VEF Achievements and Activities

Strengthening the Relationship between the United States and Vietnam through Educational Exchanges in Science and Technology

2003 - 2010

(May 2010 revised edition)

Preface

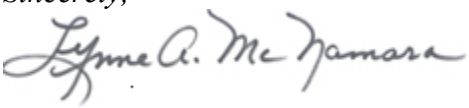
As the Executive Director of the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF), I am extremely proud to present our premier summary of the accomplishments of VEF from 2003 to 2010, entitled ***VEF Achievements and Activities: Strengthening the Relationship between the United States and Vietnam through Educational Exchanges in Science and Technology: 2003 - 2010.***

Our success is the result of significant contributions by many individuals and organizations in both Vietnam and the United States in the private, public, and governmental sectors. I wish to express our deepest gratitude to the friends of VEF for the support that they have given over the years. I also would like to express my sincere thanks to the VEF Board of Directors for their positive and dynamic support. In particular, I wish to thank the VEF staff both in the United States and in Vietnam for their extraordinary commitment to VEF and for their constant attention to quality, accuracy, and thoroughness, as is shown in this summary document.

For those of you who are new to VEF, I am confident that you will find this summary report an impressive statement about enhancing the relationship between the United States and Vietnam through educational exchange. We are extremely pleased with our remarkable achievements in such a short time.

I hope you enjoy reading about the Vietnam Education Foundation. Please feel free to contact us at any time.

Sincerely,



Lynne McNamara, Ph.D.
VEF Executive Director

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Introduction

The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) was established by the U.S. Congress after the announcement of the bilateral agreement on scientific and technological cooperation, signed by former U.S. President Bill Clinton during his historic visit to Vietnam in 2000. According to the Vietnam Education Foundation Act of 2000, the VEF annual budget is U.S. $5 million, which began in fiscal year 2001 and continues through 2018.

VEF began operations in 2003 and has enjoyed a high level of success in its many activities over the last seven years. This summary document briefly traces the history of VEF and describes its mission, organization, activities, and visions for the future.

History

The following are milestones in the history of VEF (Table 1):

DATE	EVENT
December 2000	The Vietnam Education Foundation Act of 2000 (U.S. Public Law 106-554) was amended and passed by Congress.
April 2002	The first Board of Directors was elected. Mr. Herbert Allison (Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer of TIAA-CREF) was elected Chairman of the VEF Board of Directors in December 2002.
March 2003	The first Executive Director, Mr. Pham Duc Trung Kien[1], was appointed. VEF opened its headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.
Fall term 2003	The first cohort of 19 VEF Fellows began graduate studies in leading U.S. research universities.
Fall 2003	The first gathering of VEF Fellows in the United States occurred when the 2003 cohort met in Washington, D.C., marking the beginning of the VEF annual conferences. At the request of VEF, the U.S. National Academies organized VEF annual conferences from 2003 until 2009, at which time VEF took over organizing the annual conference.
November 2003	The VEF overseas field office opened in Hanoi, Vietnam, staffed by Vietnamese contract employees.

[1] Vietnamese names in this document are listed in the Vietnamese name order of last (family) name, followed by the middle name(s), and ending with the first (given) name, except for the VEF organizational chart, in which the names are listed in the English name order.

DATE	EVENT
April 2004	Dr. Phillip Griffiths of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J., was one of the first U.S. scientists sponsored by VEF to present a seminar in Vietnam, entitled *Building Science and Technology Capacity in Vietnam*. During his visit, he also discussed the creation of Centers of Excellence in Vietnam.
February 2005	The U.S. Department of State authorized VEF as a designated sponsor of an Exchange Visitor Program.
June 2005	An official operating permit (license) from the Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) was provided to VEF for its representative office in Vietnam.
June 2005	VEF was named by Prime Minister Phan Van Khai as a means to encourage cultural and educational exchange between the United States and Vietnam when the Prime Minister made his historic visit to the United States to meet President George W. Bush.
July 2005	Over 100 top U.S. universities joined the VEF Alliance[2] in a cost-sharing arrangement to host VEF Fellows for graduate study.
August 2006	The first research report sponsored by VEF was completed: *Observations on Undergraduate Education in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, and Physics at Select Universities in Vietnam*. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Thien Nhan, who was then the Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City and is now Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of MOET, requested that VEF do this and related research.
November/ December 2006	VEF organized study tours at MOET's request for a MOET delegation, led by Prof. Dr. Nguyen Thien Nhan, then Minister of MOET, to visit Germany[3] and the United States to observe top-level universities as part of MOET's interest in establishing world-class universities in Vietnam.
January 2007	The second research report sponsored by VEF was completed: *Observations on the Current Status of Education in the Agricultural Sciences in Vietnam*.
February 2007	Vo Van Toi, Ph.D., was appointed the second Executive Director of VEF.
March 2007	MOET began emulating VEF's application and selection process, culminating in candidate interviews in August 2007, organized by VEF. The Vietnamese Government Overseas Scholarship Program, known as the 322 Program, is now known as the Vietnam International Education Development (VIED) program.

[2] The VEF Alliance consists of 107 leading U.S. universities that agree to share the educational costs for VEF Fellows in exchange for the opportunity to consider highly qualified Vietnamese talent for admission to graduate programs and to have the assistance of VEF to identify academic institutions and government entities in Vietnam of interest to the particular U.S. university.

[3] Rice University (Houston, Texas) had helped to establish a German university, which served as an example to MOET of how a U.S. university assists in such cooperative academic efforts with a foreign country.

DATE	EVENT
April 2007	Nguyen Thi Thanh Phuong, Ph.D., was appointed as the first Country Director of the VEF overseas field office in Hanoi.
May 2007	The first cohort of 12 Visiting Scholars was selected to pursue post-doctoral self-designed professional development programs at U.S. universities for up to 12 months.
June 2007	For the first time, VEF senior leadership met with Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung, which demonstrated the importance of the relationship between VEF and the Vietnamese government.
April 2008	VEF received a new operating permit from the Vietnamese government that provides VEF with tax-free Non-Return Official Development Assistance (ODA) status.
April 2008	The first cohort of four American professors was selected for the VEF U.S. Faculty Scholar Grants Program to teach at Vietnamese universities either on-site or via videoconferencing during the 2008-09 academic year.
August 2008	Marking the fifth year of interview panels in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, U.S. scientists and experts interviewed VEF Fellowship candidates for the 2009 cohort. Each year since 2003, at the request of VEF, the U.S. National Academies organizes American experts as interview panelists.
December 2008	The first VEF Alumni Conference was organized by VEF in Hanoi for VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars, who had returned to Vietnam.
November 2009	Lynne A. McNamara, Ph.D., was appointed as the third Executive Director of VEF.
January 2010	The 7th VEF Annual Fellows and Scholars Conference was the first VEF conference hosted by a VEF Alliance school, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), and co-organized with VEF. The theme was *Leaders of the Future: Entrepreneurs***.** Each year on January 3-5, VEF will hold its annual conference at a different U.S. university.
January 2010	VEF successfully transferred its responsibilities for the Vietnam OpenCourseWare (VOCW) project as well as related software and hardware to MOET. VEF donated 15 servers, which were dedicated to the VOCW project, to the 15 Vietnamese universities hosting the servers.
April 2010	VEF was asked by AASCU (American Association of State Colleges and Universities) to assist with their international efforts in Vietnam.
May 2010	At the invitation of the OpenCourseWare Consortium (OCWC), VEF co-hosted the 5th Annual OCWC Global Meeting (May 5-7) in Hanoi.

Table 1. Milestones in the History of VEF

Mission

Serving as an independent U.S. Federal Government agency, VEF is unique in comparison with other international funding agencies because it reports directly to the President of the United States. The VEF mission, as indicated in the *Vietnam Education Foundation Act of 2000*, is to further the process of reconciliation and to build the bilateral relationship between the United States and Vietnam, thus serving the interests of both countries through education in the sciences (natural, physical, and environmental), mathematics, medicine, and technology (including information technology).

VEF focuses on providing scholarships and grants for Vietnamese and U.S. nationals. This activity is conceived as a transformative and cost-effective model that fits with the VEF legislative mandate to develop highly skilled talent and leadership in science and technology for Vietnam.

The **VEF Scholarships and Grants Program** consists of three key activities:

1. **Fellowship Program,** bringing outstanding Vietnamese nationals to pursue graduate degrees at top-level U.S. universities with the goal of becoming leaders and pioneers in their fields.
2. **Visiting Scholar Program**, bringing exceptional Vietnamese post-doctoral educators and researchers to renowned U.S. universities for self-designed professional development programs of up to twelve months, thereby giving a boost to their research and leadership in science and technology.
3. **U.S. Faculty Scholar Grants Program**, offering American professors from U.S. universities the opportunity to teach at Vietnamese universities via videoconferencing or on-site in Vietnam on topics in the fields supported by VEF. The VEF Faculty Scholar program is developing sustainable educational and research programs in Vietnam as well as meaningful relationships between U.S. and Vietnamese institutions.

In building the bridge between Vietnam and the United States, other VEF activities have addressed capacity-building in Vietnam as one means to assist Vietnamese institutions and organizations as they work to upgrade their performance and capabilities in a way that builds a welcoming foundation for the return of VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars to Vietnam. The capacity-building efforts of VEF have consisted of joint projects between the scientific and academic communities of Vietnam and the United States in order to share knowledge, skills, and resources to best effect change.

VEF has responded quickly and successfully to develop various program and project models, suitable for U.S. academic institutions and suitable for the academic, cultural, and socio-economic context of Vietnam. VEF's flexible infrastructure, efficient management, quality operations, and highly-capable staff have all contributed to the rapidity of response. VEF has developed these models, continuously evaluates their effectiveness, and fine-tunes the details with the expectation of transferring successful outcomes to interested Vietnamese government entities, academics, and scientists, who then apply the models on a larger scale. Hence, quality

and effectiveness remain top priorities for VEF in planning, implementing, and monitoring its programs and activities.

