Boeing and Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation Join to Expand Hoi Ninh School

The Boeing Company and the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAF) participated this week in the groundbreaking to begin construction to effectively double the capacity of a primary school in Hoi Ninh. Boeing provided key funding to begin the construction, and the project fund is managed and the school construction supervised by VVAF.

The project at Hoi Ninh Primary School will provide for the construction of six new classrooms connected to the existing two-story classroom structure and will also include new male and female sanitary restrooms as well as a one-story building to house administrative staff, medical facility and a library. The new facilities will be equipped with desks, chairs, ceiling fans and other equipment to ensure adequate study conditions, and will be accessible by disabled children.

Hoi Ninh is a small commune in the Kim Son District, Ninh Binh Province of Vietnam. The town's primary school currently has six classrooms, which house 12 classes of 326 students and 28 teachers. Space constraints have required that some students are taught in temporary classrooms in other areas of the town.

The Hoi Ninh Primary School was established 82 years ago, in 1924. Many generations of pupils have gone through this small school to higher schools and universities inside or outside of Ninh Binh province -- some of whom now hold high positions in government organizations and agencies.

Boeing has been active since the US-Vietnam trade was restored just over 10 years ago. Since then, Boeing and Vietnam Airlines have developed a strong, "working together" relationship in which Boeing 777-200ERs and 767-300ERs have served the airline's long-haul and regional routes. Vietnam Airlines is also a launch customer for the new Boeing 787 Dreamliner, having placed an order for four of the new, high-technology jetliners. Boeing is also working with Vietnam Airlines and American Pacific University in helping to prepare candidates in the operation, maintenance and management of airplane fleets and airline functions.

"Boeing and its employees have developed a corporate culture focused on providing assistance where need exists," said Chris Flint, director, international sales -- Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "The construction of a new, modern school will provide a safe environment for all students to learn and achieve to their greatest potential."

Over the years, Boeing has lent its support to a number of programs involving good corporate citizenship, and the company continues to investigate new opportunities. Notable past projects by the Boeing team include extensive contributions for flood relief and long-time support of Operation Smile-- a nonprofit organization that provides free reconstructive surgery to children born with facial deformities and trains local doctors and nurses in new medical techniques.

"This is a great honor to once again be involved with the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation," said Paul Walters, vice president, Southeast Asia -- The Boeing Company. "It is important to Boeing that the company contributes to Vietnam and the Vietnamese people in a positive way."

VVAF has been resident and active in Vietnam since 1994, supporting rehabilitation programs aimed at helping the mobility impaired, including the treatment of victims of the USA -- Vietnam War. In 1994, VVAF in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH) opened its first orthopedic workshop at the National Hospital of Pediatrics; in 1998 the second workshop opened at Bach Mai University Hospital; in 2005 the third and fourth orthopedic workshops opened in the provinces of Nam Dinh and Ha Giang. Three additional workshops are going to be built in Thai Binh, Ha Nam and Hoa Binh.

VVAF is also implementing other programs such as Vietnam UXO and Landmine Impact Assessment and Technical Survey in Quang Tri, a Mental Health assessment survey in Da Nang and Khanh Hoa, and is in the process of establishing a new medical and social services program for disabled beneficiaries which will operate in 11 provinces throughout Vietnam.

"We are delighted to be have been chosen by Boeing for involvement in this project" said Tom Leckinger, VVAF's Country Representative. "Hoi Ninh is a stunningly beautiful village, and this school will long stand as a symbol of the friendship between the American and Vietnamese people. The people at Boeing have once again demonstrated their commitment to Vietnam and its people in a truly wonderful fashion, and have good reason to be very proud on this day."

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