

Serving New Immigrants Through a Pandemic

Initially, Taiwan did well in controlling the Covid-19 pandemic and successfully contained local transmission. Against this backdrop and with well-thought-out arrangements, Pearl S. Buck Foundation Taiwan Taipei was able to continue home visits, training sessions/activities, and other projects even though larger events were forced to be canceled. In May 2021, however, Taiwan saw a surge in community-based infections, leading to more government restrictions on people's daily lives. It was a difficult year for everyone in Taiwan, but especially hard for the children served by PSBFTT. They were from economically disadvantaged families of new immigrants, and two-thirds of them came from single parent households. Their parents, most of whom worked in unskilled manual or service jobs, were hit hard by the lockdown. Many breadwinners faced reduced wages, furloughs, or even unemployment, which led to a plunge in family incomes. Meanwhile, expenses kept rising as families had to pay for face masks, rubbing alcohol, and rapid testing kits, in addition to daily necessities. The economic impact was also felt by some of sponsors or donors, forcing them to reduce their financial contribution. This meant a huge challenge to PSBFTT—one that required a change in the usual way and content of work.

Despite the difficulties, PSBFTT provided regular social worker visits to monitor the physical and mental development of children. This



included helping children and parents navigate at-home learning by providing necessary supplies to the students. Because of quarantines and stressors due to the pandemic, social workers often had to provide more mental support and play a facilitating role in improving parent-child communication and family relationships.



PSBFTT also continued providing health care interpreting services for new immigrants. This became especially important during the pandemic. PSBFTT was able to help the families with completing hospital forms, communicating with health professionals, and understanding medication information, as well as understanding pandemic directives from government officials. This was a great relief to the families due to the language barriers that most faced and they were able to understand the government's updated health and safety guidelines and rolled out relief programs and stay safe and healthy.



PSBFTT was also successful in overcoming the challenges of donation decreases during the pandemic, finding new corporate sponsors and implementing safer and easier ways for donors to give, such as via mobile payment methods.



Over the past 50 years, PSBFTT has held onto its legacy of service to children of cross-cultural relationships and to their families. The past few years of the pandemic, however, have taught them that to be sustainable and to provide real benefits to those in most need, they have to be flexible and think of new solutions to the ever-evolving issues at hand.

Global Leadership Students Support International Programs



Pearl S. Buck International's Global Leadership Program helps high school students in grades 9 through 11 to become better students, college applicants, and global citizens. Teens and young adults learn leadership and teamwork skills and have the chance to work with and befriend students from other cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. At the end of each session, participants put their newly acquired skills to use working collaboratively on a service project of their choice, with proceeds donated toward Pearl S. Buck International's mission and work, in particular supporting future Global Leadership sessions and one of Pearl S. Buck International's many international human projects benefiting marginalized and impoverished children, families, and communities.

This summer saw two Global Leadership sessions with a total of 30 graduates, who worked together to produce an End of Summer Music Bash fundraiser on the grounds of the Pearl S. Buck Estate on August 21. This family-friendly event featured live bands, vendors, raffles, food, crafts, and games. In addition to the money raised going toward giving new students the opportunity to learn how to be leaders in future Global Leadership sessions, the students from the two summer sessions chose to support Pearl S. Buck International's project to help families in Thailand raise free range black bone chickens. By helping these families raise more chickens, a type of



work they are familiar with, it will teach them self-reliance, provide them with a reliable food source and allow them to sell their extra chickens for added income. <https://pearlsbuck.org/projects/chicken-farm-to-promote-healthy-children-during-covid-19/>.

We are so grateful to the Global Leadership students for raising awareness about all of our work and mission at their event and putting their newfound skills to use helping children in need. The students

There is still time to make a donation to the summer Global Leadership students' fund to support this important project: <https://pearlsbuck.org/fundraiser/>.

As always, thank you for your kindness in helping those served by our International Programs. And thank you for supporting our local youth in becoming empathetic and globally-minded leaders and citizens.