



UNC
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

THE UNIVERSITY
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at CHAPEL HILL

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Lynne A. McNamara, VEF Executive Director
Chris Fussner, Chairman, VEF Board of Directors
Vietnam Education Foundation
2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Dr. McNamara and Mr. Fussner,

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is proud to have 12 current and former graduate students participate in the Vietnam Education Foundation fellowship program. The Graduate School values our relationship with VEF and appreciates the support, both academically and financially, your fellows receive when pursuing graduate studies at our university.

Without the support of the VEF in identifying, supporting, and funding doctoral and master's students from Vietnam, it would be much more difficult to match talented students with graduate programs for advanced study. Our graduate programs produce diverse, well-trained, top-notch professionals to work in academia and industry, both in the United States and when the graduates return to Vietnam. Continuation of the VEF's support and funding over time are critical to developing a long-standing cadre of experienced and high-quality scientists and researchers.

In response to your request, we solicited feedback from our graduate programs and faculty with whom VEF fellows are studying. We received extremely positive feedback on the VEF students and their contributions to our campus, including the following:

"excellent all around student"

"having great students from abroad provides diversity to the program and having the VEF allows us to more easily identify those students"

"top student in [my] graduate level course...[we will be] submitting two manuscripts to top journals...I view both papers as potentially breaking. I'm delighted with the progress that [our student] has made in such a short time."

"thoughtful, hard-working graduate student that has made significant contributions in several areas of research that are beginning to come to

fruition...a vocal contributor during our group meetings and in the laboratory environment”

“very intelligent, academically well prepared, and highly motivated to succeed. He represents a generation of students who has merged into our existing student body without skipping a beat. What [out student] lacks in experience he makes up for in motivation and determination. Both characteristics strongly influence our existing students and those that he will interact with on returning to Vietnam.”

One of our well-respected faculty members on campus has worked with Vietnamese collaborators on research and teaching throughout her career. She provided the following testimonial for us to share:

“UNC-Chapel Hill has benefitted greatly from the presence of VEF fellows in the School of Public Health and other units of the University. Students, faculty, and staff have had a unique opportunity to learn about current scientific and social developments in Vietnam; to gain a contemporary understanding of a dynamic and changing society; and to build scientific collaborations with positive potential for both countries. The Vietnamese fellows have received research training of high quality and developed lifelong scientific cooperative relationships and gained access to scientific training and resources that will benefit their future research, teaching, and practice.

One example has been my recent experience of leading a semester-long undergraduate Burch Seminar in Fall 2011 for UNC students based at Hanoi School of Public Health. In teaching UNC students about the history and scope of public health problems and solutions in Vietnam, many of the most dynamic lecturers in my classes were former UNC VEF fellows who are now in positions of leadership in universities, government institutions, and NGOs in Hanoi. We visited hospitals and agencies where they worked and learned about cutting edge research, policy, and public health practice. It was wonderful to see the leadership of these former fellows and to see their UNC training in practice as they move public health forward in Vietnam.”

If we can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to be in touch.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Schmitt

Stephanie Schmitt
Associate Dean for Academics
The Graduate School

Steve W. Matson

Steve Matson
Dean
The Graduate School