

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pearl S. Buck International Mabel Lew Scholarship Awarded to Nicole Thom Hanselman

Pearl S. Buck International is proud to announce that the 2018 Mabel Lew Scholarship was awarded to Nicole Thom Hanselman. Nicole is a pre-med major at Elmira College where she is an honors student and a member of Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, TriBeta Biological Honor Society, and Gamma Sigma Epsilon Chemistry Honor Society. She is also on the soccer team, serves as a resident assistant, tutors at the Southside Community Center, and volunteers with her church youth group.

Since its establishment in 1997, the Mabel Lew Scholarship has provided a \$5,000 scholarship awarded annually by Pearl S. Buck International to a female of Asian descent. This is the final year for the scholarship award.

Nicole overcame an early life of hardship to achieve academic success and give back to her community. As a young child in Vietnam, she and her younger brother experienced the death of their father, mother, and older sister due to a lack of access to medical care, went to live with an uncle, then were sent to an orphanage. At 10-years-old Nicole and her brother were adopted by an American family through Pearl S. Buck International's former program, Welcome House.

In her moving scholarship application essay, Nicole wrote about Pearl S. Buck International, "Reflecting back I am extremely grateful for my adoption through Welcome House. Without Welcome House, I would not have met my family and started this wonderful life with them. If I had not been adopted, I would still be living in fear, desperately trying to provide for my younger brother and myself in Vietnam."

Although the Welcome House program was phased out in 2014 because of changes in international adoption regulations, Pearl S. Buck International is honored by visits and involvement from former Welcome House families as volunteers, speakers, and donors. Pearl S. Buck International continues to serve adoptive families and adoptees through their work in intercultural programs for the community and humanitarian aid for children and communities in need from the countries where many of the adoptive children were born.

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Pearl S. Buck International® provides opportunities to explore and appreciate other cultures, builds better lives for children around the globe and promotes the legacy of our founder by preserving and interpreting her National Historic Landmark Home.