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Betsy Parrish Selected by U.S. Department of State for Prestigious English Language Specialist Assignment

The U.S. Department of State announced the selection of Betsy Parrish of Hamline University for a six-month virtual English Language Specialist project on developing handbooks for establishing Communities of Practice in Vietnam with the National Foreign Language Project of the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training. Parrish is part of a select group, as her project is one of 130 that the English Language Specialist Program supports each year.

Parrish will conduct sixteen online workshops and consultation sessions for a team of expert trainers and ministry officers on establishing and sustaining Communities of Practice with English language teachers in Vietnam. The team will develop five handbooks to support teachers at all school levels. Parrish, Professor in English language teacher education in the School of Education at Hamline, has over 25 years of experience working on professional development projects in the US and abroad, including prior experience in Vietnam as a Fulbright Specialist.

The English Language Specialist Program is the premier opportunity for leaders in the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) to enact meaningful and sustainable changes in the way that English is taught abroad. Through projects developed by U.S. Embassies in more than 80 countries, EL Specialists work directly with local teacher trainers, educational leaders, and ministry of education officials to exchange knowledge, build capacity, and establish partnerships benefiting participants, institutions, and communities in the United States and overseas.

Since 1991, the English Language Specialist Program has sent hundreds of TESOL scholars and educators abroad to promote English language learning, enhance English teaching capacity, and foster mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries through cultural exchange. On assignment, EL Specialists may conduct intensive teacher training, advise ministries of education or participate in high-level educational consultations, and offer plenary presentations at regional, national or international TESOL conferences. These projects are challenging and those selected represent the best of the U.S. TESOL community. In return, the program provides professional development opportunities to help participants experience different cultures and build skills that can greatly enhance their TESOL careers back home.

English Language Specialists are counted among the more than 50,000 individuals participating in U.S. Department of State exchange programs each year. The Specialist Program is administered by the Center for Intercultural Education and Development at Georgetown University.

For further information about the [English Language Specialist Program](#) or the U.S. Department of State, please visit our elprograms.org/specialist, contact us by telephone at [202-632-6452](tel:202-632-6452), or e-mail ECA-Press@state.gov.