Organization

VEF is governed by a **Board of Directors** with thirteen members, including three U.S. Cabinet members, two U.S. Senators, two U.S. Representatives, and six presidential appointees. Current members are:

- **Cabinet members**: Secretary of Education, Mr. Arne Duncan; Secretary of State, Ms. Hillary Rodham Clinton; and Secretary of Treasury, Mr. Timothy F. Geithner
- **Legislative members**: Senator David Vitter and one more Senator to be appointed; Representatives Earl Blumenauer and Joseph R. Pitts
- **Presidential appointees**:
    - Dr. Stephen F. Maxner, Chairman, VEF Board of Directors; Director, Vietnam Center of Texas Tech University
    - Ms. Elizabeth Dugan, Chair, VEF Financial Committee
    - Mr. David Duong, CEO, California Waste Solutions
    - Mr. Christopher J. Fussner, Owner & Founder, Trans Technology Pte Ltd.
    - Ms. Marjorie Margolies, President, Women's Campaign International
    - (One more to be appointed)

The **VEF Executive Director** is appointed by the Board of Directors and carries out the functions of the Foundation subject to the supervision and direction of the Board.

The headquarters of VEF is located in Arlington, Virginia, U.S.A., which is located in the Washington, D.C., area, with its field office in Hanoi, Vietnam. The following diagram, entitled VEF Organizational Chart, shows the organization of VEF and its current staff (Fig. 1).

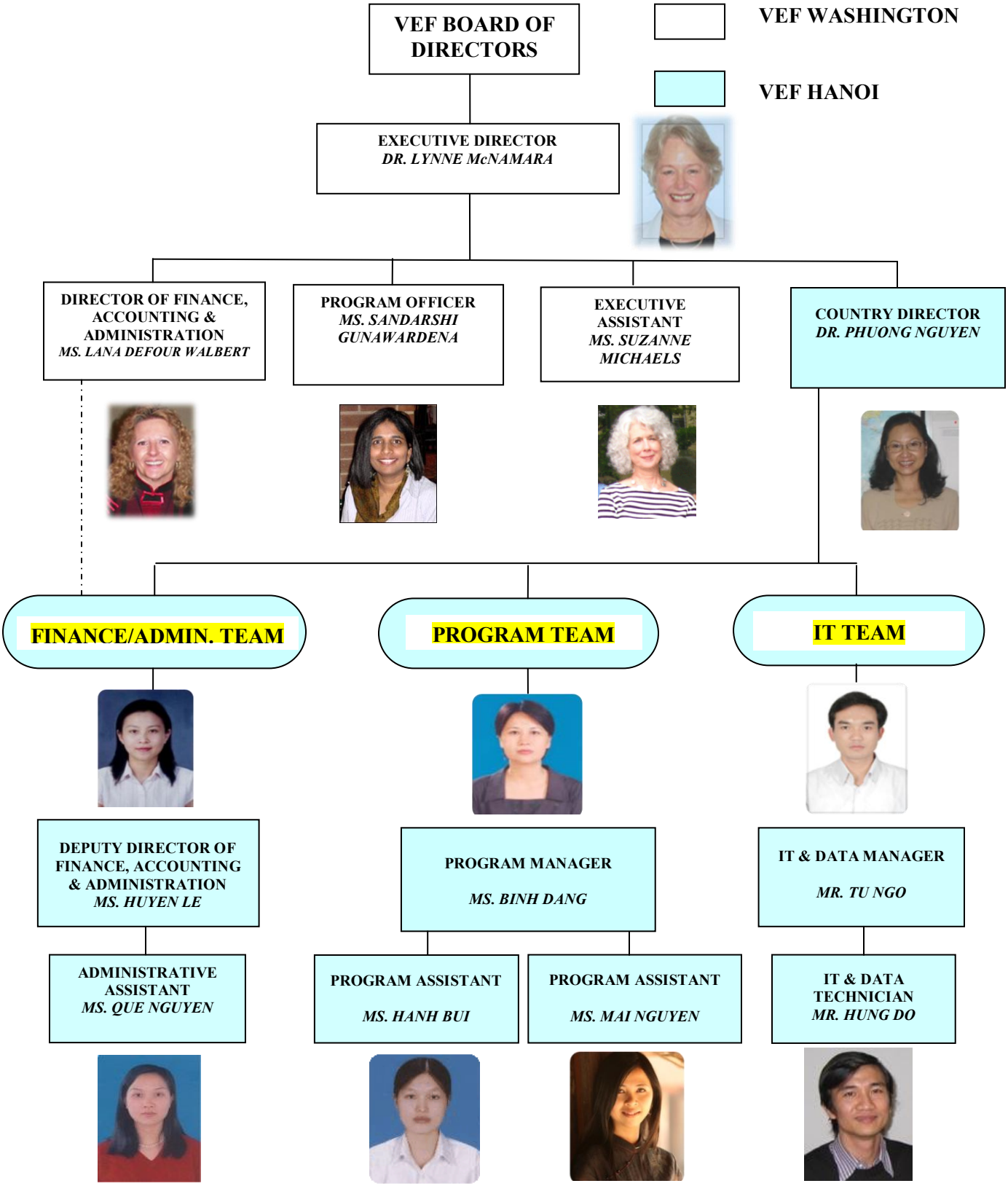

Figure 1. VEF Organizational Chart

Scholarships and Grants

Fellowship Program

As the flagship activity of VEF, which has been in effect longer than other programs, the VEF Fellowship Program creates opportunities for talented Vietnamese to become pioneers and leaders in their fields by pursuing graduate degrees at U.S. universities. VEF has designed a rigorous application and selection process in order to identify outstanding candidates. VEF then helps the final nominees understand how to apply to top-level U.S. universities. Fellows are chosen based on individual merit, including academic performance and the potential for scientific contributions to education and research in their fields. To facilitate relationships with U.S. universities, VEF established the VEF Alliance, a cost-sharing arrangement with over 100 top U.S. research institutions. With accompanying supportive data, the following sections summarize the multiple aspects of the VEF Fellowship program as of May 2010.

Application and Selection Process

The VEF Fellowship Program is not envisioned as a simple funding mechanism for graduate study in the United States. Indeed, it aims to support talented and ambitious Vietnamese, who desire to contribute not only to the scientific and technological progress of Vietnam, but also to the VEF mission. To attract the best and brightest candidates, VEF has designed an open, competitive, and transparent application and selection process that assures U.S. universities of the highest quality of applicants from Vietnam and that helps to build Vietnam's reputation in science, engineering, mathematics, medicine, and technology. Hence, the candidates must have an excellent academic record and significant professional and/or research experience. In addition, they must demonstrate a strong commitment to the development of Vietnam through their academic and research pursuits. They are expected to be admitted to a top U.S. research university, which is highly recognized in the applicant's field.

The applicant can obtain a VEF Fellowship by applying through either Process A or Process B. In Process A, after having succeeded in acquiring minimum required scores on standardized exams, specifically the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), applicants must demonstrate an ability to excel in the U.S. academic environment. They can do this in a highly challenging oral exam and interview conducted in English by two renowned U.S. professors invited by VEF to Vietnam with the assistance of the U.S. National Academies. The two U.S. professors, serving on a subject area review panel, provide an individualized letter of recommendation for each candidate that they recommend for a VEF Fellowship. The letter is used in applying to U.S. universities.

After having passed the oral exam/interview, the nominee, with support from VEF, applies to leading U.S. universities chosen by the candidate and confirmed or recommended by the U.S. professors during the interviews. These U.S. universities must belong to the VEF Alliance or be willing to accept VEF's financial terms. After the candidate receives admission to one or more U.S. universities, the National Academies assists VEF in determining the best university for the

candidate to attend, while taking into consideration the interests of the individual. The list of nominees is presented to the VEF Board of Directors, which approves the final list of Fellowship recipients, who have applied through Process A or Process B.

In Process B, the applicant must have already been admitted to a U.S. university. After passing a technical review and a brief phone interview conducted by VEF staff and the National Academies, successful candidates are recommended to the VEF Board of Directors to receive a VEF Fellowship award.

The VEF Fellowship program is highly competitive. In the 2010 cohort Fellowship competition through Process A, 86 out of 449 initial registrants met the minimum requirements to continue to the next round, which was a technical review by the U.S. National Academies. As a result of the technical review, 82 candidates were invited to the final stage of the competition, which was the oral exam/interview, to compete for a total of 40 Fellowships. During the 2010 cohort competition through Process B, eight (8) out of 43 initial registrants met the minimum requirements to continue to the next round, which was a technical review followed by a phone interview. Four (4) were accepted as VEF Fellows. Thus, for the 2010 competition, a qualified individual had a 47% (40/86) chance of receiving a Fellowship through Process A and a 50% (4/8) chance of receiving a Fellowship through Process B.

To prepare Fellows for their new environment in the United States and to train them in leadership and team-building, VEF organizes a Pre-Departure Orientation for the newly-selected Fellows in June before their departure from Vietnam. The purpose of the orientation is to hone their skills for academic success, to ensure a smooth transition to the United States, and to begin their integration into the VEF family.

MOET has recognized the success of the VEF Fellowship Program and is emulating the VEF application and selection process for its own scholarship program, known as the Vietnam International Education Development (VIED) program. In a collaborative effort and at the request of VIED, VEF has been training MOET staff on how to set up their own application and selection process, how to develop and use online electronic forms and files based on the VEF Online Management System (OMS), and how to manage systems and processes related to an overseas study program based on the VEF model.

VEF Alliance and Funding Arrangements

VEF has established an alliance with over 100 leading U.S. research universities through a Memorandum of Understanding, outlining the agreement. Members of the VEF Alliance agree to provide a share of the educational costs in exchange for the opportunity to consider accepting highly-qualified Vietnamese talent for graduate programs and to have support from VEF to identify academic institutions and government entities in Vietnam of interest to the particular U.S. University. VEF benefits from this relationship in many ways, including the cost-effective financial arrangement, which contributes to the efficiency of VEF program operations.

