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Sandy Hoa Dang
Acting Executive Director

PRESS RELEASE

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SANDY HOA DANG NAMED ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE VIETNAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Washington, D.C., August 25, 2014 – The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) announced today that Ms. Sandy Hoa Dang has been selected by the VEF Board of Directors as VEF Acting Executive Director.

Prior to joining VEF as Acting Executive Director, Ms. Sandy Hoa Dang was the Co-founder and Principal of 11plus Philanthropy, a consulting company that provides leadership training, capacity building, and strategic planning to individual donors, foundations, and nonprofit organizations.

Ms. Dang was born in Hanoi and left Vietnam when she was ten years old. After living in refugee camps in rural China and Hong Kong, she resettled in the United States at the age of thirteen. Because of her personal experience, Ms. Dang has devoted her life to helping disadvantaged children and families. For more than a decade, she served as Founder and Executive Director of Asian American Leadership, Empowerment, and Development (AALEAD), an organization that supports immigrant and refugee families through a broad array of educational and social services. She subsequently was awarded a fellowship to attend the Masters of Public Administration (MPA) program at the Harvard Kennedy School and completed her MPA in 2010. In 2011, Ms. Dang was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve on the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Education Foundation.

Ms. Dang has received numerous awards for her outstanding public leadership, including being named Washingtonian of the Year in 2001. She also serves on the Community Advisory Board of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the Community Advisory Council for WETA Television. In addition to her MPA, Ms. Dang holds a bachelor's degree from Duke University and a master's in social work from Catholic University. She is fluent in Cantonese and Vietnamese.

Ms. Dang first joined VEF in November 2011 as a Presidential appointee to the VEF Board of Directors. She was then selected as Chair of the VEF Finance

Committee on July 2012. During her tenure as VEF Board member from November 2011 to October 2013, she significantly contributed towards achieving the mission of VEF.

Ms. Anhlan Phuc Nguyen, Chair of the VEF Board of Directors, said: “Ms. Sandy Dang has great knowledge of VEF operations. She is whole-heartedly committed and dedicated to the VEF cause. With more than 20 years of program management and 17 years as a senior executive, she brings solid experience to VEF and will serve as the Acting Executive Director for a six-month period while VEF is recruiting the permanent Executive Director.”

The VEF Chair continued “Importantly, I want to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Lynne McNamara, who served as the former Executive Director, for her outstanding contributions to VEF. She has contributed significantly, during her 10 years with VEF, to building all of the VEF programs, including initiating and developing the VEF Alliance program with U.S. universities as well as the Visiting Scholar program, the U.S. Faculty Scholar program, and many various elements within the VEF Fellowship program. We wish her a good retirement in years to come.”

VEF is a special initiative enacted by the U.S. Congress to bring the United States and Vietnam closer together through educational exchanges related to science, engineering, mathematics, medicine, and technology. The Foundation is in its eleventh year of operations. Its flagship activity, the VEF Fellowship Program, has placed 504 fellows at 96 top-tier U.S. graduate research institutions for master’s and doctoral degrees. Additionally, the Visiting Scholar Program funds Vietnamese doctorate recipients in pursuing postdoctoral programs at U.S. universities for up to 12 months. Under the Visiting Scholar Program, which began in 2007, 46 Vietnamese citizens with doctorates have attended 35 major U.S. universities for self-designed, postdoctoral programs lasting from 5 to 12 months. The newest VEF program is the U.S. Faculty Scholar Grant Program, which began in 2008. Through this program, 39 U.S. Faculty Scholar Grants have been awarded to 31 American professors, enabling them to teach one or two semester courses in English at 26 Vietnamese institutions either on-site in Vietnam or via real-time, interactive video conferencing from the United States. VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars are required to return to Vietnam after completing their academic programs in the United States.

For additional information on VEF, please visit the VEF website at: ww.vef.gov.
