



NEWS

## 2+2 Vietnamese Student Enjoying New Experiences at U of M Crookston

Written by Adria Peters - February 20, 2024

In August 2023, Thao Nguyen traveled from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam to the University of Minnesota Crookston as part of the 2+2 Joint Program with University of Social Sciences and Humanities, VNU-HCM, and she'll be spending her first winter on campus. Nguyen explained how the weather in Ho Chi Minh City only had two seasons: dry season and rainy season.

"Here I can experience the four seasons fully," she expressed. "The weather here is better than back home; the air feels more fresh and clean."

Nguyen shared how thrilled she was to see snow for the very first time in October, and she was excited to experience her first Christmas holiday with snow on the ground.

Nguyen is an only child making her especially close to her parents, Phuc Bao Nguyen and Kim Hue Thi Ngo. She also has many cousins who she remains close with. Nguyen comes from a Christian family, with her dad being a pastor, and while she missed Christmas with her family this year, she still made it special in Crookston.

Nguyen describes her experience of moving to Crookston as feeling "familiar."

"I actually haven't experienced any culture shock," she stated. "I have made plenty of friends here and I have had a good experience thus far."

Nguyen likes the Crookston campus' numerous facilities and its investment in its students.

"UMC really invests in things for the students like the laptops, for example," she explained. "UMC prioritizes the students and offers a lot of convenience."

The hardest aspect of moving to Crookston, Nguyen says, is the lack of a vehicle. If she wants to venture off campus, she must walk or get a ride.

Coming from a religious family, Nguyen wanted to find a church community in Crookston where she could feel welcomed. With some help from Rae French, coordinator of student engagement and retention, Nguyen was able to find the perfect church for her. Nguyen now attends Bible Baptist Church in Crookston, and loves it.

Nguyen has also found a place with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) student group on campus.

"Even though I am not an athlete, the group welcomed me," she stated.

Nguyen has been able to teach FCA about bible study and worship based on what her father has taught her. She enjoys meeting with people who share the same faith as her.

Nguyen has also made a connection with Associate Professor Danielle Johannesen and describes Johannesen's teaching style as "free" and "comfortable."