VEF provides an annual grant to the U.S. university of $27,000 per Fellow for the first two years of graduate study. The university manages and supplements the VEF grant funds to cover all

required tuition, fees, health/medical insurance, books and equipment, and a monthly stipend for 12 months, which must be equivalent to that paid to a graduate student in the designated department. Through a graduate assistantship or other means, the university must fully support a VEF doctoral Fellow from the third year. Each Fellow also receives $1,000 per year as a Professional Development Grant (PDG) to use for professional purposes, provided that the Fellow is within the VEF grant period, is enrolled full-time, and is not involved in Academic Training (an off-campus employment benefit of the J-1 visa status). A master's degree student receives up to two years of PDG and a doctoral student receives up to 5 years of PDG. VEF provides this annual grant to the university, and the university disburses it to the Fellow.

Additional Support

To encourage networking, VEF organizes an Annual Conference as a forum to share opinions, knowledge, and experience among the Fellows and Visiting Scholars and with other scientists and U.S. experts. Through these activities, VEF continues to build a spirit of community, solidarity, and professionalism among its Fellows and Visiting Scholars in order to help them sustain professional and personal support systems while in the United States and when they return to Vietnam. Typically, guest speakers give motivational presentations on such topics as leadership, emerging technologies, and the relationship between research, education, and entrepreneurship. VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars also have opportunities to present their scientific research results at the VEF Annual Conference.

As an example of VEF's efforts to facilitate the Fellows' return to Vietnam, since 2008 the annual conferences have included a session with the theme of *All the Ways Home*. The discussions and activities are designed to stimulate proactive thinking among VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars about ways to better serve Vietnam upon their return and, most importantly, to create positive communication on this topic between VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars and Vietnamese leaders and guests. To promote professional opportunities, a Job Fair highlights Vietnamese universities, research institutions, and government entities as well as corporations and companies working in Vietnam.

VEF is committed to helping Fellows and Visiting Scholars to return to Vietnam to contribute to their country. One further example is VEF efforts to establish a VEF Alumni Association. The first VEF Alumni Conference was held in Hanoi, Vietnam, in December 2008 and the second one will be held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, in August 2010.

Program Statistics

The tables and charts below provide summary data on all VEF Fellows as of May 2010, addressing the following topics: numbers in each cohort, U.S. universities enrolling VEF Fellows, academic performance of VEF Fellows, fields represented in VEF Fellows' graduate degree studies as well as specialties represented in Engineering, gender, degrees sought (master's or doctorate), age, origin in Vietnam, and numbers of publications per year through 2009. Included in this summary report is an analysis of VEF Fellows, who have graduated, including

the employment status of returnees to Vietnam and the employment situations and positions of Fellows, who are pursuing Academic Training before returning to Vietnam.

Numbers in Each Cohort

From March 2003 through the fall term 2010, 344 VEF Fellows, consisting of 8 separate cohorts, have been placed in graduate programs at 76 top-tier U.S. research universities, which are listed further below. A cohort is defined as a group of Fellows, who begin graduate studies in the United States together in the same year, which is identified according to the fall term of that academic year. The numbers in the VEF Fellowship cohorts are summarized in Table 2.

COHORT YEAR	NUMBER OF VEF FELLOWS
2003	**19**
2004	**82**
2005	**51**
2006	**37**
2007	**40**
2008	**38**
2009	**39**
2010	**38**
TOTAL	**344**

Table 2. Numbers of VEF Fellows in Each Cohort

U.S. Universities Enrolling VEF Fellows

VEF Fellows apply on their own to U.S. universities while VEF provides financial support for applications to no more than five recommended universities. VEF pays for the following: the review of each Fellow's statement of purpose for the university application; GRE Subject Tests, if required by the university; submissions to the universities of standardized test score results; and application fees, if required by non-Alliance universities. To date, 76 American universities have enrolled VEF Fellows since 2003 (Table 3).

1	Arizona State University	39	Tufts University
2	Auburn University	40	University at Buffalo, the State University of New York
3	Boston University	41	University of Arizona
4	Bradley University	42	University of Arkansas
5	Brown University	43	University of California at Berkeley
6	California Institute of Technology	44	University of California at Davis
7	Carnegie Mellon University	45	University of California at Los Angeles
8	Case Western Reserve University	46	University of California at Riverside
9	Clark University	47	University of California at San Diego
10	Clemson University	48	University of Chicago
11	Columbia University	49	University of Colorado at Denver Health Science Center
12	Cornell University	50	University of Florida
13	Delaware University	51	University of Georgia
14	Duke University	52	University of Hawaii at Manoa
15	Emory University	53	University of Houston
16	Florida State University	54	University of Illinois at Chicago
17	Georgia Institute of Technology	55	University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign
18	Indiana University	56	University of Iowa
19	Iowa State University	57	University of Maryland at College Park
20	Johns Hopkins University	58	University of Massachusetts Amherst
21	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	59	University of Michigan at Ann Arbor
22	Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center	60	University of Minnesota
23	Michigan State University	61	University of Missouri at Columbia
24	New York University	62	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
25	Northeastern University	63	University of Oklahoma
26	Northwestern University	64	University of Pennsylvania
27	Ohio University	65	University of South Florida
28	Oklahoma State University	66	University of Southern California
29	Old Dominion University	67	University of Texas at Austin
30	Pennsylvania State University	68	University of Texas at Houston
31	Princeton University	69	University of Utah
32	Purdue University	70	University of Virginia
33	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	71	University of Washington
34	Rice University	72	University of Wisconsin – Madison
35	Rutgers University	73	Virginia Commonwealth University
36	Stanford University	74	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
37	State University of New York at New Paltz	75	Washington State University
38	Texas A&M University	76	Yale University

Table 3. U.S. Universities Enrolling VEF Fellows

Academic Performance

The effectiveness of VEF's rigorous selection process and the quality of VEF Fellows are reflected in their academic performance (Fig. 2). As of the end of the fall term 2009, a majority of the Fellows enrolled (81%) had a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of B+ or better, with almost one quarter of VEF Fellows carrying a GPA of A. One new Fellow in the 2009 cohort (1%) had a GPA of C, which was due to language and cultural adjustment difficulties. In such situations, VEF confirms with the department, academic advisor, and the Fellow that academic issues can be resolved so that the Fellow will be successful.

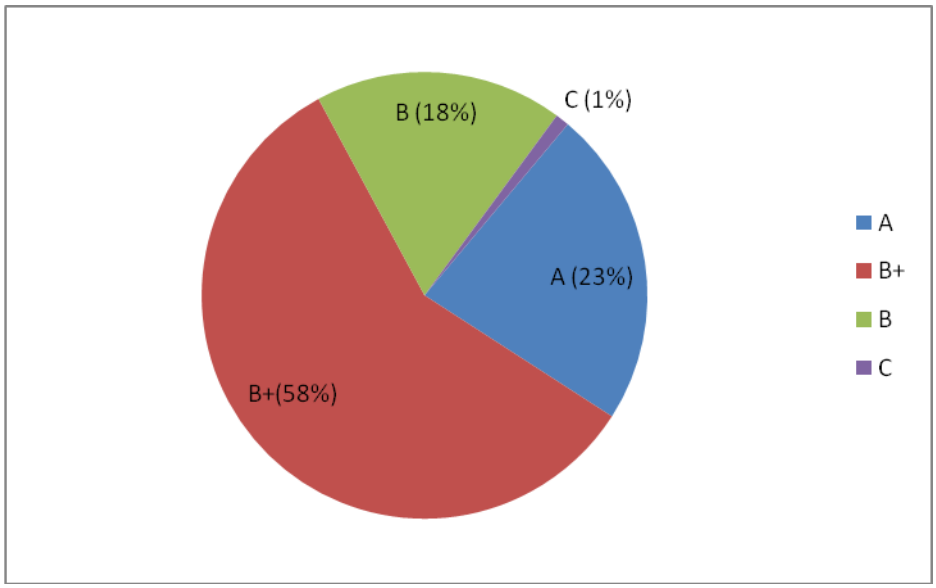

Figure 2. Cumulative GPA of Fellows Enrolled as of the End of the Fall Term 2009

Fields Represented

Engineering, averaging 41% of VEF Fellows across all cohorts, and Computer Sciences, averaging 19% across all cohorts, have been the primary fields of study of VEF Fellows (Fig. 3). Interestingly, the number of Fellows studying in the broad field of Biological and Life Sciences has quadrupled from 5% of the 2003 cohort to 21% of the 2010 cohort while the field of Public Health has held at around 10% of VEF Fellows in recent years.

