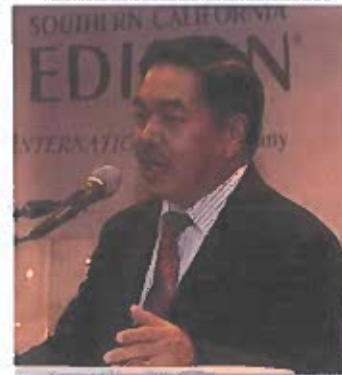


Dr. Long Pham in the Press



EDISON INTERNATIONAL PORTAL



Nuclear Engineer Serves Up Inspiration for the New Year

From rural Vietnam to diversity advocate, from teacher's aide to Board of Education, Long Pham balances career, family and community

Ring in the New Year has always had significant meaning for SONGS Nuclear Engineer Long Pham, because to him, it's the start of one more year to give back to the company, community and country that he so dearly loves.

With more than two decades of service to Southern California Edison and as the co-founder and former President of SCE's Vietnamese Affinity Group (SCEVA), Long has an unwavering commitment to connect the company's work with the Vietnamese community. Not only does he work directly with Edison's CARE program to help SCE make a difference in several Los Angeles and Orange County-based Vietnamese communities, but he also represents "what's possible" to minority children everywhere as a lifelong advocate for education and a new member of the Orange County Board of Education – a seat he will hold until June 2012.

A native of Vietnam, Long stumbled into the United States while trying to make his way to France. As an engineer on a cargo ship based in Saigon in the early 1970s, Long had dreams of working in France's nuclear sector because he already had all of the necessary qualifications, including a Vietnamese Engineering degree. He spent years in the shipyards trying to earn enough money to get to France, until one day fate intervened.

Detour to Guam leads to America

Thousands of Vietnamese men, women and children had capsized their small boats in the ocean in an effort to find refuge in other countries after the fall of the Vietnamese government. Long and the crew on his cargo ship rescued the survivors and took them to Singapore, but by the time they arrived, Singapore was turning away Vietnamese refugees. As they pulled into the harbor, more than 800 additional refugees were handed over to Long and his crew to care for and take someplace else.



Tasked with trying to find haven for nearly 3,500 refugees while a growing number of ports were turning them away, Long and his crew finally heard from the U.S. Embassy, which opened the port of Guam to his cargo ship. Long disembarked the ship with the rest of the refugees with the intention of buying a one-way airplane ticket to France, but instead was processed as a refugee and sent to New Jersey, and then Pennsylvania.

It was in a Pennsylvania-based Vietnamese refugee camp where his uniquely American future would start. He began working as a teacher's aide for the Department of Education – helping Vietnamese children learn English – where he learned the language himself and made friends with several American teachers, including an English Professor at the University of Pittsburgh. The professor, who eventually became Pennsylvania's Assistant Superintendent of Education and who remains one of Long's good friends today, encouraged the young and apprehensive Long to attend his university in pursuit of another – American – engineering degree. Long later transferred to and graduated from Pennsylvania State University.

Long finds his groove and makes a difference

In the 1980s, Long began contracting for Bechtel, including a stint at SONGS where he performed hydraulic analysis and developed several computer models for the plant. He also worked for Georgia Power Company before spending nearly a decade at NASA, where he helped the space program engineer and deploy new space shuttles.

In 1992, Long came back to SONGS as a senior engineer and three years later, the NRC recognized one of the projects he was working on as “superior” in a letter sent to former Chief Nuclear Officer Harold Ray. Long's jobs at SONGS have varied, from work in the Nuclear Engineering Design Organization to his work today, overseeing the chemical and volume control system and the plant's In-Service Testing program, which detects the plant's aging equipment in safety related systems.

He takes his job of balancing public safety with the economic impacts of operating the plant very seriously. He also realizes that his love of education and lifelong learning has impacted every decision he has made.

In 1999, Long was elected by his engineering peers across the country to become Vice President of the American Society for Mechanical Engineers (ASME), and he served in this post until 2003. In this capacity, Long worked with deans of engineering schools in universities throughout California, Hawaii and Nevada, organizing student contests, chairing technical conferences, and encouraging students to look into the nuclear field. He even lobbied Congress with several



prestigious university deans for the passage of a law to make the cost of continued and higher education tax deductible for every American. The law passed in 2000.

Meanwhile, the devoted husband and busy father of four children, who still serves as an advisor to ASME, also found time to volunteer his time in inner-city Los Angeles and Orange County schools, teaching disadvantaged children math and science from a “real world” perspective.

SCE nurtures Long’s Vietnamese roots

In 2001, Long was part of a group of SCE employees that founded the SCE Vietnamese Affinity Group. He is proud of the fundraising he’s done for the local Vietnamese communities – a large SCE-customer base – and also of his involvement in raising money for his native country, including more than \$50,000 last year used to purchase 900 new wheelchairs for the handicapped in Vietnam.

Long feels the SCEVA’s efforts to create “family” among employees is equally as important as the fundraising. With more than 150 members in the SCEVA, Long enjoys time spent with other Vietnamese, promoting each other’s personal and professional growth while enhancing the awareness of their rich culture and traditions.

“We educate each other,” he says. “Though we all have different experiences with Vietnam, the common denominator is Vietnam. We support each other, celebrate our heritage and talk about what it’s like to be citizens of the United States.”

He points to himself when he speaks: “I never dreamed as a boy in Vietnam that I would have had these opportunities to make a difference,” he says. “I am a proud American. I owe this country so much gratitude for accepting me, encouraging me, nurturing me. I like to give back to others and prove that, in America, anything can happen.”

Serving as an inspiration to others

As a relatively new member on the Orange County Board of Education – he was elected in June 2008 – Long has worked to promote math and science on a broader level. “We need better teacher training and professional development in our public schools, and local dollars just don’t cover it,” he says.

He also hopes to inspire others to success. “Several years ago I gave a speech at a prominent university and shared my story with students, and afterwards, a



young Asian man asked if he could take his picture with me. He hugged me and told me he couldn't wait to show his parents the photo, proof of what is possible in America. When I asked him what he meant, he simply said, 'Only in America could a Vietnamese refugee become vice president of a major professional organization and a successful engineer for a great company.'"

Long's eyes fill with tears. "That's the message I want to spread - to new employees at SCE, through our Affinity Group, through my volunteering in public schools and my work on the Orange County Board of Education: Anything is possible for anyone. Working hard, getting involved in your community, and making a difference - this is something we can all do in 2009."

