Boeing Helps Top Vietnamese and American Universities Establish Ground-Breaking Cooperation Agreements

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] last week brought together leading Vietnamese and U.S. universities for an intensive "working together" conference. The conference was aimed at developing cooperative plans that will enable the Vietnamese universities to achieve international standards and recognition in information technology (IT) and aviation while providing opportunities for the U.S. schools to fulfill their mission for international engagement.

Participants at the Boeing-sponsored Vietnam-U.S. University Networking Conference initiated a series of projects designed to promote engineering and technology accreditation and improve IT capabilities and English-language skill development through curriculum exchange and cooperative information exchange and training programs.

Vietnamese participants included Hanoi University of Technology, University of Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh University of Technology, Can Tho University, Civil Aviation Training Center of Vietnam and Saigon Hi Tech Park. The U.S. academic system was represented by Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Bellevue Community College, Washington State University, Carnegie Mellon University, Edmonds Community College, Seattle University and the University of Washington.

Boeing's role was to bring the various perspectives and visions together, helping the universities establish cooperative plans to achieve the overarching objectives. These objectives comprise a higher-education roadmap for technology in Vietnam, for which Boeing will provide project management to ensure focus and maintain schedule.

"Sponsoring this conference is just one of many initiatives that Boeing has embarked upon to improve the economic and social well-being of our friends in Vietnam," said Chris Flint, director of International Sales - Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "Our mission is to be the best business partner for Vietnam and, by leveraging the Boeing name and connections with the world's industrial, academic and technology leaders, we can help establish thousands of new jobs in IT, aviation and other high-tech industries, accelerating Vietnam's emergence as a global leader in those fields."

Fostering international cooperation is a key element in how Boeing supports Vietnam's government initiative to improve educational standards and performance. "The conference represents a strong start to cooperation in aerospace, IT and other engineering subjects," Flint added.

The specific projects undertaken at the conference were agreements to:

1. Promote accreditation equivalency for engineering and technology by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET).
2. Improve IT capabilities to compete globally by adopting Capability Maturity Model(r) Integration (CMMI) processes and standards.
3. Improve business and communication by enhancing English-language skill development.
4. Improve engineering and technology education by exchanging aerospace and IT curriculum collaboration with leading U.S. universities.
5. Build a capable aviation and IT work force by conducting seminars, workshops and certificate training programs from U.S. universities.

CMMI and ABET standards are recognized worldwide as the essential foundation for achieving world-class competitive abilities in IT and high-technology engineering. Introduction of CMMI standards to India in the late 1990s was the key step toward the emergence of Bangalore as a global IT powerhouse. By acquiring progressively more demanding levels of CMMI credentials, Vietnam will be able to participate in global IT business, along with other centers.

Achieving ABET equivalency is essential for students and faculty from Vietnam's engineering and technical university programs to be able translate their credentials to U.S. and other universities and will be an important factor in who foreign companies decide to hire at their rapidly growing Vietnamese high-tech engineering and manufacturing facilities.

During the three-day conference, Vietnamese university participants provided information on their capabilities and the current status of education at each campus, while identifying needs and priorities for the future. They also shared proposals on specific projects that align with school and national interests.

"Boeing recognizes the past growth and the future potential of Vietnam as the country's aviation/aerospace and IT industries continue to develop," said Flint. "One of the greatest benefits to a country is to support its future by enhancing the education system for the country's youth."

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