

## Defense Department R&D Awards Total \$1/2 Billion

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) has announced that half a billion dollars will be awarded to small technology companies this year for early-stage research and development projects. The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program will fund up to \$850,000 for pre-prototype R&D in small technology companies, and up to \$600,000 in such funding for small companies working cooperatively with researchers at universities and other research institutions.

Another \$36 million will be awarded to small technology companies working cooperatively with research institutions through the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program.

The purpose of the programs, says a DoD spokesperson, is to "harness the innovative talents of small technology companies for the benefit of the U.S. military and the U.S. economy." Projects selected for awards must serve a DoD need and have the potential for commercialization in private sector or military markets.

Although the majority of past awards have not been to medical technology firms,

some funding has already gone to medically related technology. One such company, Q-Source, Inc., East Hartford, CT, has won several SBIR contracts for the development of medical laser technology.

"This is one of the best programs government has ever come up with," says Peter Chenausky, president of Q-Source.

For further information on the programs, interested firms may contact the DoD at 703-205-1596. A web site fully describing the programs, and offering application materials, can be found at <http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/sbir>. ■

### Exploring Vietnam

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equipment that anyone may wish to donate to them. It is hoped that Professor An may be able to visit America in 1997 and attend the SNM meeting in San Antonio. He and Chau make it clear that they would welcome any American nuclear medicine physicians who would be interested in visiting Vietnam and their departments. I would be delighted to offer any assistance to SNM members who would like to consider a professional trip to Vietnam.

Overall, my family and I found our trip to be exciting and incredibly educational. I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to interact with our fellow nuclear medicine physicians. I was accepted and made to feel comfortable in this otherwise foreign environment. The warm, friendly feeling I experienced is wonderfully described by Stan Goldsmith in his "Scatter" column (February 1994). In a brief treatise called "Home," he describes how the familiar surroundings of a nuclear medicine department in Asia allowed him to relax despite the fact that he was 10,000 miles away from New York. Similar to Stan's feelings, I felt "at home."

—Leonard M. Freeman, MD

Dr. Freeman works at the Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, New York.

The SNM Education and Research Foundation (ERF) encourages members of the nuclear medicine community to donate used equipment in working condition to medical centers in developing countries. Such donations can include imaging instruments, computers, dose calibrators and other equipment utilized in the day-to-day practice of nuclear medicine. The ERF will facilitate the transfer and coordinate the efforts toward the optimal utilization of the donated instruments. For more information or to contribute, please contact:

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