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VEF helps to train high quality human resources for Vietnam

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(baodautu.vn) Over its 9 years of operation in Vietnam, the Fellowship Program of the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) has sent 385 Vietnamese Fellows to study at 82 leading universities in the United States. Reporter of the *Investment News* interviewed Dr. Lynne McNamara, VEF Executive Director about the program.

Could you please share information about the VEF activities?

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

The VEF Fellowship Program has sent 385 Vietnamese Fellows to study at 82 leading universities in the United States, the majority of whom pursue a doctorate degree.

Besides, our Visiting Scholar Program brings opportunities for Vietnamese citizens to participate in post-doctorate level programs in U.S universities.

As of July 2011, VEF has a network of 176 VEF Alumni consisting of 141 Fellows, 24 Scholars and 11 U.S. Faculty Scholars. Some Alumni Fellows are still continuing their post-degree Academic Training in the United States.

Please tell us the purpose of the working visit of the U.S scientists to Vietnam this time?

With the support of the U.S. National Academies, these scientists will be interview panelists in the oral exams to select candidates for the VEF Fellowship.

VEF expects to send up to 45 new Fellows to begin graduate programs in the United States in the fall of 2012 in the fields of study supported by VEF such as sciences (natural, physical, and environmental), engineering, mathematics, medicine (including public health and health sciences), and technology (including information technology).

These U.S. professors will also conduct twelve lectures and discussion sessions at eight universities and research institutes in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The 3rd VEF Alumni Conference, with the theme "VEF Alumni Network: Unity and Growth", will also be held in Can Tho at the end of this month.

Are there any recent innovations in VEF's operations?

VEF is giving more priorities during the selection process to female candidates, fields of study of high demand in Vietnam such as agriculture; while still making efforts to balance the ratio of candidates' places of origin. We are also having an intention of strengthening the support to some new fields of study as well as social sciences.