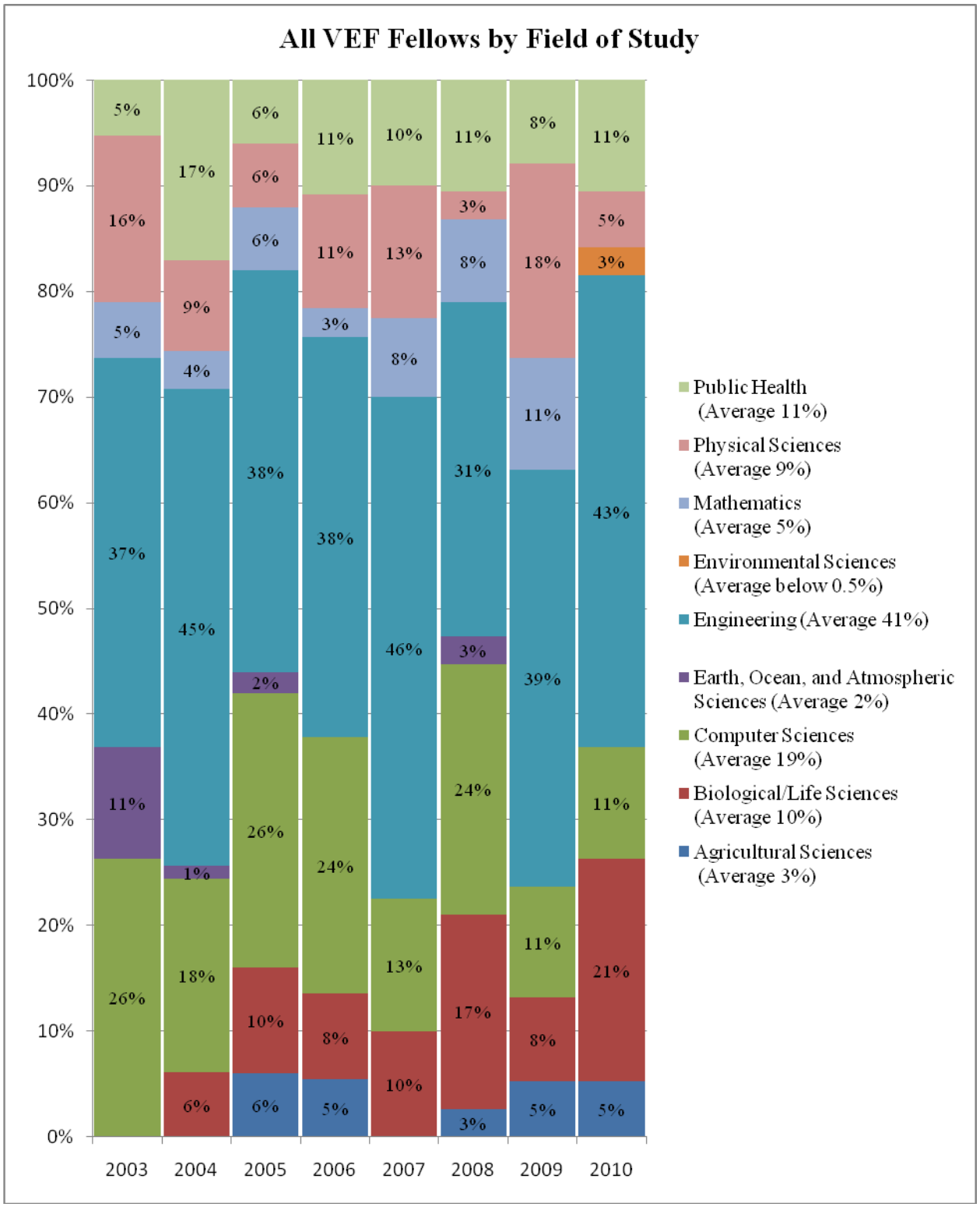

Figure 3. All VEF Fellows by Field of Study

Specialties in Engineering

Since Engineering is the major field of study of VEF Fellows, an analysis of the various specialties is informative. Electrical Engineering is the primary specialty among VEF Fellows, averaging 37% of all Fellows, followed by Civil Engineering (16%) and then Mechanical Engineering (11%), equally shared with Environmental Engineering (11%). (Fig. 4)

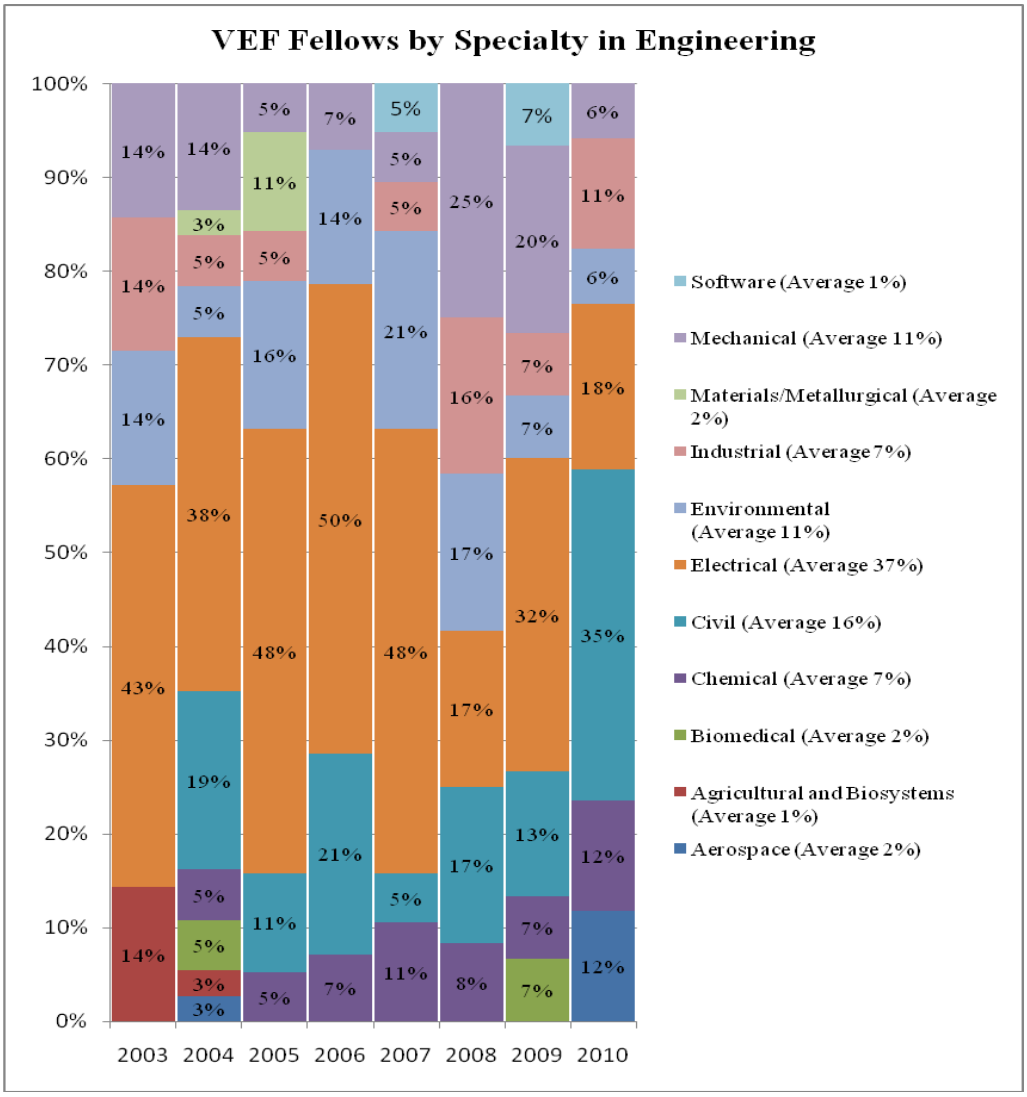

Figure 4. All VEF Fellows by Specialty in Engineering

Gender

The gender of all cohorts of VEF Fellows is 72% male and 28% female, but there are variations for each cohort. Although there are fewer women than men in each VEF Fellowship cohort, the number of female Fellows has increased significantly, from 5% of the 2003 cohort to more than 30% of each cohort, beginning with the 2008 cohort (Fig. 5).

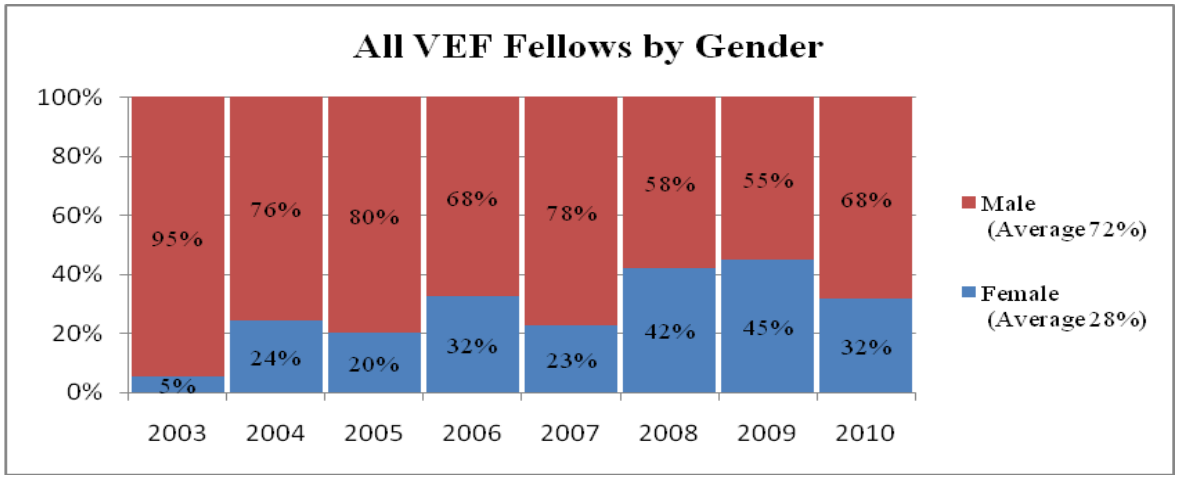

Figure 5. All VEF Fellows by Gender

Degree Sought

The majority of VEF Fellows (90%) pursue a doctoral degree, while 10% on average pursue a master's degree (Fig. 6).

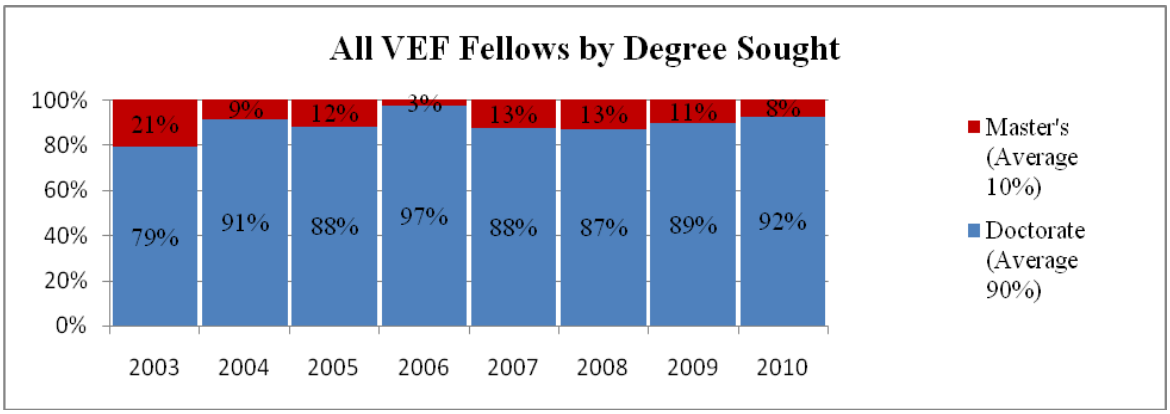

Figure 6. All VEF Fellows by Degree Sought

Age

The majority of Fellows (72%) are between 21 - 26 years old, while 17% are 27 - 30 years old and 11% are over 30. The youngest age group (21 - 26 years old) has increased steadily since 2003 when it was 53% of the Fellows and now this age group has been a significant majority of Fellows (over 70%) for 6 consecutive years, since 2005 (Fig. 7).

