, and non-native English speaker, Dinh deeply sympathized and empathized with the challenges that faced her students. Identifying with them fueled her desire for their success. She championed each student individually, helping to orient and align their academic path with their future career goals, encouraging them with her motherly one-on-one approach, and voicing their needs at the faculty level. Her life was a model to her students, demonstrating that with hard work, dedication and integrity, the American Dream is attainable.