

The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF): 10 years of operations with 421 fellowships given

During its 10 years of operations, VEF has awarded 421 fellowships to Vietnamese students and has organized educational exchange activities between the United States and Vietnam

10 years of educational collaboration

The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) was established in 2000 to create educational exchange activities between the two countries. VEF receives an annual budget of U.S. \$5 million from the U.S. Congress until 2018. VEF's official operations began in 2003 and the first group of Fellows began studying in the United States in that same year. The fields of study supported by VEF are science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine (including public health and biomedical sciences). Since 2003, VEF has supported 421 Vietnamese Fellows at 84 leading U.S. universities.

In addition, VEF also has two other programs -- the Visiting Scholar Program and the U.S. Faculty Scholar Program. The Visiting Scholar Program is for Vietnamese who have earned doctoral degrees to participate in postdoctoral programs in the United States from 5 to 12 months. Since 2007, 38 Visiting Scholars have gone to 30 major U.S. universities and research institutes.

The VEF U.S. Faculty Scholar Program awards grants for U.S. professors to teach courses at Vietnamese institutions, either on site in Vietnam or via video conferencing from the United States. Since 2008, 26 U.S. Faculty Scholar grants have been awarded to 21 American professors, who have been selected to teach courses at 19 Vietnamese institutions.

Besides this, VEF also carries out capacity-building activities to build the relationship between U.S. and Vietnamese institutions and government entities and to strengthen the foundation in Vietnam for the return of VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars to their home country after study.



2012 VEF Fellows and Scholars at the Pre-Departure Orientation in Da Lat in June 2012

VEF's impact on the training of high-quality human resources

During the past ten years (2003-2013), VEF has been engaged in other significant projects to develop high-quality human resources as well as to support the efforts of the Vietnam Government with 2 national-level reports. Also during these ten years, VEF has received widespread support and praise from many government entities and higher education institutions in both Vietnam and the United States.

Prof. Dr. Nguyen Thien Nhan, Deputy Prime Minister, Socialist Republic of Vietnam

remarked, *“Collaboration in education is a person-to-person diplomatic collaboration that leads to mutual understanding. We think that education and training will help us understand each other, which is very important. After that, research relations can also be established. This is a long-term relationship. Specifically, for the last ten years, VEF has sent Vietnamese students to study in the United States. When they come back, they are going to work in many areas. We think that they are core human resources, with high competence.”*



VEF Fellow and Scholar Alumni at the VEF Annual Alumni Conference in Danang in August 2012

Dr. Nguyen Quan, Minister of Science and Technology, Socialist Republic of Vietnam:

“VEF has helped Vietnam to train high-quality human resources, especially in fields that Vietnam needs for the cause of industrialization and modernization. VEF also carried out two important research projects for the Vietnam Government. In our opinion, VEF is going the right way and we hope that VEF will continue to support Vietnam as it has been doing.”

Dr. E. William Colglazier, Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State, the United States of America said, *“In ten years' time, VEF has proven how much it can contribute to the future of the country by helping educate young people in science and technology, which are really key to the economic future and prosperity and peace of the world. And I think VEF has done more than any institution in building this bond between the United States and Vietnam, both working towards a common goal of trying to have a prosperous future for our citizens. So*

as I said, I'm a big fan of VEF and my only hope is that VEF will continue to do this work in the future."

As Vietnam continues in further international integration, the U.S.-Vietnam relationship ushers in a new era, in which VEF plays the important role of a "bridge" for cooperative activities in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine through educational exchange, thus further strengthening the bilateral relationship between the United States and Vietnam.

Currently, applicants for the 2014 VEF Fellowship Program can apply online via Process A at the VEF official website. Process A is for applicants who have not been admitted to any U.S. universities yet. For more information, please visit: www.vef.gov

By Thuy Nga