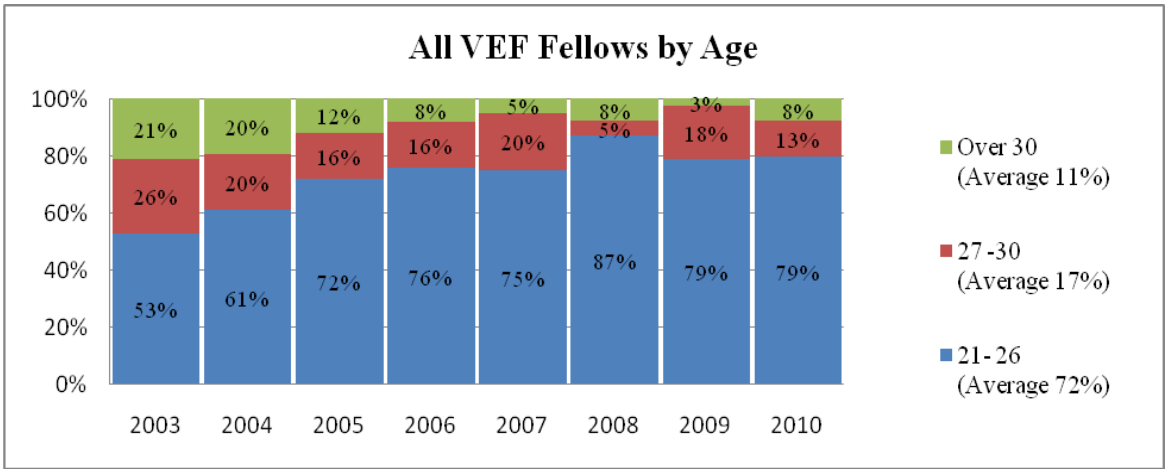

Figure 7. All VEF Fellows by Age

Origin in Vietnam

Vietnam can be divided into three regions (North, Center, and South), according to the Statistics Directory of 2009, issued by the Vietnamese General Department of Statistics. The North includes the Red River Delta (11 provinces) and Northern mountainous areas (14 provinces). The Center includes the Northern Central areas and coastal areas in the Center (14 provinces) and the Highlands (5 provinces). The South includes the South Eastern areas (6 provinces) and the Mekong Delta (13 provinces).

To represent the number of Fellows from these areas of Vietnam, an analysis was done of the reported address, defined as one's origin, at the time of an individual's application to the VEF Fellowship. While the distribution has varied from year to year, the overall majority of Fellows (59%) are from the North, 24% are from the Center, and 17% are from the South (Fig. 8).

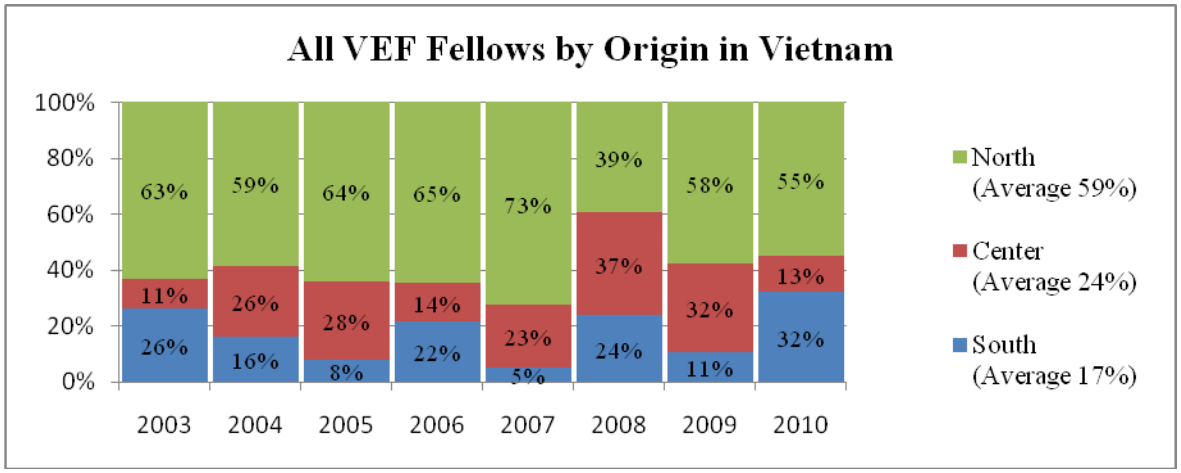

Figure 8. All VEF Fellows by Origin in Vietnam

Number of Publications per Year

VEF Fellows have achieved laudable results in terms of professional publications. While the majority of publications consist of conference proceedings and book chapters, which are labeled as *Other* in Fig. 9, publications by VEF Fellows in peer-reviewed journals (*Journals*) have increased significantly from one (1) in 2004 to 40 in 2009. In general, the years 2008 and 2009 witnessed a surge in the number of total publications, with 84 in 2008 and 88 in 2009. Overall, the number of publications has been increasing steadily each year since 2005 (Fig. 9).

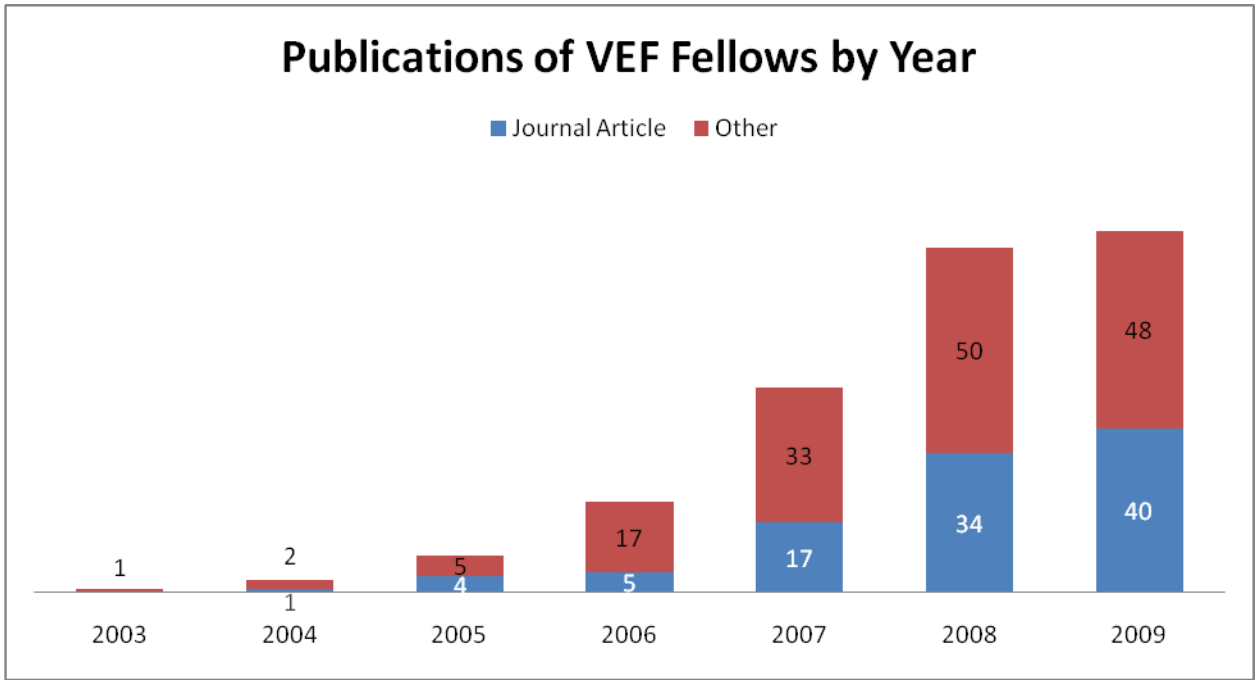

Figure 9. Publications of VEF Fellows by Year

VEF Fellows and Scholars Association

VEF has assisted the Fellows to organize the VEF Fellows and Scholars Association (VEFFA) as an independent entity. VEFFA is a forum for Fellows and Visiting Scholars to communicate and network while developing self-governing skills. A recent VEFFA initiative is the Vietnam Book Drive, a campaign to collect textbooks donated by professors and students from universities across the United States. Resulting from these efforts was the establishment of a library in Vietnam in December 2007, which is dedicated specifically to the VEFFA collection and is located within the Ta Quang Buu Library of the Hanoi University of Technology (HUT). Under the second VEFFA Book Drive Project in 2008 in cooperation with Vinh University (VU), the VU-VEFFA Library was created. VEFFA conducted three Book Drive projects in 2009 in cooperation with the Hanoi University of Agriculture (HUA), the Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HCMUT), and the University of Da Nang (DNU), thus creating the HUA-VEFFA, HCMUT-VEFFA, and DNU-VEFFA Libraries. These libraries offer free access to students and faculty not only at the universities where they are located, but also for any students and faculty from other universities and research institutes across Vietnam.

VEF Fellowship Graduates

As of May 2010, 93 Fellows have graduated, which represents 27% of all Fellows (93/344) to date. The degrees obtained are as follows: 48 doctorates (52%) and 45 master's degrees (48%). The graduates are pursuing various interests, which can be summarized as follows (Fig. 10):

- 56% (52) have already returned to Vietnam.
- 28% (26) are in post-graduate Academic Training (AT) in the United States.
- 11% (10) are working abroad.
- 5% (5) are pursuing personal study in the United States with other sources of funding or are in the United States on J-2 status (spouse of a J-1 student).

