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Veteran brings hope and artificial limbs to people living with disabilities

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Dr Lê Thành Đô finishes work on a prosthetic leg at his workshop. — Photo daidoanket.vn

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HÀ NỘI — There is a house and workshop in Hà Nội's Hai Bà Trưng District where disabled people from across the country can come for a better life.

The workshop is managed by a special doctor, Lê Thành Đô, 70, who returned from the war with many wounds on his body.

As a soldier, he understands the pain of losing a part of the body. With a heart of generosity, Đô set up a workshop at his home to produce artificial limbs for people with disabilities.

Đô had a hard childhood. He was orphaned and had to live with his grandparents. He always earned excellent academic achievements though he faced many difficulties in life.

In the 10th grade, he volunteered to join the army. In 1958, he was seriously injured in his face and arms after an attack of enemy planes. After two years of treatment, his health was not better. He returned home to work as a teacher and continued his studies at Hà Nội Medical University.

After six years of studying at university, he worked at an invalid care centre in Bắc Ninh Province's Thuận Thành District.

His life has turned a new page because he is happy to bring medical knowledge to care for wounded soldiers suffering from paralysis due to back injuries. "These were the years that I never forget, when I worked at the centre. I was living with my teammates. I treated them and encourage them. They are like my relatives," Đô told the *Đại Đoàn Kết* (Great Solidarity) newspaper.

During his time at the centre, he worked with some charitable organisations. He also found help from humanitarian groups, non-governmental organisations, embassies and donors to support the cost of making artificial limbs for disabled people.

He returned Hà Nội after 10 years of working at the invalid care centre and established a workshop at his house to produce artificial limbs for disabilities.

Nguyễn Đình Nguyên, one of Đô's patients from Hà Nội's Long Biên District, said that he was presented with a pair of artificial legs by Dr Đô after suffering from a railway accident.

"The accident has robbed me of my legs and it was a big shock in my life. But now my psychology has stabilized and I believe in life more after a friend introduced me to Dr Đô and he made me a pair of prosthetic legs for free," Nguyên told the *Quân Đội Nhân Dân* newspaper.

This is just one of more than 600 cases that Dr Đô has helped with over the years. Most of them are children and disadvantaged people.

He said that the process of making a prosthetic leg takes a lot of time, from mixing plaster and pouring molds in order to fit each person and help them live more comfortably and easily.

In addition to examining patients and supporting them in obtaining prosthetic legs, he also encourages and advises patients to practise in order to regain the ability to walk.

Over 13 years into his retirement, Đô is busier with charity. The children with paralysis and cerebral palsy at the rehabilitation centre have also often received health check-ups and artificial limbs for free from him.

With nearly 50 years of experience in orthopedic treatment, he is still learning more advanced techniques to apply to his workshop in order to help people with disabilities have a better life.

The greatest joy of old age is simply being able to help more people with disabilities, Đô said. — VNS

Read more at <http://vietnamnews.vn/society/451894/veteran-brings-hope-and-artificial-limbs-to-people-living-with-disabilities.html#GiLxjpx2E30AooouR.99>

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Video: <https://www.facebook.com/vietnamnewsvns/videos/308993309761413/>

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