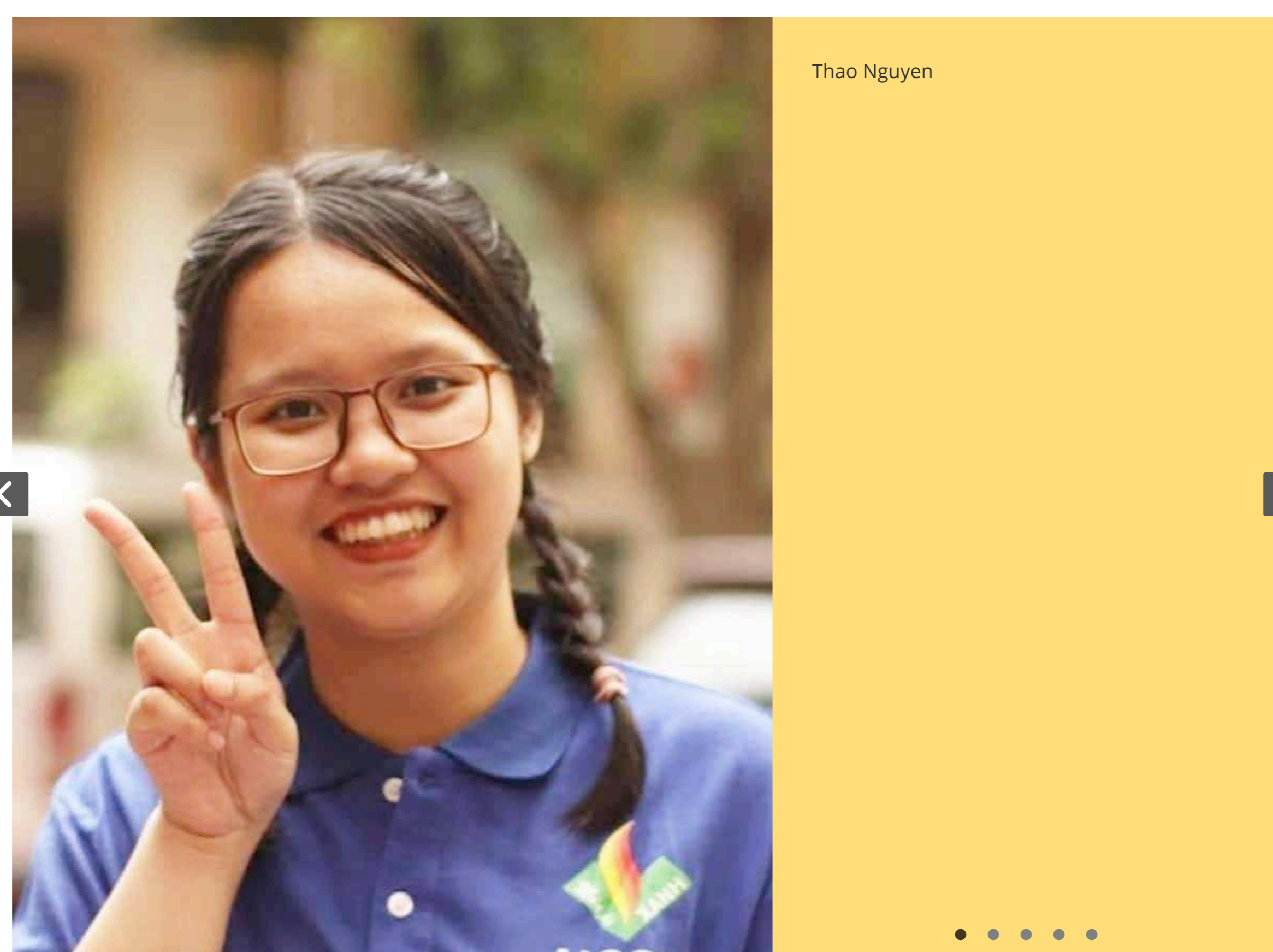
"She is so thoughtful and meticulous with her words," Nguyen described.

Nguyen studied liberal arts in Vietnam and is studying English at the U of M Crookston. The 2+2 program had her complete her first two years at VNU-HCM in Vietnam, and the last two years at Crookston.

Her projected graduation date is May 2025 and, after graduation, she would like to go back to Vietnam briefly to visit her family. She then hopes to find employment in the United States, specifically somewhere down south. Nguyen has a cousin who lives in Tennessee, which Nguyen says has a large Vietnamese community, so she has considered moving there after graduation.

"I hope to get a job in technical writing, but I would like to improve my (English) writing skills first," she acknowledged.

### 2+2 Student Thao Nguyen



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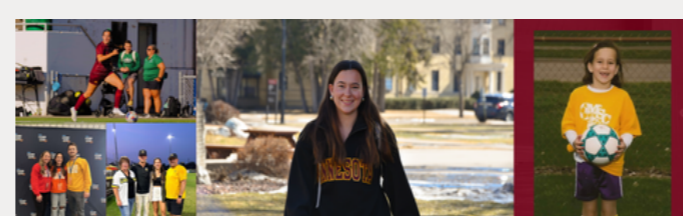
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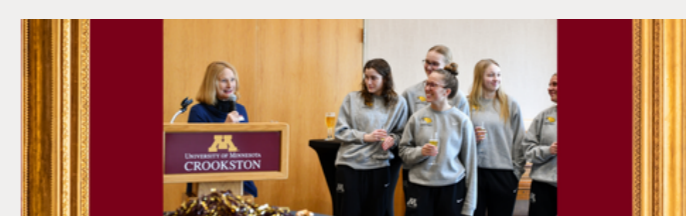
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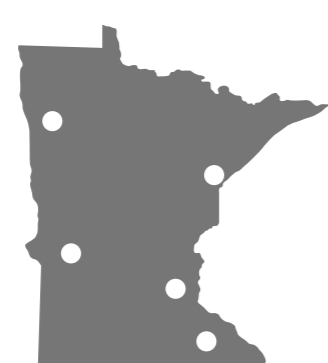
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