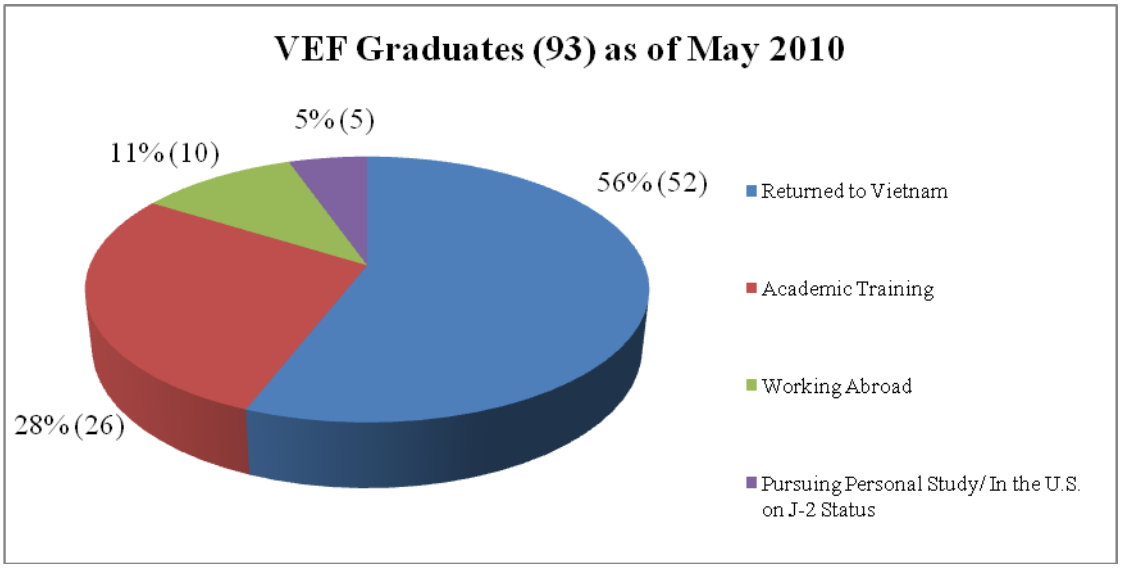

Figure 10. VEF Graduates (93) as of May 2010

The charts and tables below present further data on the VEF Fellowship graduates, which includes the following:

- ✓ Fields of study represented by graduates, who have returned to Vietnam
- ✓ Types of employment of the returnees, whether in the corporate, academic, development, or self-employment sector
- ✓ Employment and positions of graduates, who are pursuing post-graduate Academic Training.

Fields of VEF Returnees (VEF Fellows only)

The two major fields of the 52 VEF Fellows, who have graduated and returned to Vietnam as of May 2010, are Engineering (32%) and Computer Sciences (33%). Public Health ranks next with 13% of the returnees, followed by the comprehensive field of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences at 6%, Biological/Life Sciences at 6%, Physical Sciences at 6%, and finally by Agricultural Sciences and Mathematics, each at 2% (Fig. 11).

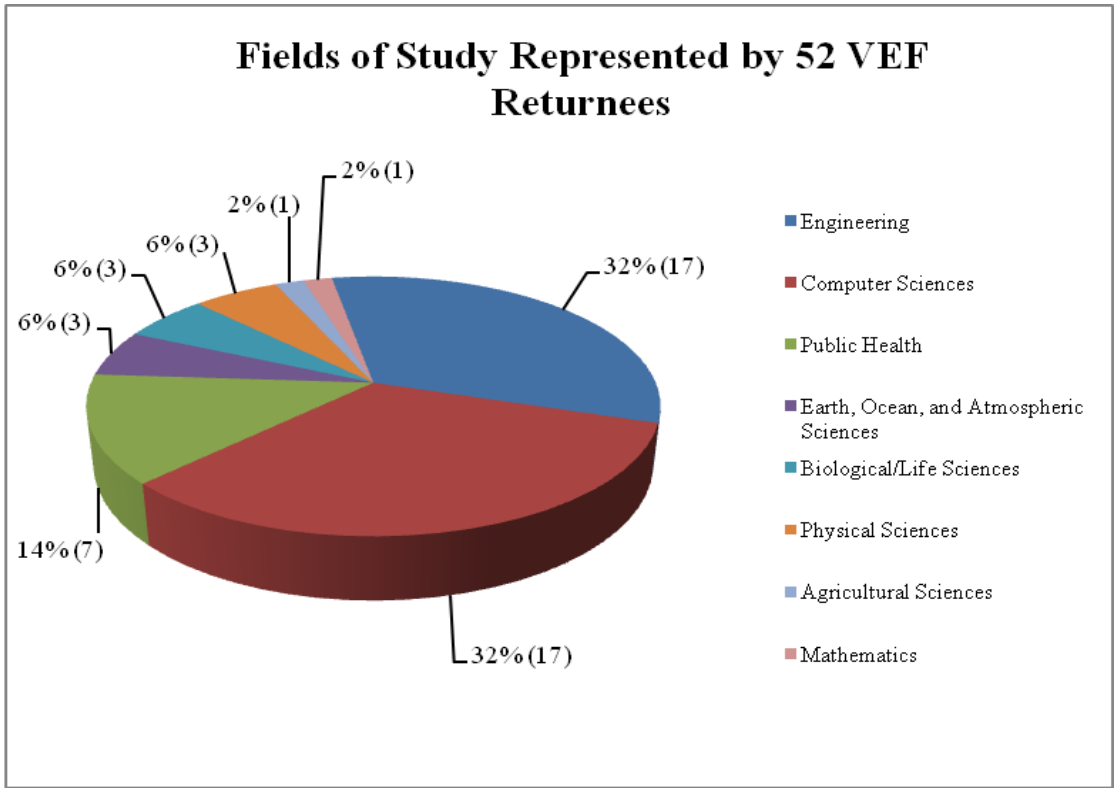

Figure 11. Fields Represented by VEF Returnees

Employment Sectors of Returnees (VEF Fellows only)

The majority of the returnees (51%) are working in the corporate sector while 38% are working in academia (Fig. 12). The remaining are working in the development sector (7%) or are self-employed (4%). This data represents 47 of the 52 returnees since the other five returnees have just recently returned to Vietnam as of May 2010 and have not yet finalized their employment situation.

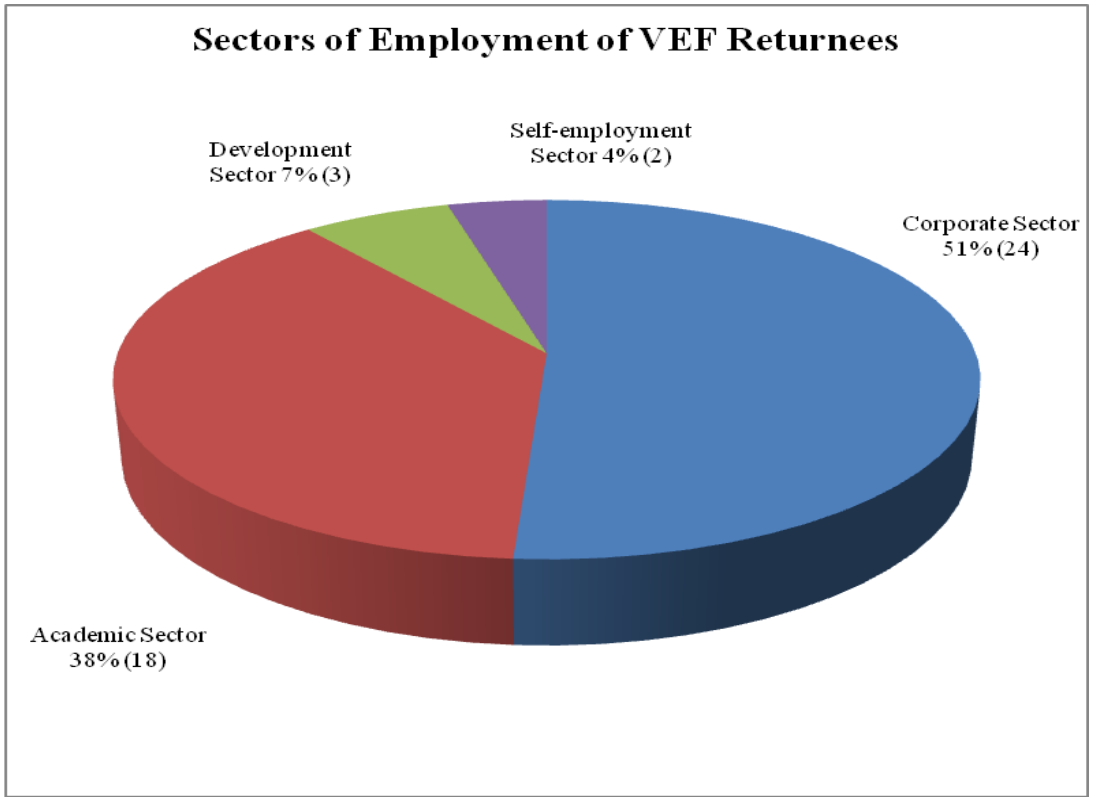

Figure 12. Sectors of Employment of Returnees

The returnees have attained significant positions (see the tables below) in the corporate, academic, and development sectors as well as through self-employment. A brief analysis precedes each table, summarizing the degrees obtained and the location of employment.

CORPORATE SECTOR EMPLOYMENT (VEF Fellows only)

Of the 24 returnees in the corporate sector, the majority (88%) obtained a master's degree while three received a Ph.D. in the United States. Table 4 below lists in alphabetical order the 24 companies and corporations in Vietnam where VEF Alumni are working. The majority of the VEF Alumni (54%), who are employed in the corporate sector, are working in Ho Chi Minh City while fewer (42%) are working in Hanoi and one is working in the central city of Da Nang.

