

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### American Vietnamese Soccer Experience

### Women in Soccer Sports Exchange Program

**Hanoi – August 21, 2008**

**Ho Chi Minh City – August 22, 2008**

**Dong Nai City – August 23, 2008**

The U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council – Education Forum (USVTC-EF) is pleased to announce the initiation of a new program –“American Vietnamese Soccer Experience” – a Women in Soccer Sports Exchange Program, in co-operation with the Vietnam Sports Committee and its Women’s Division of the Vietnam Football Federation, and its affiliated Football Federations at the provincial level, as well as Hong Bang University in Ho Chi Minh City and the Dong Nai Department for Sport and Culture. This program is pursuant to a grant from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Culture Affairs (BECA) and aims to further improve understanding between the people of Vietnam and the United States through the medium of youth sports. We welcome any participation and support from the business community into this program.

The following American Coaches and Players will lead the program in Vietnam

**Janine Szpara:** Playing background: US Women’s National Team, WUSA Cyberrays, Shiroki Serena of Japan, Colorado College NCAA All American and team captain. Coaching background: USSF "A" License Coach, Former Coaching Assistant at Stanford, Cornell, Santa Clara, and UC Berkeley, Youth Club Coach in Oregon for 5 years.

**Leslie Gaston:** Playing background: US National Youth Team player pool. WUSA Atlanta Beat, W-League Silverbacks, University of North Carolina National Champions, NCAA All American and team captain. Coaching background: Youth Club Coach in Georgia for 5 years and UNC camp coach.

**Emily Patterson:** Playing background: W-League Sacramento Storm, W-League Silicon Valley Red Devils, University of Portland NCAA National Champions, Regional IV Youth Team Player. Coaching background: Youth club coach in Oregon for 6 years.

**Katy Daly:** Playing background: University of Puget Sound, Youth Olympic Development State and Regional Teams. Coaching background: Special Olympics and T.O.P. Soccer coach, Staff coach at the Starfire sports complex in Seattle, Youth club coach in Oregon.

### **Components of the Program**

The program will consist of two main components: 1) three one-day training clinics for approximately 300 female athletes (within the 12-18 year old range) and 30-45 coaches in three locations across Vietnam on August 21 – 23, 2008 and 2) an 8-10 day visit to the United States for a smaller group of coaches and athletes later this year. The “American – Vietnamese Soccer Experience” will serve two primary functions: (1) improve sporting infrastructure for young Vietnamese women and disabled athletes ages 12-18 years, plus their coaches and (2) use sports to increase mutual understanding and strengthen ties between the people of the United States and Vietnam. The Program will consist of two substantive components: (1) three clinics for approximately 300 youth Vietnamese female athletes and up to 45 current and prospective coaches led by American coaches and athletes, and (2) an eight-day visit to two American cities by a smaller select group of Vietnamese athletes and coaches to participate in organized sport, health education, and coaching activities with American youth soccer hosts and engage in social and cultural outreach activities. Women’s Soccer is one of the most popular sports in Vietnam, as reflected in FIFA’s Global Ranking of the 37<sup>th</sup> best women’s team in the world. The “American – Vietnamese Soccer Experience” is designed to increase soccer participation and infrastructure for Vietnamese women and their coaches, through an international partnership. The USVTC-EF will work closely with the Vietnam Sports Committee and their respective sporting associations, the Bay Area Women in Sports Initiative (BAWSI), THUSC United (Portland), Nike, other sporting organizations in both countries, and including support from our Corporate Members and offices in the U.S. and Vietnam. The USVTC-EF will also work closely with the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi and the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City on this important program.

### **Public-Private Partnerships**

We hope that “American Vietnamese Soccer Experience Women in Sports Exchange Program” will be enhanced by strong participation of the U.S. private sector. We look forward to working closely with U.S. companies to develop this program further.

For more information on the program, please contact Virginia Foote ([vbfoote@usvtc.org](mailto:vbfoote@usvtc.org)) or Robert Schiffer ([schifferrl@hotmail.com](mailto:schifferrl@hotmail.com)).