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Dear Fulbrighters,

As we enter the beginning of another exciting Fulbright year, I would like to welcome our new U.S. Fulbright scholars and students to Vietnam and send my best wishes to their Vietnamese counterparts who are on their way to the United States. I would also like to congratulate all of our new scholars and students on their achievements.

I was very glad to get the opportunity this summer to meet many of this year's Fulbrighters at the various orientations in Hanoi. For this fall, we are planning for many activities, most of which will be organized according to the wonderful suggestions from you. Some of you had suggested we hold seminars on topics germane to your professional careers, while others have suggested we continue with the social gatherings that have been taking place over the summer for Vietnamese Fulbrighters.

As many of you know, the Fulbright Program has been striving in the past year to promote stronger ties among all Fulbrighters in Vietnam. With the offer of help from a couple of your fellow Fulbrighters, we hope to bring to you soon a website solely dedicated to Fulbrighters in Vietnam. This website would help us broaden our efforts of reaching out to you. Please read more about our website initiative in this newsletter. If you feel you or your organization can help us develop this website in any way, we would love to hear from you. This is an exciting initiative for us and we hope you will all actively participate in the new "virtual" Fulbright Club.

Best wishes,



Tran Xuan Thao, Ph.D.
Director
Fulbright Program in Vietnam

FULBRIGHTER NEWS:

Fulbright Program welcomes new U.S. Fulbrighters at orientation

The Fulbright Program in Vietnam welcomed the newest U.S. Fulbright students and scholars at an orientation session held on September 8, in Hanoi. The new Fulbrighters including Dr. Mart Stewart, Dr. Ngo Vinh Long, La Hao Hanh, and Richard Verrone, had an opportunity to orient themselves to living and working in Vietnam.

United States Embassy officers spent the morning briefing the new Fulbrighters on issues relevant to Americans living and working in Vietnam including health and safety matters. The group then heard a presentation on the educational system in Vietnam by Director Tran Xuan Thao. The new Fulbrighters found the presentation very useful as it was their first introduction to the intricacies of the Vietnamese educational structure under which they will work. The practical tips on how to go about researching and working with local institutions were especially useful for many.

The U.S. Fulbright scholars and students then split into two groups following the presentation. The students held a lively discussion with Ken MacLean, a current Fulbright student, on his research and personal experiences in Vietnam. The scholars had a chance to learn from the experiences of Dr. Joe Peters, a current Fulbright scholar. They also met with the representatives of their host institutions and were able to ask questions pertinent to their lecture and research in Vietnam. The orientation ended with dinner where the new Fulbrighters were able to know each other better.

New Vietnamese Fulbright scholars prepare for departure

Seven new Vietnamese Fulbright scholars met on September 12, at an orientation held at the Fulbright Program office, to prepare for their departure to the United States for academic year 2000-2001. The half-day event focused on how to maximize benefits from the Fulbright experience and offered practical tips for living in the United States. Two former scholars, Drs. Pham Thanh Nghi ('99) and Bach Tan Sinh ('99), were present to share their experience and offer advice to the new scholars.

Dr. Nghi advised the new scholars to take advantage of faculty associates while at their universities; complete their year-long research plan early; and keep in touch with the Fulbright Office and CIES. Dr. Sinh, who had just returned from his Fulbright research only recently, told the new scholars about how to get research done and making the best use of the immense resources. He also discussed social issues such as how to integrate oneself into the university community.

	Home Institution	Host Institution	Field of Research
Bui Dung The	Hue University	Purdue University	Agricultural economics
Duong Hong Anh	VNU-Hanoi	UC-Berkeley	American studies
Ho Huu An	Hanoi Agricultural Univ. I	University of Arizona	Horticulture
Le Vinh Danh	Ton Duc Thanh Univ. of Tech.	George Washington Univ.	Public Policy-Development
Luu Ngoc Trinh	Institute of World Economy	Columbia University	Economics
Nguyen Phung Hoang	Hue University	Indiana University	Education
Nguyen Thi Hong Thuy	Nat'l Economics Univ. – Hanoi	U. of Houston–Clear Lake	Human Resources Mgmt.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

What	Who	Where	When
Fulbright Reception	All Fulbrighters	HCMC	September 29, 2000
Application deadline for Fulbright Scholar Program, Academic Year 2001-2002	All eligible candidates	Hanoi	October 15, 2000*

* The August issue of the Fulbright News incorrectly reported the application deadline for the Fulbright Scholar Program. The correct deadline is October 15, 2000.