#	COMPANY/CORPORATION	LOCATION	POSITION/TITLE
	With a master's degree completed under VEF sponsorship (21)		
1.	CIENCO JSC 586 Company	Da Nang	Senior Structural Engineer
2.	DDP Materials Limited Company	Ho Chi Minh City	Vice Managing Director
3.	Golden Bridge Financial Corporation	Hanoi	Senior Manager
4.	Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City	IT Project Manager
5.	Integrated Electronics and Communications Joint Stock Company	Hanoi	Vice Director
6.	Intel Products Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City	Industrial Engineer
7.	Intel Products Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City	Engineer
8.	International Relations Office, Saigon Post and Telecommunications Services Corporation	Ho Chi Minh City	Project Manager
9.	Mai Thu Printing Limited Company	Ho Chi Minh City	Vice Director
10.	OC TECH Joint-Stock Company	Hanoi	Director
11.	Petro Vietnam Automation and Information Technology Company	Hanoi	Expert
12.	Petro Vietnam General Services Joint Stock Corporation	Ho Chi Minh City	Chemical/Project Engineer
13.	Siemens Limited Vietnam	Hanoi	Expert
14.	Supply Chain, Unilever Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City	Assistant Manager
15.	Technology Resources Vietnam Company	Ho Chi Minh City	Consultant
16.	Total Building Systems Limited Company	Ho Chi Minh City	General Manager
17.	Viet Phu Company	Ho Chi Minh City	Senior Software Engineer

#	COMPANY/CORPORATION	LOCATION	POSITION/TITLE
18.	Viet Thong International	Hanoi	Senior Software Engineer
19.	Vietnam Report Joint-Stock Company	Hanoi	Project Manager
20.	VNDirect Securities Corporation	Ho Chi Minh City	Analyst
21.	VinaGame	Ho Chi Minh City	Vice President of Web Business
	With a doctoral degree completed under VEF sponsorship (3)		
1.	Add-on Development Company - A Danish company	Hanoi	Quality Assurance Leader
2.	Petro Vietnam Automation and Information Technology Company	Hanoi	General Director - CEO
3.	Research and Development Division, Tan Tao Group	Hanoi	Project Manager

Table 4. Corporate Sector Employment of VEF Returnees

ACADEMIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT (VEF Fellows only)

As of May 2010, 18 VEF Alumni are working in the academic sector. Most (56% = 10/18) are working as faculty members in universities in Vietnam and the rest are working in research institutes. The majority (50% = 9/18) are located in Ho Chi Minh City, while eight (45% = 8/18) are in Hanoi and one (1) is in Thai Nguyen. Table 5 below is organized alphabetically by the name of the academic institution or organization.

#	ACADEMIC INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	POSITION/TITLE
	With a master's degree completed under VEF sponsorship (7)		
1.	Bridge Design Department, Hanoi University of Civil Engineering	Hanoi	Lecturer
2.	Center for Environmental Research and Education	Hanoi	Environmental Scientist
3.	Faculty of Information Technology, Ho Chi Minh City University of Science	Ho Chi Minh City	Lecturer
4.	Hanoi University of Technology	Hanoi	Lecturer
5.	National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology	Hanoi	Research Scientist
6.	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City	Lecturer
7.	University of Natural Sciences, Vietnam National University	Ho Chi Minh City	Lecturer
	With a doctoral degree completed under VEF sponsorship (11)		
1.	Chemical Engineering Department, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology, Vietnam National University	Ho Chi Minh City	Faculty member
2.	Civil Engineering Department, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology, Vietnam National University	Ho Chi Minh City	Lecturer
3.	Delivery Department, Hanoi Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital, Hanoi	Hanoi	Doctor
4.	Department of Computer Science, University of Natural Sciences, Vietnam National University	Ho Chi Minh City	Lecturer
5.	Faculty of Forestry, Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City	Ho Chi Minh City	Lecturer

#	ACADEMIC INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	POSITION/TITLE
6.	Hanoi University of Sciences, Vietnam National University	Hanoi	Lecturer
7.	Institute of Hygiene and Public Health	Ho Chi Minh City	Researcher
8.	Institute of Social and Medical Studies and Center for Promotion of Advancement of Society	Hanoi	Founder/Management Board
9.	International Department, Thai Nguyen University of Economics and Business Administration	Thai Nguyen	Head
10.	Rubber Research Institute of Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City	Researcher
11.	University of Queensland	Hanoi	Research Fellow

Table 5. Academic Sector Employment of VEF Returnees

DEVELOPMENT SECTOR (VEF Fellows only)

Even though a minority of VEF returnees (7%) are working in the development sector in Vietnam, all of them work for world-famous organizations, as shown in the table below (Table 6). All three returnees work in Hanoi.

#	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	POSITION/TITLE
	With a master's degree completed under VEF sponsorship (1)		
1.	Inter Agency Unit, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Vietnam	Hanoi	Head
	With a doctoral degree completed under VEF sponsorship (2)		
1.	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Vietnam	Hanoi	Health Policy Specialist
2.	Environmental Defense Fund - a U.S. Non-Governmental Organization	Hanoi	Science and Policy Analyst

Table 6. Development Sector Employment of VEF Returnees

SELF-EMPLOYED (VEF Fellows only)

As of May 2010, two VEF returnees were self-employed, comprising four percent (4%) of the total. They have established their own companies in Hanoi, which are shown in the table below (Table 7).

#	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	POSITION TITLE
	With a master's degree completed under VEF sponsorship (1)		
1.	EQuest	Hanoi	Director
	With a doctoral degree completed under VEF sponsorship (1)		
1.	Center for Support of Social Development Programs	Hanoi	Vice-Director

Table 7. Self-Employed

ACADEMIC TRAINING

VEF encourages Fellows to pursue Academic Training (AT) after degree completion. Providing significant professional experience and opportunities, Academic Training helps VEF Fellows to develop their skills beyond their academic studies and assists them in strengthening ties with U.S. experts in their fields, whether in academia or in other sectors, before returning to Vietnam. The maximum time allowed for AT for cohorts 2003 – 2009 is 18 months for those in a master's degree program and 36 months for those in a doctoral degree program. The allowable time for both master's and doctoral degree programs for cohorts 2010 and beyond will be 18 months for AT. VEF Fellows are required to return to Vietnam for at least two years after completing their academic program in the United States. This includes completion of degree work and subsequent Academic Training.

Table 8 below lists in alphabetical order the names of the companies, corporations, and institutions hosting the 26 Fellows, who were pursuing post-graduate AT as of May 2010, and includes their position/title as well.

#	COMPANY/CORPORATION/INSTITUTION	POSITION/TITLE
1	Airvana Company	General Dentist
2	Argonne National Laboratory	Postdoctoral Appointee
3	California Institute of Technology	Postdoctoral Scholar
4	Caterpillar Champaign Simulation Center	Staff Engineer
5	Columbia University	Ritt Assistant Professor
6	Coordinated Science Laboratory Urbana	Visiting Research Associate

#	COMPANY/CORPORATION/INSTITUTION	POSITION/TITLE
7	Deccan International	Operations Research Developer
8	Department of Human Genetics, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	Postdoctoral Fellow
9	General Motors	Chemical Engineer
10	GT Solar Inc., Merrimack	Electrical Engineer
11	Herrero Contractors Inc.	Virtual Design and Construction Technician
12	Moffat and Nichol Company	Engineer
13	National Institute of Standards and Technology	Guest Research
14	National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda	Visiting Fellow
15	Pennridge Dental Associates	General Dentist
16	Samsung Information Systems America, Inc.	Senior Research Engineer
17	School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Postdoctoral Research Associate
18	Sigmas Design	Design Engineer
19	Sony Electronics Inc.	Senior Research Engineer
20	University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign	Visiting Research Assistant Professor
21	University of Texas at Houston, School of Public Health, CITAR Project	Postdoctoral Fellow
22	University of Texas at Houston, School of Public Health	Data Analyst
23	University of Virginia	Research Assistant
24	Children's Nutrition Research Center, Baylor College of Medicine	Postdoctoral Fellow
25	Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Medicine	Postdoctoral Fellow
26	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	Software Engineer

Table 8. Organizations Hosting Fellows Pursuing Post-Degree Academic Training (AT) in the United States

Visiting Scholar Program

The VEF Visiting Scholar Program was established in 2007 for Vietnamese nationals who already hold a doctorate in fields supported by VEF, including science, mathematics, medicine, engineering, and technology. The Visiting Scholar Program invigorates leadership development in education by helping researchers and educators from Vietnamese academic and research

institutions to improve their professional skills and research knowledge in top-notch U.S. universities. The Visiting Scholar pursues a self-designed program for five to twelve months. This may include formal courses, workshops, seminars, laboratory and field research, and other types of professional development activities. Upon returning to Vietnam, the Visiting Scholar must train others using the knowledge and skills acquired in the United States. Thus, this post-doctoral endeavor has a multiplying effect as a training-of-trainers (TOT) program.

Selection of Visiting Scholar (VS) applicants is highly competitive and based on the following criteria:

- ✓ Academic and professional merit of the candidate
- ✓ Quality of the proposed professional development program
- ✓ Expected outcomes
- ✓ Breadth of the proposed TOT activities upon return to Vietnam
- ✓ Potential of future contributions to Vietnam

The U.S. host institution must formally accept the Visiting Scholar's proposed professional development plan and provide logistical support, while financial support is not expected. The applicant's home institution in Vietnam must allow the Visiting Scholar to be absent during the proposed period of time to pursue the professional development program in the United States. After a technical review by the National Academies, a review panel, comprised of VEF senior staff and representatives from the National Academies, interviews recommended candidates by phone.

VEF has awarded 29 Visiting Scholar grants to date since 2007. The 2007 cohort consists of twelve (12) Visiting Scholars; the 2008 cohort consists of seven (7) Visiting Scholars; and the 2009 cohort consists of seven (7) Visiting Scholars, who are expected to complete their post-doctoral programs in the United States by September 2010. The 2010 cohort consists of three (3) Visiting Scholars, who will begin their post-doctoral program in the Fall 2010.

A quick sketch of the demographics of the 2007-2010 cohorts of Visiting Scholars shows that the Visiting Scholars are primarily from the North region of Vietnam and over the age of 34. Here is a brief summary of the four cohorts of Visiting Scholars:

- ➢ The primary fields of interest are Agricultural Sciences, Biology, Computer Engineering, and Physics.
- ➢ The majority of Visiting Scholars are male (62%), while 38% are female.
- ➢ Their regions of origin in Vietnam are distributed as follows: 54% from the South, 23% from the North, and 23% from the Center of Vietnam.
- ➢ The ages of Visiting Scholars range from 26-61 years old. The majority are over 34 years of age, with most (52%) falling between the ages of 35-44 while over a quarter (27%) fall between the ages of 45-61. The smallest number (21%) are in the youngest group of 26-34 years old.

