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Năm Viễn Xứ:
Hành Trình
và Di Sản
Người Việt Tị Nạn



50 Years Beyond the Waves:
The Journey and Legacy
of Vietnamese Refugees

A Quiet Light: Mr. Nam Lộc & the Voice of a Refugee Generation

Version 1: Narrative Nonfiction Version

Version 2: Poetic Personal Tribute Version (available in both English and Vietnamese translations in forthcoming editions)

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Mr. Nam Loc

In the spring of 2025, as the United States continues to debate immigration reform and citizenship policy, the story of Mr. Nam Lộc offers something deeper than politics—a legacy that spans continents, decades, and generations.

Now in his 80s, Mr. Nam Lộc is not a household name to most Americans. But within Vietnamese American communities across the country, he is something more enduring than celebrity. He has been a voice—literally and figuratively—for those who arrived in this country with little but their memories and their hope.

In Southern California, where the scent of salt air



A songwriter and musician

meets the warmth of sidewalk pho shops, stories of migration still echo. They live in the laughter of grandchildren born far from the Mekong, in the silence of those who lost everything, and in the steady voice that has narrated that journey for nearly half a century: the voice of Mr. Nam Lộc.

From Saigon to Southern California

April 30, 1975—the fall of Saigon—marked the end of one era and the beginning of another. For Mr. Nam Lộc, then a journalist, it marked a sudden transformation: from observer to participant, from citizen to refugee.

He arrived in the United States with no fortune, but with an abiding sense of purpose. In the decades

that followed, he helped resettle tens of thousands of refugees through his work with Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, where he served as Director of the Immigration and Refugee Department. Whether in federal courtrooms or church basements, he offered guidance, interpretation, and—above all—dignity. He became a lifeline not through grand gestures, but through consistent presence.

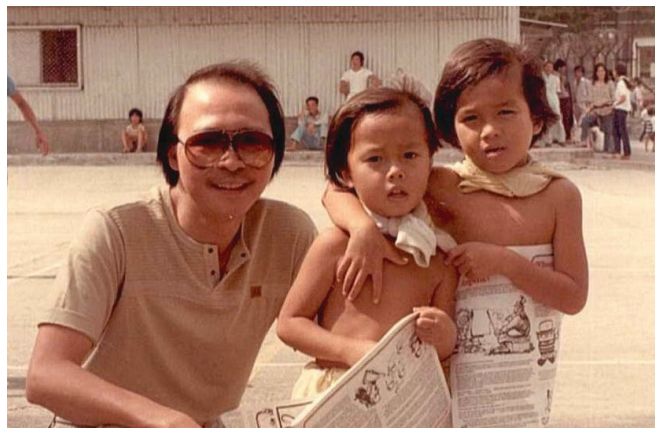
A Familiar Voice, A Steady Advocate

Long before he was appointed one of only eight U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Citizenship Ambassadors in the country—and the only one of Vietnamese descent—Mr. Nam Lộc was already seen as a community leader. His voice on Vietnamese-language radio and television was a source of comfort, clarity, and continuity for families navigating the complexities of American life.

For many, his broadcasts were not just news updates; they were orientation sessions for a new identity.



Mr. Nam Loc joined the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) in December 1975—now known as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)—and remains active five decades later, even in retirement.



Refugee camp in Hong Kong (1985)

In 2007, he was recognized nationally, sharing the Immigrant Family Advocate Award with actress Salma Hayek, presented by the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA). Yet he has remained remarkably humble—more comfortable in community centers than at podiums.

Legacy Without Spotlight

Today, when younger generations ask what it means to be Vietnamese American, they inherit more than just family stories. They inherit structures built by people like Mr. Nam Lộc: pathways to citizenship, preserved cultural memory, and a sense of place in a country that often asks immigrants to prove they belong.

He rarely speaks about personal accolades. Instead, he recounts small victories: a mother reunited with her son after years apart, a refugee granted asylum against the odds, a grandmother who held her naturalization certificate with trembling hands and



Ông Nam Lộc và BS Xuân Vũ, MD -Hành Trình 50 Năm- Cộng Đồng Việt Nam Arizona và Viet News USA- tháng 4 năm 2025

tears in her eyes.

Endurance in an Age of Distraction

In an era defined by fleeting attention and digital celebrity, Mr. Nam Lộc's quiet impact is a reminder that legacy isn't always loud. It's built slowly, in waiting rooms and paperwork, in listening before speaking, in bridging generations that don't always speak the same language—literally or figuratively. He is not a star in the Hollywood sense. But in communities across California and beyond, his influence has been brighter and far more lasting. As the sun sets over Huntington Beach—where he still lives and works—it does so in a familiar arc: slow, golden, and steady. Much like the man himself.



ĐNH Xây Dựng Tượng Đài Chiến Sĩ Việt Mỹ -



Đón thuyền nhân tại phi trường LAX-Los Angeles, CA-1978

Activities:

- *Citizenship Ambassador, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security*
- *Member of the Board of Directors of U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants*
- *Former Chair of the Los Angeles Immigration & Refugee Voluntary Agencies*
- *Former Member of Naturalization Advisory Committee, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security*
- *Former Member of the Board of Directors of Asian Pacific American Legal Center*
- *Former Member of Justice for Immigrants Sub-Committee, Archdiocese of Los Angeles*
- *Former Member of the Refugee Advisory Committee of the State of California*
- *Former Member of Diocese Advisory Committee, Migration and Refugee Services, United State Conference of Catholic Bishop*
- *Former Chairman of the Los Angeles Refugee Forum*
- *Former Member of the Southern California Association of Governments*
- *Former Member of the International Catholic Migration Commission*
- *Former Member of Advisory Board for School of Social Work/California State University, Los Angeles*

Awards & Recognitions:

- *California Governors: Pete Wilson & Gray Davis*
- *California Senate Resolution #341*
- *California Senators: Nell Soto, Joe Dunn, John Seymour, Lou Correa*
- *United States Member of Congress: Senator John McCain, Congressman & woman: Howard L. Berman, Xavier Becerra, Adam Schiff, David Dreier, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Zoe Lofgren...*
- *California State Assembly: Antonio R. Villaraigosa, Judy Chu, Ken Maddox*
- *Los Angeles Mayors: Eric Garcetti, Antonio R. Villaraigosa.*
- *Los Angeles City Councilman Richard Alatorre and City Attorney Rockard J. Delgadillo*
- *United States Immigration and Naturalization Service*
- *Orange County Register: 30 To Watch Figures*
- *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops & CLINIC: Excellence in Advocacy Award*
- *City of Westminster: Special Achievement Award*
- *Vietnamese American Heritage Foundation: Lifetime Achievement Award*
- *Vietnamese American National Gala: Golden Torch Award*
- *International Institute of Los Angeles: Excellence in Community Service Award*
- *Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA): Immigrant Family Advocate Award*
- *Orange County Board of Supervisors: Commitment to Public Services*
- *Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors: Outstanding Achievements in Naturalization Service*
- *Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Service: Excellence in Leadership Award*