Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: Đỗ Châu Huyên
Interviewer: Trâm Lê
Date: January 5, 2015
Location: Baldwin Park, California
Sub-collection: Tram Le Oral Histories
Length of interview: 02:10:46
Transcriber: Thuy Mai

Narrator Life Map

1948 - Born in 1948 in Trảng Bàng District in the province of Tây Ninh.
      - Lived in a mansion provided by the government
      - Enjoyed a peaceful and comfortable life

1968 - Attended the University of Saigon, majoring in Language and Literature
       - Obtained a degree equivalent to a B.A. in English
       - Became an English teacher at the Academic Military High School
       - Taught at Sương Nguyệt Anh High School
       - Went on to teach at an adult English school, VAA (Vietnamese American Association)

1972 - Mrs. Đỗ met her husband at a memorial service
       - They got married and had 3 kids together

1975 - Witnessed her mom being shot in the head by a stray bullet
       - She and her husband decided to stay in Vietnam because of their pride
       - All the men in her family was sent to re-education camp
       - She had to take care of her 3 kids by herself
       - Frequently visited her husband while he was in prison until he was let out

1992 - Mrs. Đỗ and her family were sponsored by her brother-in-law to go America through ODP, settling in LA
       - Because her husband used to be a prisoner, their documents were changed from ODP to refugee status
       - She sent all of her kids to continue their college education while she worked as a substitute in Alhambra School District

1996 - After her son, Trí, graduated from college, she decided to go back to school to become an elementary school teacher
       - She passed her TOEFL test and went to Cal State University
       - She also had to go to Charter School for Education to become a teacher

1998 - Mrs. Đỗ dropped the study program she was in and decided to become a preschool teacher instead
- Went to East LA College and obtained a child development permit
- Was the president of Gia Long High School Alumni Association for 2 years
- Participated in a poetry contest in Reno

2000
Taught preschool at Alhambra Children Center for the next 5 years until the school shut down due to lack of funding
- Was in the Pasadena Newspaper when she was photographed feeding birds at a park

2005
Became the side director at a childcare and human service agency called OPTIONS

2008
Bought a house in Baldwin Park, California
- Went back to Vietnam for the first time
- She felt lost and unfamiliar

2014
Retired from OPTIONS
- Mrs. Đỗ published a book called “Khúc Ca Tình Yêu”
- She is the mother of Westminster mayor, Tri Ta