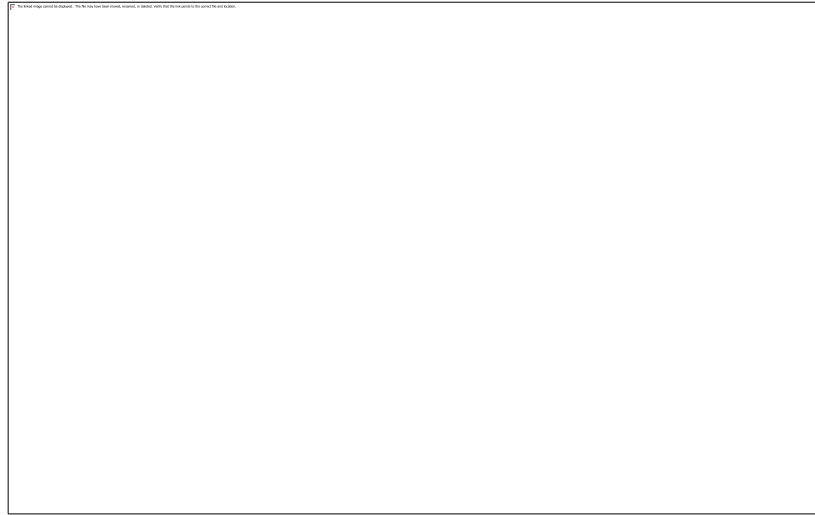


## Penn State Greater Allegheny welcomes Vietnam educators

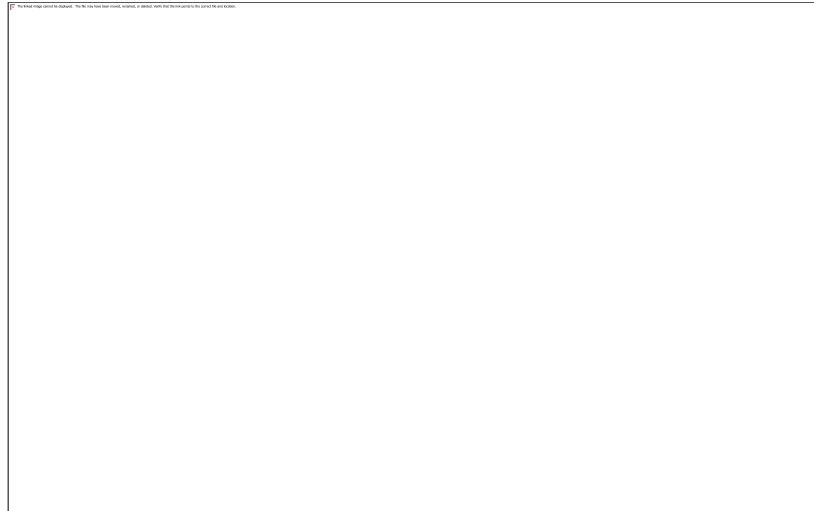
Penn State Greater Allegheny's vision to engage in global understanding is becoming realized as numerous faculty from Vietnam's Duy Tan University are embarking on a four-year course to receive business education training in McKeesport.



*Vietnamese ambassador Le Cong Phung, left, is welcomed by McKeesport Major James Brewster during his Tuesday visit to Penn State Greater Allegheny*

"Everything you are doing in Pittsburgh to help Vietnam is in interest to our two nations," said Le Cong Phung, Vietnam ambassador to the United States at the welcome reception for the Duy Tan professors participating in the train-the-trainer program Tuesday. "More students in Vietnam can enjoy what our teachers learned in the United States."

The agreement for the exchange program was signed Jan. 17 and the Duy Tan faculty began classes Tuesday. Approximately 100 Vietnamese faculty will gain the teaching tools necessary to instruct 24 business courses. All tuition costs are being paid by Duy Tan. The faculty will leave the U.S. with a non-credit certificate that will give the teachers distinction within the classroom in Vietnam, which is a country that requires a heavy amount of certification from its educators.



*Duy Tan University vice provost Nguyen Huu Phu speaks in Vietnamese as educator Vo Thi Thuy Tien translates to English remarks about Penn State Greater Allegheny's academic partnership with the Danang, Vietnam, school*

"It's a very touching moment," said Vo Thi Thuy Tien, an international business and accounting teacher from Duy Tan about the day and being introduced to the Penn State Greater Allegheny community. "I want to see how the structure of teaching the class here can apply back in Vietnam."

Two faculty members from Penn State Greater Allegheny will journey to Duy Tan to implement and monitor the teaching models learned for at least two weeks each semester. Next summer PSGA faculty members will be a part of a symmetrical train-the-trainer program in Duy Tan.

The program began when Kurt Torell, director of academic affairs at Penn State Greater Allegheny, met Bao Le Nguyen, vice provost and director of academic affairs at Duy Tan, when he traveled to Vietnam as part of a Pittsburgh Regional Alliance economic development trip in February 2009. Bao discussed interest in diversifying partnerships, as Duy Tan already had a relationship with Carnegie Mellon University.

"It's fabulous," Torell said of the initiative moving forward as he looked around the room, filled with Vietnamese faculty.

PSGA chancellor Dr. Curtiss Porter explained the train-the-trainer program is an extension of Penn State Greater Allegheny's initiatives as an international campus. Since 2003 the school has been involved in promoting global consciousness among students through the "Teaching International" initiative.

The partnership between the two universities is proving to be a representation of how far both nations have come since they were at war more than 40 years ago.

"I wanted to see Vietnam a country at peace and not at war," said Anthony Accamando, co-founder of the organization the Friends of Da Nang and a Vietnam War veteran. "Policies and differences between countries can exist, but in the end there are very little differences between people."

Le Cong said that in the short 15 years relations have been normal between the U.S. and Vietnam, America has become the biggest export market and the largest investor in the developing nation.

Le Cong, however, is hoping his nation will become the biggest exporter of students to the United States. He said that in 2000 there were 6,000 Vietnamese students in this country, but today that number has grown to 13,000.

"(This program has) vital importance to our own students who will not be limited by location, i.e. Southwestern Pennsylvania," Porter said.

He went on to commend Vietnam for being a country developing strongly in Asia, and he explained that for the U.S. and Vietnam to continue to be globally competitive and economically viable, international programs are pertinent.

Le Cong said these strides in international development and the relationship between the nations today is a result of a focus on education.

"There was a time when I thought these flags would never stand side by side," Accamando said.

By Tracy Taylor, For The Daily News  
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