Fulbright Directory to be available soon

The Fulbright Program in Vietnam will soon be printing a directory of returned Vietnamese Fulbrighters. The directory will help Fulbrighters keep in contact with each other and broaden their network of Fulbright friends. The directory will be mailed to all Fulbrighters with current addresses at the end of October.

Your help is needed in keeping the directory updated. If you have recently moved or changed contact information (i.e., phone and fax numbers, email address, etc.), please fax or email the Fulbright Program office, tel: (04) 831-4580 ext. 150, fax: (04) 831-4601, email: fulbrightvn@fpt.vn.

USEFUL INFORMATION:

HANOI:

U.S. Embassy
7 Lang Ha
Hanoi, Vietnam
Tel: (04) 843-1500
Fax: (04) 843-1510

Public Affairs Section - Hanoi
6 Ngoc Khanh
Hanoi, Vietnam
Tel: (04) 831-4580
Fax: (04) 831-4601
Email: fulbrightvn@fpt.vn

HO CHI MINH CITY:

U.S. Consulate
4 Le Duan, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Tel: (08) 822-9433
Fax: (08) 822-9434

Public Affairs Section - HCMC
9/F, Saigon Centre
65 Le Loi, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Tel: (08) 821-6400
Fax: (08) 821-6405

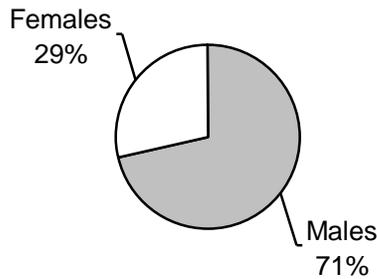
Fulbright Program Website:

<http://www.usembassy.state.gov/vietnam/www/hfhp.html>

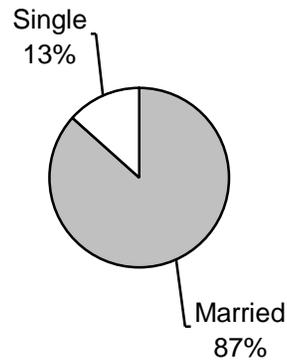
FULBRIGHT FACTS:

Profiling the typical Vietnamese Fulbrighter

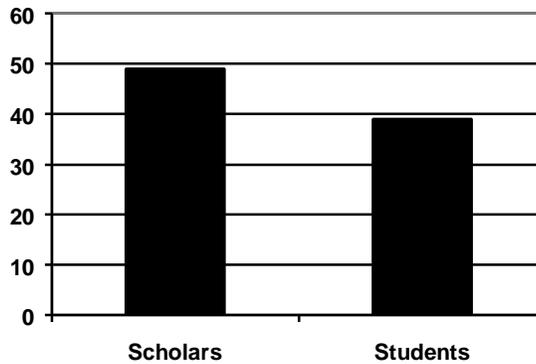
Gender of Vietnamese Fulbrighters (1993-2000)



Vietnamese Fulbrighters' Marital Status (1993-2000)



Average Age of Vietnamese Fulbrighters (1993-2000)



FROM YOU:

Have you moved recently? Please write your new contact details here and fax or email to PAS - Hanoi: (04) 831-4601 or fulbrightvn@fpt.vn.

New Address: _____

New telephone: _____
 New fax: _____
 New E-mail: _____

FULBRIGHT HIGHLIGHTS:

New website for Fulbrighters in Vietnam in the works

In an effort to broaden the opportunities for Fulbrighters to interact and exchange ideas, a website dedicated to Fulbrighters in Vietnam will soon be launched. The website will provide a virtual club for networking, discussion, and exchange of information and news for all Fulbrighters in Vietnam. The website is tentatively planned to include an online directory of returned Fulbright scholars and students, discussion and news forums, career center, classified section and yearbook.

The website site will start with a homepage that will include announcements by the Fulbright Program in Vietnam, a what's new section and a social activities section. The homepage is intended to be a forum for social interaction and exchange. The online directory of the website will be a web-based database that will enable Fulbrighters to look up a friend or a colleague for social and professional networking. The discussion and news forums will enable Fulbrighters to interact with each other and discuss topics and issues that are important in their lives and careers. The classified section of the website will allow Fulbrighters to post and look for jobs that are specifically targeted at people with high-caliber qualifications like returned Fulbrighters. Finally, the yearbook feature will allow Fulbrighters to post pictures and notes to their classmates.

Each Fulbrighter will be given a unique password to log onto certain areas of the website such as the online directory and yearbook. Fulbrighters will also be given a free email account that will automatically forward to their current personal or work email addresses. This will enable Fulbrighters to get the latest news and updates from other Fulbrighters on the website.

