

Viet Kien Ngo

Viet Kien Ngo is an emerging global citizen whose international education journey has taken him from Hanoi to Christchurch – a move that has shaped his academic growth, leadership development, and cultural identity. Arriving in New Zealand in 2020, Kien has quickly become a respected voice within Canterbury's international education community, recognised for both his academic achievements and his dedication to intercultural leadership.

Kien's New Zealand journey began at Shirley Boys' High School, where the freedom to explore his interests transformed his approach to learning. He completed a degree in International Business (Finance) alongside a Certificate in Arts specialising in Japanese and Chinese at the University of Canterbury. His studies took him abroad on exchanges to Paris, China, and Indonesia, where he frequently found himself acting as an informal ambassador for both Vietnam and Aotearoa New Zealand. Building on these international and cross-cultural experiences, Kien has since embarked on the Master of Teaching and Learning, with the aspiration of becoming a secondary school teacher as a way of giving back to the community and contributing to the future of education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

A passionate advocate for belonging and cultural understanding, Kien recently won first place in UC's 2025 Inclusive Challenge for work focused on fostering student connection on campus. His story highlights the power of international education to open doors, shape identity, and create meaningful impact across communities. Kien was named the 2025 Mayor's International Student of the Year, selected from 14 separate nominations submitted by teachers, university staff, and peers who have witnessed his impact first-hand. He is known for his commitment to inclusion, community engagement, and building bridges between cultures. Fluent in English, Vietnamese, and Japanese, he has supported visiting student groups, served as a translator and guide, and contributed to initiatives that strengthen connections across the region's education sector.



International Education Leader

2025 Mayor's International Student of the Year

Topic: Two Student Voices | Two Journeys | One Aotearoa



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