1.

We are two of the many people who contributed to the birth and growth of Sao Mai Center. It took two years of unforgettable work (that is the 1999-2001 Bung Sang training project) before Sao Mai could be established and now the Center has reached its 15th year of life.

2.

We are proud that Sao Mai was able to create and complete so many projects in favor of the blind including the establishment of 26 other computer rooms for the blind in 23 provinces of Vietnam. This is a great achievement for the blind in Vietnam.

3.

Since the beginning, when we started the 2 year training program, our approach was "Blind help the Blind" and "use the computer technology to improve the quality of life of the blind".

We strongly believed and still believe that the only way out of poverty or social discrimination is Education and we refer to this belief by saying "Knowledge is Richness".

4.

With these ideas in mind, in addition to pay special attention to free computer classes for blind children held at Sao Mai Center, in 2003 we also started and monitored a "computer education for blind women program", carried out by Sao Mai Center until 2011, that provided computer education to 41 blind women plus the five trained at the Dong Nai computer lab in 2013. Some of them reached high levels of competence and have become computer trainers for the blind in their provinces of origin/residence.

5.

Sao Mai Center is now a well-known institution with a relevant role in Information Technology for the blind also outside Vietnam.

During all these 15 years the biggest problem for Sao Mai has been the lack of a stable/permanent venue. They had to change location four times!!!

We think that after 15 years of commitment and appreciated work Sao Mai deserves to have a venue of its own, and we hope that a donor (offering about 70.000 USD) will help make this dream come true. We hope we can meet again for the 20th birthday celebration in a permanent Sao Mai venue.

6.

To celebrate the 15th birthday Sao Mai decided to provide a computer product to benefit all sighted Vietnamese children, and translated the software for children called DoudouLinux in Vietnamese. The Italian NGO that started the Sao Mai Project in 1999, Mantovan Association of Bolzano City, supported the cost of this project. The software is now ready for all Vietnamese children to enjoy and to develop learning and cognitive skills.

7.

In the last 15 years, and in the two years of training before 2001, the two of us and all the people involved in the Sao Mai life-story have gone through common extraordinary experiences while building our own individual lives. There have been marriages … and divorces. Many of us became parents, some made a new life in other parts of Vietnam and in other countries, and some are no longer with us.

We all are different from what we were 17 years ago, but we all are interconnected branches of the same tree and our links cannot be deleted.

Carlo and Amedeo