"Many Fulbrighters are very busy with their jobs and families to participate actively in a social club. In addition, Fulbrighters are scattered all over the country and it is difficult for many of them to meet at a convenient location. A Virtual Fulbright Club on the internet can eliminate many of the obstacles of a real club," said one of the Fulbrighters helping to design the Fulbright website.

The idea for this "virtual" club came from a couple of Vietnamese Fulbrighters who wanted to see more of their peers get online and interact. "The initiative and commitment shown by these returned Fulbrighters is laudable. They came up with plan for the club and are helping to design and launch the website," said Dr. Tran Xuan Thao, director of the Fulbright Program in Vietnam. "We really want to make the 'virtual' Fulbright Club a reality because it will broaden the opportunities for Fulbrighters to interact. With the Virtual Fulbright Club, we can post pictures and news of gatherings as well as tell our friends of special events that have occurred in our lives like weddings or births," he added.

The online club is intended to complement, and not supplant, the current social and development activities of the Fulbright Program office.

Fulbrighters, who are willing to offer their knowledge and ideas for the new website, are asked to contact the Fulbright Program office for more information on how they can contribute, tel: (04) 831-4580 ext. 150.

FULBRIGHT FEATURE:**La Hao Hanh studies public health issues in Hanoi**

La Hao Hanh, U.S. Fulbright Student, is in Hanoi conducting a study on cervical cancer with the Hanoi School of Public Health. The following is her report on what she is doing.

Epidemiology is the confluence of my academic, professional, and personal experiences. As an undergraduate, I studied anthropology and psychology, and followed a pre-medicine track. I then studied environmental health sciences for my masters degree, which intertwined my interests in human culture, behavior, and health. Ready to earn work experience, I worked as a research fellow at the USPHS Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. My job was to investigate the public health impact of hazardous waste sites across the United States. The experience uncovered my lack of epidemiological skills needed to methodically study the relationship between an exposure and a disease, and infectious, non-environmental causes of cancer. In addition, my contact with affected citizens near the sites cemented my desire to practice and promote public health. Hence, I returned to Johns Hopkins University to pursue my Ph.D. in infectious disease epidemiology. I have chosen to come to Vietnam on the Fulbright Program to focus on the epidemiology of Human Papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted virus that causes cervical cancer. Epidemiology will allow me to look at social, cultural, and behavioral factors in addition to the basic science of this disease in Vietnam.

As in most developing countries, cervical cancer is the predominant cancer among females in Vietnam. A treatable disease if caught early, it is even more tragic that cervical cancer also reigns as the leading cause of female cancer deaths. Vietnam stands out even more because there are no published studies yet on the epidemiology of HPV. As a Vietnamese American, my decision to conduct my research in Vietnam was more than academic. My maternal grandmother died of cervical cancer, and the number of older Vietnamese American women with hysterectomies is of epidemic proportion.

The key to preventing this disease is to implement a cervical cancer-screening program. Towards this goal, I hope to conduct a study that will both fill in the knowledge gap on HPV in Vietnam and evaluate the potential use of HPV-based testing as a screening device. Over the next 10 months of my fellowship, I anticipate weaving Western with Vietnamese research methods to develop epidemiology as a unique academic science in Vietnam. My study will repeat an HPV prevalence study in Hanoi conducted by International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), but will also include the role of male sexual history and behavior.

This study will recruit 1,100 women in 4 communes north of Hanoi. It will be conducted with the support of the faculty at my host institution, the Hanoi School of Public Health, and in collaboration with the cancer epidemiologist at the National Cancer Institute in Hanoi. Both institutions will be critical in implementing the study, assisting with logistics, and staffing of interviewers, physicians, and laboratory technicians.

Most public health research in Vietnam thus far has focused on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Only recently has there been sufficient awareness and resources to research other important public health problems such as injury and, in this case, the interface between infectious disease and cancer. To my knowledge, this will be only the second study conducted on HPV in Vietnam.

The rapid development of the Hanoi School of Public Health in the past three years represents the growing opportunities to do conduct public health research in Vietnam. In the short time that I've been here, I've noticed faculty simultaneously conducting research and writing grants, reminiscent of my counterpart U.S. institution. However, in contrast, Vietnam has less institutional review procedures, which speeds study implementation, yet has its own drawbacks. Most Western research institutions have a committee that is responsible for ensuring that volunteers fully understand the risks and benefits of the study when they consent to participate. This formal development of protecting human research subjects only began in the 1960s in the U.S. for participants enrolling in experimental therapy. On the other hand, the research approval process in Vietnam does require personal networking. Thus, one difficulty I've faced has been the amount of time necessary to establish appropriate contacts before study implementation.