NEW YORK, June 24, 2013 – The Institute of International Education announced today that it has selected five U.S. universities to participate in the 2013 - 2014 International Academic Partnership Program (IAPP) focusing on Vietnam. Over the next year, international education professionals at each of these institutions will participate in a series of training activities arranged by IIE to help them develop their strategy and implement and sustain partnerships with counterparts in Vietnam. The strategy-building program includes a study tour to Vietnam to learn more about the Vietnamese higher education system and learn about Vietnamese institutions’ priorities for developing academic partnerships. In November 2013, IIE will lead representatives of the five campuses on a high-level delegation to three cities in Vietnam to meet with potential partner campuses, U.S. Embassy officials, representatives from the Vietnamese Ministry of Higher Education, and other education-related organizations.

The five U.S. campuses are: Ball State University, Fort Hays State University, Marquette University, Northern Arizona University, and Stetson University. An IIE review panel selected these universities based on successful applications that outlined their strong interest in building ties with institutions in Vietnam and their need for the assistance that IAPP provides.

Each institution has made a commitment to form a campus-wide task force to work on prospective partnerships, conduct an institution-wide inventory of activities pertaining to Vietnam and develop a strategic plan focused on partnering with Vietnamese institutions. Partnership activities may include new study abroad programs, student exchanges, joint research, or faculty linkages. IIE’s goal in creating the IAPP program of webinars, workshops and site visits is to empower institutions with a number of resources necessary for building successful partnerships with Vietnamese institutions and other counterparts around the world.

“Higher education linkages are becoming even more critical to bringing countries and people closer together. More and more institutions are realizing that they cannot solve global issues in isolation, and are seeking out partners in other countries to provide complementary tools, teaching methodologies, and cultural perspectives”, stated IIE President and CEO, Allan E. Goodman.

IAPP has expanded significantly since its inception through a two-year grant from the U.S. Department of State’s Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education in 2009. To date, IAPP has assisted nearly 80 institutions in developing a strategic plan for partnering with countries such as India, China, Brazil, and Myanmar. Past participants have successfully expanded their international collaborative activities with their respective focus countries, and have developed new
study abroad programs, fostered joint faculty research, coordinated joint conferences, and established new courses. IAPP Vietnam is a logical expansion of the program, and will maintain the initiative’s core strategic planning tenets while providing country-specific guidance through assistance from the IAPP Vietnam Advisory Board and IIE’s regional office in Hanoi. For more information on all previous IAPP programs, including participating institutions, see www.iie.org/iapp.

According to the *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, published by IIE with support from the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Vietnam is currently the eighth most popular country of origin for international students in the U.S., with 15,572 Vietnamese students enrolled at U.S. higher education institutions in the 2011-12 academic year. In fact, the number of Vietnamese students in the U.S. has continued to grow significantly since the late 1990s, and has even landed in the top 20 countries of origin since the 2006/7 academic year. Like many neighboring countries in Southeast Asia, U.S. study abroad to Vietnam presents a gross imbalance in the exchange of students between the two countries. In the 2010/12 academic year, despite a 28.4% increase from the previous year, only 881 Americans studied abroad in Vietnam. However, this does represent a decade high, with fewer than 100 Americans traveling to Vietnam for study abroad at the end of the 90s.

In his recent testimony to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, Joseph Yun, Acting Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, emphasized the value of educational exchange in furthering U.S. – Vietnamese diplomatic goals, stating, “Our forward-looking relationship with Vietnam manifests itself most clearly in our blossoming people-to-people relationships. We believe building these connections through exchange opportunities, cultural enrichment, and educational ties is key to establishing a broader partnership with Vietnam’s people, 60 percent of whom were born after 1975”. In his remarks, he highlighted the efficacy of the Fulbright Program, which includes Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh, Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Thien Nhan, and Vietnamese Ambassador to the United States Nguyen Quoc Cuong among its alumni.

**Institute of International Education**
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