U.S. Faculty Scholar Grant Program

To meet the requirements of the VEF legislation, the U.S. Faculty Scholar Grant Program was established in late 2007 with three main goals:

1. To help build capacity in Vietnam in science, mathematics, medicine, engineering and technology through teaching and related research activities.
2. To help Vietnamese institutions address specific educational needs, including curriculum development, integration of research opportunities, identification of student learning outcomes, and evaluation.
3. To build positive relationships between U.S. and Vietnamese higher education institutions and faculty members that may lead to sustainable partnerships.

The U.S. Faculty Scholar teaches courses in English at Vietnamese universities either on-site in Vietnam or by interactive, real-time videoconferencing from the United States. VEF is the organizer and sponsor of this project while the Faculty Scholars work in cooperation with the Vietnamese and U.S. institutions. The National Academies, under contract with VEF, conducts the technical review of qualified proposals and recommends finalists for a final interview by phone, conducted by the National Academies and senior VEF staff.

Under the U.S. Faculty Scholar Program, 13 U.S. Faculty Scholars have been selected to teach courses at 11 Vietnamese universities. VEF is supporting six (6) Faculty Scholars in cohort 2010, while having supported two (2) Faculty Scholar grants in cohort 2009 (for three Faculty Scholars) and four (4) grants for the first cohort of 2008.

On average to date, the majority of the teaching programs (58%) are conducted via video-conferencing from the United States and the rest (42%) are conducted on-site (face to face) (Fig. 13).

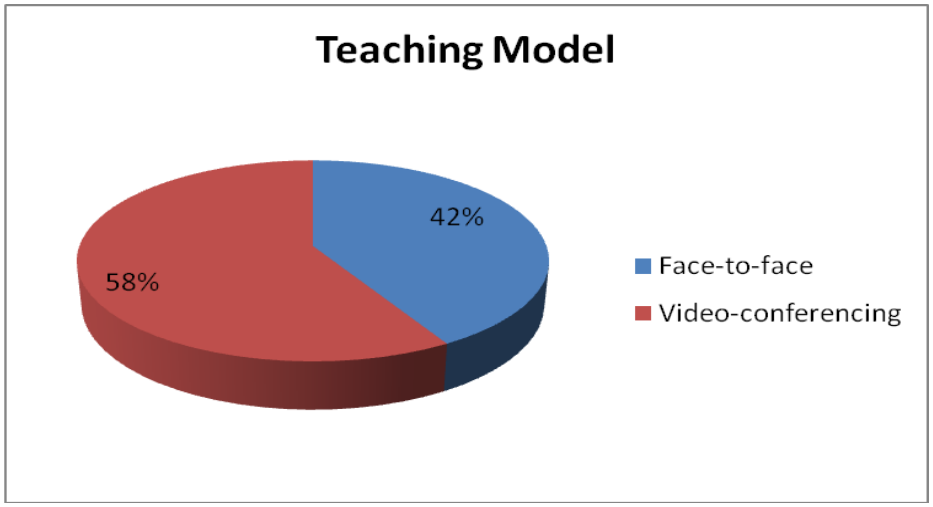

Figure 13. U.S. Faculty Scholar Teaching Model

Capacity Building Activities

VEF has developed strategic activities ranging from international conferences, seminars, and workshops to special projects that help build Vietnam's capacity in science, mathematics, medicine, engineering, and technology. VEF has sponsored over 50 scientists, engineers, and experts from more than 40 U.S. institutions to deliver lectures and presentations at over 40 Vietnamese host institutions throughout Vietnam. Each year during the Fellowship interviews in Vietnam, VEF arranges opportunities for the U.S. professors to give lectures in their fields at Vietnamese universities.

VEF has also been involved in several special projects, including the potential development of Millennium Science Initiative (MSI) Centers of Excellence, the investigation of the prospective establishment of a top-tier U.S. university in Vietnam, research on the status of higher education in Vietnam, and the development of Vietnam OpenCourseWare (VOCW). The latter two projects are discussed in more detail below.

VEF Reports on Higher Education in Vietnam

VEF sponsored two ground-breaking studies to contribute to the development of higher education in science and technology in Vietnam:

1. *Observations on Undergraduate Education in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, and Physics at Select Universities in Vietnam* (completed in August 2006)
2. *Observations on the Current Status of Education in the Agricultural Sciences in Vietnam* (completed in January 2007)

The reports summarize issues facing higher education in Vietnam and provide extensive recommendations. As a follow-up, VEF organized a workshop in Hanoi in August 2007 to discuss the relevance and feasibility of these recommendations and to identify innovative approaches, pilot projects, and partnerships. VEF prepared a summary of the outcomes, *Opportunities for Enhancing STEM Education in Vietnam: A Forum for the Discussion of VEF's Reports on Undergraduate and Agricultural Education.* All three reports were developed with assistance from the National Academies and are available free to the public at the VEF website (www.vef.gov).

Vietnam OpenCourseWare (VOCW) and Porting of Creative Commons Licenses (CCL) Vietnam

The Vietnam OpenCourseWare (VOCW) program was developed as a cooperative activity primarily between two government entities, VEF and MOET, with strong support from Rice University's Connexions, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and the Vietnam Advanced Software Company (VASC). Begun in 2005, VOCW was an answer to expanding the availability of free course materials to Vietnamese universities and faculty members. At no cost, MIT provided their open courses, and Connexions provided their software platform for course

development. In addition to establishing the infrastructure for the VOCW website and network of servers, VEF provided training and support throughout Vietnam on the use of Connexions for authors to create courses on VOCW. The VOCW website was launched in December 2007 for public use.

As a pilot project for VOCW, VEF provided financial support to 30 top Vietnamese experts to develop 24 courses in total, consisting of 8 high-quality courses in each of the following fields: Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, and Biotechnology. These experts were invited to attend a workshop on course design and evaluation that was organized by VEF and MOET and was conducted by Dr. Philip Doughty of Syracuse University. In the end, only 18 (75%) out of the 24 courses were completed; each included a syllabus, course calendar, readings, lectures, and assignments in English with annotations in Vietnamese. These courses were reviewed by U.S. experts in each specific field, who provided valuable editorial input to the Vietnamese authors.

To ensure the participation of a broad educational community in Vietnam, VEF worked closely with MOET to conduct a series of workshops at many universities throughout Vietnam on how to use the Connexions software as a means to share the learning materials on the VOCW website. As of October 2009, more than 600 faculty members and Information Technology (IT) administrators throughout Vietnam had participated in the workshops, and these trained individuals could then serve as trainers of their colleagues at their universities. Furthermore, to popularize VOCW, the VEF team conducted a series of training programs on VTV2, the national television channel in Vietnam for education. These training programs focused on course development using the Connexions software.

As a gesture of goodwill and cooperation with the Vietnamese government, VEF successfully transferred its responsibilities as well as the software and hardware for the VOCW project to MOET on January 14, 2010. In addition, VEF donated the servers to the 15 Vietnamese universities that had hosted a VEF server dedicated to VOCW. In total, VEF contributed over $600,000 to the VOCW project.

As a fundamental aspect of VOCW, VEF facilitated the porting of the Creative Commons licenses into the Vietnamese language and law while MOET provided essential support through the Vietnamese universities and faculty members. Since early 2009, the VEF VOCW team worked closely with Creative Commons (CC), a not-for-profit organization that promotes the creative re-use of intellectual and artistic works (whether owned or in the public domain). The VEF VOCW team also worked with D&N International (D&N), a Vietnamese law firm, to create Vietnam jurisdiction-specific licenses from the generic Creative Commons licenses. Creative Commons helps protect the intellectual property rights of authors on the VOCW website and the rights of any Vietnamese authors and artists, who share their creative works with others.

The outcomes of the VOCW project include the following:

- As of October 2009, a network of 29 Vietnamese universities were members of the VOCW community.
- As of January 2010, 1165 modules and 225 courses were available on the VOCW website (http://vocw.edu.vn). 1800 MIT courses were also accessible from this website.
- In May 2010, Creative Commons Vietnam was launched.

Future Directions

During the first seven years of operations from 2003 to 2010, VEF has established an excellent infrastructure as well as effective and efficient procedures for maintaining high-quality operations. With an optimistic vision, VEF will excel at the next level of operations, focusing on sustainable and high-standard activities that will continue to serve as a bridge between the United States and Vietnam.

With its small staff but immense mission, VEF hopes to have a profound scientific and technological impact on Vietnam by facilitating partnerships between U.S. and Vietnamese research and educational institutions through the VEF Fellows, Visiting Scholars, and U.S. Faculty Scholars. Areas of focus for educational exchange endeavors include emerging technologies and sciences, interdisciplinary collaboration, and building the indispensable relationship between research, education, and entrepreneurship.

VEF expects to work not only with MOET to send more Vietnamese nationals to the United States, but also with the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) to provide incentives for graduates returning to Vietnam. To achieve this, VEF has worked with MOET's VIED office, at their request, to transfer to VIED detailed information about the VEF application and selection process, about establishing agreements with U.S. universities, and about building the online management system (OMS). Furthermore, VEF is cooperating with the National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED), a division of MOST, on initiatives that attract returnees to contribute to Vietnam in research, education, and entrepreneurship and that establish expert scientific groups among VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars.

Education is a means to a great end: deeper knowledge, genuine understanding, expanding on the past, and building for the future. VEF Fellows, Visiting Scholars, and U.S. Faculty Scholars are contributing enormously to the mutually-beneficial relationship between Vietnam and the United States. VEF, combined with the active involvement of U.S. and Vietnamese scientists, engineers, and experts in the United States and Vietnam, is dynamically building solid connections that strengthen the relationship between the United States and Vietnam. These efforts contribute to a bright and productive future for U.S.-Vietnam relations.

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