After the first year of the pandemic, the daily lives of the students at the Chongshi Girls’ School returned to normal with the implementation of programs and projects to help graduates of the school inherit and pass on the spirit of Pearl S. Buck.

Activities the girls participated in included a visit to the Pearl S. Buck Museum and a lecture on “Pearl S. Buck and her Chinese Hometown of Zhenjiang.” Many of the students participated in an oral English contest as well as took part in the Pearl S. Buck Reading Club. While study abroad opportunities continue to be suspended but are in future plans, the girls engaged in online activities with their sister school La Salle, in Girona, Spain, Hong Kong Diocesan Girls’ School, and Taipei Wesley Girls’ High School.

The sponsored seniors held a party before they graduated, in which they shared their experiences at the school and thanked Pearl S. Buck International and their sponsors.

Each of the students made a short video and wrote emails to Chongshi and PSBI to show their sincere gratitude.

The priority of all the projects and programs implemented this past year was to provide good opportunities for all the students to overcome their difficulties, comprehensively develop skills, and help each of them have a better life in the future.
According to the data and materials released by the Korean government, as of 2021, there are 385,000 multicultural households in Korean society, which account for 1.8% of all households. As the settlement of multicultural families has grown, the number of children from multicultural families aged 7 to 18 is fast growing.

Pearl S. Buck Foundation Korea (PSBFK) continues to carry out various support projects such as educational support for multicultural children and adolescents and livelihood support for vulnerable multicultural families (single parent families, families with disabilities, families suffering from disease, etc.), and provision of multicultural understanding education to help enhance awareness.

PSBFK has implemented several projects to help support the multicultural families of Korea, including a kiosk donation campaign in the Samsung employee dining hall. The funds from this project provide medical support for a multicultural adolescent suffering from a rare and incurable disease as well as livelihood support for his single mother.

PSBFK’s most successful project of the year was “Science Magic,” a creative science support project for the education and care of the children of multicultural families. 30 children from underprivileged multicultural families participated in ‘Science Magic,’ receiving four types of “science magic” teaching aids and participating in six contactless science programs. Consequently, the children were able to spend their leisure time after school engaged in these activities instead of spending that time alone; in particular, they were able to spend their time usefully instead of using their mobile phones or watching television.

Other projects implemented by Pearl S. Buck Foundation Korea supported the health, educational, livelihood, nutritional, and psycho-social needs of their constituents, including an after-school program for teenagers, creative science support, multicultural festivals, mask donations, meal support for children of multicultural families, a Pearl S. Buck 130th birthday celebration, legal advice for multicultural families, and multicultural family communication improvement.
Education programs remain the most challenging mission of Pearl S. Buck Foundation Philippines. Now in its third year, PSBP’s college scholars serve as tutors for elementary and high school sponsored children. Through PSBP’s education program, 100% of sponsored children were able to advance to the next grade level at the elementary, high school and college levels.

PSBP launched several projects this year, including a Sex Education Webinar for sponsored high school and college students in Pampanga, which has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy, and the Pre-Loved Selling for School Supplies project, in which the students collected gently used clothing and scheduled a one-day sale of these items. The proceeds were used to buy school supplies for 100 elementary sponsored children in Zambales and Bulacan.

The Christmas Gathering was once again held in-person, with the giving of the “Noche Buena” package, a pack of food for each family for their Christmas celebration. Amerasian Day 2023 was also celebrated with a poster-making contest using any Pearl S. Buck quote.

Two special projects were implemented last fiscal year. These are the “Pinoy Sari-Sari” Livelihood Support Project in Ormoc and the Psychological Assessment of 16 Girls at Lost Coin Ministries Foundation Shelter, which serves girls who are the victims of online sexual abuse and exploitation, three of whom are sponsored children. There are 30 college scholars who have earned a bachelor’s degree and finished their college education this year.

It is PSBP’s first time having that many college graduates at one time. This number is timely because PSBP is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year and the PSBP-Alumni Association is scheduled to launch during the Anniversary celebration in December.
Taipei-Taiwan

Lin Shih-Shuan
Executive Director

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, PSBFTT continued to make a difference in the lives of those they serve. Thanks to the generous contributions from local enterprises to earmarked fund, they provided personal protective anti-COVID supplies and daily necessities to 193 families and 317 children under their care. PSBFTT support allowed them to re-engage in social activities with peace of mind while ensuring that the basic needs of the children were met.

The pandemic also affected PSBFTT funding sources. Support from both the public and private sectors for personnel and administrative expenses has steadily decreased in recent years, with some sources being discontinued. However, the planning and execution of social care services, which require the dedication and expertise of PSBFTT colleagues, cannot be replaced by cost-saving measures such as AI. Therefore, they have been actively exploring new funding sources and partnerships, increasing engagement with the public, in order to sustain operations and services.

This has been one of the most significant challenges in recent years. In the current year, core services have continued while introducing new initiatives:

- To encourage academic excellence, a total of 74 scholarships and bursaries were awarded to students ranging from elementary school to university.
- Empowerment Program for Second-generation Immigrants: Thirty high school students with a new immigrant parent were selected based on their academic accomplishments and character. These students are granted scholarships and bursaries for three consecutive years, encouraging them to pursue their aspirations and enhancing their competitiveness for the future.
- Empowerment Training in Hairdressing Skills: Recognizing that many primary caregivers in the families supported by PSBFTT are women, most of whom held entry-level service industry positions that were disrupted by the pandemic, it has been deemed crucial to equip them with professional skills. This not only increases their employability but also offers the potential to start their own businesses.

