

Phan Thi Hanh is a name heard often in the coastal commune of Cuong Gian in Nghi Xuan district of the central province of Ha Tinh. The girl, born in 2000, has won scholarships from 13 prestigious schools in the US.



Phan Thi Hanh

Hanh said she was once a 'smartphone addict' and vowed to wean herself off smartphones and spend time on more useful things.

"To forget my habit of using smartphones, I spent more time to exchange information with friends and participate in extracurricular activities organized by the school," she said.

Hanh also had an inferiority complex about her English. Therefore, after passing the exams to the high school for the gifted under Vinh University, Hanh immediately set a plan to study English.

"I want to be good at English because this allows me to communicate with friends all over the world and learn about many different cultures," she said.

When entering high school, Hanh spent time every day to practice speaking and listening skills. She learned English everywhere she could, even when she was on the bus. And the efforts were rewarded: she got high scores on IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and the standardized test (SAT) for college admissions.

Hanh's good English skills helped her write an essay about the impact of smartphones on youth.

In her essay, Hanh emphasized the need to change the development of smartphone technology, to ease youth's reliance on smartphones.

When asked about her 'know-how' to obtain so many scholarships, Hanh said good learning records and impressive essays helped persuade the schools to grant scholarships. In addition, schools also pay attention to candidates' extracurricular activities.

Hanh received many replies from her applications. Ohio Wesleyan University decided to grant scholarship to Hanh though it had run out of scholarships for students, because it was impressed with Hanh's achievements.

After thorough consideration, Hanh decided to study computer science at Depauw University – which has a high ranking in social sciences, linguistics, and biology. The scholarship is \$36,000 a year, equal to 80 percent of tuition.

“Studying computer science has been my dream since childhood,” she said.

The schools that accept to grant scholarships to Hanh include Creighton; College of Wooster; Gustavus Adolphus College; Ohio Wesleyan University; Illinois Institute of Technology; University of Dayton; Beloit College and University of Central Florida.

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