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PRESS RELEASE

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NGUYEN THI THANH PHUONG SELECTED TO BE COUNTRY DIRECTOR OF VIETNAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Washington, D.C., April 15, 2007 – The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) announced today that Dr. Nguyen Thi Thanh Phuong has been selected to be the Country Director for VEF's operations in Vietnam and will be based in the VEF office in Hanoi.

Prior to her new appointment with VEF, Dr. Phuong served as Senior Officer in the Office of International Relations and Research Affairs and as Lecturer at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh City. While maintaining these roles, she also served as VEF's part-time Representative, organizing and overseeing various activities associated with the VEF Fellowship Program and the Seminars and Projects Program. From January to September 2006, Dr. Phuong served as VEF Project Consultant, playing a key role as coordinator and co-author for two VEF-sponsored research projects: *Observations on Undergraduate Education in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, and Physics at Select Universities in Vietnam* and *Observations on the Current Status of Education in the Agricultural Sciences in Vietnam*.

Dr. Van Toi Vo, Executive Director of VEF, commented, “Dr. Phuong has significant knowledge of, and experience with, higher education in Vietnam and in the U.S.. She is a great asset to VEF as she will provide strong leadership, and will advance the strategic plan and mission of VEF. In particular, she will focus on developing closer links and partnerships between the institutions in Vietnam and the U.S. and on promoting the contributions of VEF Fellows to Vietnam.”

Dr. Phuong received her Bachelor of Arts degree in English Linguistics and

Literature from the University of Social Sciences and Humanities - Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and her Bachelor of Sciences degree in Hotel and Tourism Management from Hanoi Open University, Ho Chi Minh City Campus. She completed her Master of Arts degree in Comparative Linguistics from the University of Social Sciences and Humanities - Ho Chi Minh City. In 2005, Dr. Phuong attained her Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Texas Tech University (TTU) in the U.S. while gaining a comprehensive understanding of the U.S. education system and culture. Besides research in cooperative learning, general education programs, and multicultural education, her main research interests include accreditation, institutional effectiveness, and quality improvement.

Phuong stated, "I am very honored to be selected as Country Director of VEF and look forward to continuing to serve VEF and our excellent Team toward outstanding success. I will do my best to contribute to the betterment of Vietnam's higher education and to furthering VEF's mission of building Vietnam's capacity in science and technology through educational exchange, and thereby strengthening the relationship between the U.S. and Vietnam."

VEF (www.vef.gov) is a special initiative by the U.S. Congress to bring the U.S. and Vietnam closer through educational exchanges related to science and technology. The Foundation is in its fourth year of operations and incorporates assistance from the U.S. National Academies in developing and executing VEF programs. As its flagship activity, the VEF Fellowship program has placed nearly 200 Fellows at more than 50 top U.S. graduate institutions, mostly for doctoral degrees. VEF Fellows are required to return to Vietnam after completing their academic programs in the U.S.

VEF is governed by a Board of Directors whose thirteen members consist of three U.S. Cabinet members—Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, and Secretary of Treasury Henry Paulson; two U.S. Senators—Senators John Kerry and Chuck Hagel; two U.S. Representatives—Representatives George Miller and Chris Smith; and six Presidential appointees—currently Dr. Malcolm Gillis, Zingler Professor of Economics, Rice University, and Chairman of the VEF Board; Trung Dung, Founder and Chairman of BlueKey Services; Frank Jao, President and CEO of Bridgecreek Development Company; Dr. Marilyn Pattillo, Assistant Professor of Clinical Nursing, University of Texas at Austin; and Richard Wall, J.D., Managing Partner, O'Donnell, Waiss, Wall & Meschke.

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