

March 1, 2012

Dr. Lynne McNamara  
Vietnam Educational Foundation  
2111 Wilson Blvd., Suite 700  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Dr. McNamara:

As you are well aware our Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences has a long history of interactions with the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) and we value all of them highly.

The most obvious interaction is through the VEF students who apply to our institution for graduate studies in the biomedical sciences. The quality of the VEF students who have applied to our Graduate School to date has been very good and they have particularly good preparation in the 'hard sciences' of physics, chemistry, and mathematics. They also come to us with indications in their applications of a strong work ethic and commitment to careers in biomedical science and research, and we have never been disappointed with either or with their academic preparation.

Our VEF students have done very well academically. Of the seven students we enrolled three have already received the PhD, three are currently enrolled and making good academic progress, and one withdrew after her first year for family reason even though she was doing well academically. In terms of all the standard indicators, e.g., time to degree, GPA in coursework, quality of dissertation research and related publications, etc., the VEF students have performed well. In addition several have received highly competitive internal awards for research excellence and travel awards to present their dissertation research at national professional meetings.

Our VEF students have also enriched the overall educational experience in our Graduate School. All of them have interacted well with faculty, staff, and their student peers and represented VEF and their homeland very well in a number of ways. Some that come immediately to mind include the following.

- One of them, Liem Minh Phan, was the first international student elected president of our student government organization in the history of our school.
- Several of our female VEF students have also proudly attended student events wearing traditional Vietnamese dress.
- The VEF students always make a point every year of presenting their professors with 'Thank You' cards on the traditional Vietnamese Teacher's Day

- The VEF students are always helpful telling our faculty, students, and staff about the best Vietnamese restaurants in Houston!

I could go on, but I think you get my point that they are well integrated into our school, participate fully, and enrich our academic and social environment.

As you know we were also pleased to host the VEF Fellows Annual Meeting in Houston. The students who attended made a very positive impression on our faculty and staff, and again represented your organization very well. We have also been pleased to host several other visitations from VEF staff and Vietnamese government and academic visitors.

I should also mention that I was fortunate enough to participate in the in-country interviews on two occasions, and was impressed with the overall quality of the students I interviewed. I would have been very pleased to accept any of those (the great majority) who received favorable ratings from their interviews.

Thank you for your partnership in training these fine young men and women in the areas of biomedical science. I am quite confident that most of them will return to Vietnam to become the academic leaders of the future, and that you will be as proud of them as I am.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George M. Stancel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and "S".

George M. Stancel, PhD  
Executive Vice President for Academic and Research Affairs, and  
Dean, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

GMS/g

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