



PRESS RELEASE

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VIETNAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION SPONSORS U.S. FACULTY SCHOLARS TO TEACH IN VIETNAM

Hanoi, Vietnam, and Washington, D.C., Aug 17, 2009 – The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) is pleased to announce the selection of the second group of American professors to teach at Vietnamese universities during the 2009-2010 Academic Year as part of its U.S. Faculty Scholar (USFS) Grant Program.

The USFS Grant Program contributes to the VEF mission of bringing the United States and Vietnam closer through educational exchanges related to science, engineering, mathematics, medicine, and technology. American Faculty Scholars teach in English at Vietnamese universities in their fields of expertise. Teaching may be conducted either on-site in Vietnam or by interactive, real-time videoconferencing from the United States. VEF serves as the sponsor and organizer while the Vietnamese universities serve as the hosts and the U.S. universities cooperate in the collaborative programs. The U.S. National Academies assists VEF in the selection of Faculty Scholars.

Michael W. Michalak, the U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam said: “The VEF U.S. Faculty Scholar Program is an outstanding U.S. government funded program, which reflects one of our Mission’s top priorities of enhancing American cooperation with Vietnam in the area of education. I believe it will also serve to support Vietnam’s efforts to further reform and develop its higher education system.”

The first cohort of four U.S. Faculty Scholars started their teaching programs at Vietnamese host universities in December 2008 and finished in June 2009. Now, VEF is pleased to support three more American professors, who will lead two different teaching projects in Vietnam this year under the USFS Grant Program.

Dr. Findlay Gordon Edwards, Associate Professor at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, will be in residence in Vietnam, teaching on-site at the Hanoi Water Resources University (WRU) during the Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 terms. Dr. Edwards commented: “Working with the Vietnamese faculty, I will assist WRU in realigning their

curriculum with the U.S. water resources curriculum model, and I will also introduce alternative teaching methods as well as assist with the preparation for ABET accreditation. In addition, I will instruct three water resources courses in order to provide instructional models and materials: (1) *Basic Hydrology*; (2) *Water Resources Planning and Management*; and (3) *Regional Regression Flood Equation Development*. I hope that my assistance will enhance the efforts of WRU to upgrade and restructure its engineering curriculum and instructional methods.”

The second teaching project is granted to two U.S. professors: (1) Dr. Quyen D. Chu, Associate Professor of Surgery and Chief of Surgical Oncology at the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Shreveport; and (2) Dr. Hung S. Ho, Professor of Surgery at the University of California at Davis. During the Spring 2010 term, Drs. Chu and Ho are team-teaching the course entitled, *Fundamentals of Clinical Surgery*, via videoconferencing at Thai-Binh Medical University (TBMU). Dr. Chu commented, “One of the purposes of this course is to expose Vietnamese medical students to evidence-based medicine and problem-based learning. More importantly, this project serves to foster the exchange of academic ideas between the United States and Vietnam.”

Dr. Ho said that, by introducing peer review processes and promoting problem-solving skills, the course provides Vietnamese medical students opportunities to apply and practice their knowledge with an emphasis on experiential learning. He stated: “Our U.S. Faculty Scholar activities will contribute in part to the concerted efforts by the Vietnamese government to develop science and technology and to enhance the quality of higher education in Vietnam. The VEF grant also enables us to participate in the National Academies of Science call for more U.S. involvement in global health. For the future, in the framework of a sustainable long-term collaboration, we will continue to be available to assist Vietnamese faculty colleagues and universities in their efforts to build advanced medical curricula.”

The Vice Minister of Science and Technology (MOST), Dr. Le Dinh Tien, said: “The U.S. Faculty Scholar Program is an excellent initiative of VEF and will have significant effects. MOST greatly appreciates VEF’s efforts in continuing to contribute to the development of science and technology in Vietnam.”

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) Deputy Director General of the Department of Higher Education, Dr. Nguyen Thi Le Huong, said: “MOET fully supports the U.S. Faculty Scholar Program initiated by VEF. MOET hopes to develop advanced teaching curricula at the Vietnamese host universities and to build sustainable collaboration between U.S. and Vietnamese universities.”

Dr. Lynne McNamara, VEF Acting Executive Director, stated: “An excellent example of American and Vietnamese university collaboration, the U.S. Faculty Scholar Grant Program is a significant initiative of VEF, bringing outstanding American experts to teach at Vietnamese universities. Without a doubt, the USFS Grant Program will have a lasting impact on higher education in Vietnam.”

An initiative of the U.S. Congress, the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF), a U.S. federal government agency, is in its seventh year of operations. Among its other programs, the VEF Fellowship Program has placed 306 Fellows at 68 top U.S. graduate research institutions, mostly for doctoral degrees. In addition, the VEF Visiting Scholar Program provides opportunities for Vietnamese to pursue post-doctoral programs at U.S. universities for up to 12 months. VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars are required to return to Vietnam after completing their academic programs in the United States.

For more information on VEF, please visit the website: www.vef.gov.