

The Vietnam Education Foundation to select 45 young Vietnamese intellectuals to study in the United States

12 U.S. scientists and professors just had their working visit to Vietnam, arranged by the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF), from August 4-12, 2011. 45 young intellectuals will be selected to study in the United States this time.



VEF is an initiative of the U.S. Congress and is an independent federal government agency under the U.S. Government. VEF is annually funded with U.S \$5 million by the U.S. Government until 2018.

12 U.S. scientists and professors coming to Vietnam this time will be interview panelists to select candidates for the VEF Fellowship Program, Cohort 2012. The new Fellows will begin their graduate programs in the U.S. universities in the middle of 2012, in the fields of study supported by VEF including sciences (natural, physical, and environmental), engineering, mathematics, medicine (including public health and health sciences), and technology (including information technology). The interviewers will help to select 45 best candidates among 82 applicants to pursue graduate programs at the U.S. universities in 2012.



VEF is in its 9th year of operation. As a flagship program, the VEF Fellowship Program has sent 385 Vietnamese Fellows to study at 82 leading U.S. universities. As of July 2011, VEF has a network of 176 VEF Alumni consisting of 141 Fellows, 24 Visiting Scholars and 11 U.S. Faculty Scholars. Some Alumni Fellows are still continuing their post-degree Academic Training in the United States before returning Vietnam. VEF is so pleased that VEF Alumni, after returning to Vietnam, have taken over important positions in the academia, corporate and development sectors. Besides the Fellowship Program, the VEF Visiting Scholar Program also brings opportunities for Vietnamese citizens to participate in post-doctorate level programs at U.S. universities, from 5 to 12 months.

Dr. Lynne McNamara, VEF Executive Director, said that 2018 is the sunset of VEF and VEF will not select new Fellows by the year of 2016. The remaining budget of the last two years (2017 and 2018) will be used for supporting the remaining Fellows in those years. Recently, there have been some changes within VEF. Last year, U.S. President Obama appointed Mr. David Duong, a Vietnamese American to be VEF Board Member. Mr. David Duong is Chairman of the Board of Directors cum CEO of California Waste Solutions and Vietnam Waste Solutions. He received the prestigious Bay Trade Global Award for his achievements of world trade and environmental stewardship. In addition, Ms. Sandy Dang, the founding president of Asian American LEAD (AALEAD), which supports immigrant families through a broad array of educational and social services, has also been appointed as a new VEF Board Member.

Mr. David Duong commented: “The programs of the Vietnam Education Foundation are not politically-related but purely educational. VEF Fellows returning to Vietnam are making contributions to the socio-economic development of the country. Therefore, I hope to receive the support from the whole community of both the Vietnam and United States governments. It is my wish to bring the name and image of VEF to more and more people”. As a VEF Board Member,

he will make recommendation on expanding the fields of study supported by VEF in order to attract more applicants, especially female and ethnic minority ones; balancing better the number of Fellows and Visiting Scholars coming from different regions in Vietnam, and increase the number of applicants. He also would like to propose to President Obama to appoint one more Vietnam-origin person to the Foundation since he/she would have better knowledge of Vietnam than non-Vietnamese ones. VEF is making efforts towards the establishment of an American university in Vietnam.