- In the era of video marketing, it has become imperative to disseminate information about PSBFTT services through video content. They have partnered with a business-established foundation that provided a professional team to produce six videos to introduce and promote PSBFTT services and values to the public.

Sadly, in March 2023, Ms. Feng Hsien-Mei, the founding chair of the foundation, passed away. Ms. Feng was a pillar of strength and dedication to the Pearl S. Buck Foundation for an astounding 55 years. Initially focused on Asian-American mixed-race children, the mission shifted under her guidance to cater to the needs of new immigrant families. Her tireless efforts not only fulfilled the needs of countless children but also ensured the foundation's stability and growth, setting an inspiring example for all our colleagues.
The most successful project of the 2022-23 year for Pearl S. Buck Foundation Thailand was the Raising Black Pig for Food and Income project in Mae Ramard. This project taught children and their parents how to raise black pigs for food and income; a pilot program of 20 sponsored children and their families participated, learning how to raise and breed the pigs for food security and to sell for extra income.

Other projects included teaching 61 sponsored children and their families about physical and oral healthcare check-ups; supporting families with vegetable garden-growing to promote better nutrition and provide extra income; knitted hats that were donated by a group of women to 65 young Karen hill tribe children to protect them from the cold and elements; and supporting frog and chicken-raising for better nutrition, some of which benefited children living with HIV/AIDS. Another project geared toward supporting the educational needs of sponsored children provided necessary education assistance such as school uniforms, school shoes, socks, school bags, and other supplies. This project allows each individual child to study better and do better in school while lessening the educational expenses of their families. PSBFT also provided career training and skills, in particular sewing and embroidery, to sponsored children and their families living below the poverty level to help them supplement their incomes.

Many children received extra support from their sponsors in the face of unexpected medical emergencies, helping to pay for medical treatments and physical therapy. 99 sponsored children benefited from donations to buy presents for New Year’s and Children’s Day celebrations. PSBFT staff made home visits to sponsored children and their families to give advice and teach them about healthcare, education, physical and psycho-social development, reduce malnutrition, support better communication among family members, and help build up good relationships between sponsored children and their generous sponsors, helping the children in writing letters and drawing pictures to send to the sponsors.

National Children Day’s activities were organized for 38 preschool-age children, including showing off their abilities and talents, exercising to keep warm and strong in winter, developing friendships, and learning to work in groups. The children all had fun and learned pride and self-esteem.
Even though each disadvantaged child is supported by the government, funding is limited to raise and educate a person. Therefore, the orphanages served by Pearl S. Buck International Vietnam remain in dire need of support from donors and organizations to supplement the nutrition, education and psycho-social development support. PSBIV has made great efforts to implement myriads of programs and projects to make a significant contribution to the hundreds of served beneficiaries living in 7 orphanages in Vietnam.

Under the Health Program, PSBIV continuously provided decent meals and appliances to the children, including children with HIV and children with disabilities, with funding from sponsorship program. The children receive monthly nutrition supplementation to improve their daily meals, their standard of living, and their mental and physical health. In addition, 88 children in Birla are given hand soaps and toilet cleaner to prevent the spread of common contagious summer-related diseases. Thanks to generous donations from donors and sponsors, 165 children with disabilities living in Thuy An Orphanage received diapers. In addition, PSBIV provided all 322 young children with milk and yogurt. 72 children also had eye check-ups and treatment then were provided with glasses.

Under the Education Program, PSBIV had supported essential learning items for 202 children including books, notebooks, pens, calculators, lamps, and children have enough supplies to confidently attend class, focus on their studies, and be motivated for the new academic year. Additionally, 156 children received 10 computers, 6 printers and 2 computer power supplies for their computer room. Furthermore, 18 children in Birla Village received shoes.

Under the Psycho-social Protection and Development Program, the orphans took part in special occasions including Lunar New Year, International Children’s Day, Summer Vacation, and Mid-Autumn Festival. It is not only a recreational time for the children, but also a meaningful occasion to broaden their knowledge and understanding of Vietnamese culture and boost their spiritual development.

Apart from the great dedication and the devotion of the housemothers and staff in the seven orphanages, the significant support and endless love of sponsors and donors have also contributed to the children’s development. Thanks to their aid, PSBIV could successfully support the orphanages with basic necessities. Among these remarkable projects was the Computer Lab Project for 156 children in Center No.2 and Center No.3. Thanks to PSBIV’s support, the orphanages have computer rooms with enough facilities for all the children to utilize.

The Child Sponsorship Program is the most crucial part of PSBIV activities. Despite challenges and difficulties caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, social and political changes, the Child Sponsorship Program has been operating successfully in Vietnam. Thanks to the program, the children have a good chance to access well-qualified healthcare, good education, and a healthy living environment. Therefore, the children sincerely and honestly express their high appreciation, deep gratitude and thanks to PSBI in general and PSBIV in particular.