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Teacher Explores AIDS Epidemic In Vietnam

Documentary to Premiere Sunday, May 9 at 10 PM on the *Global Voices* Series on PBS WORLD Channel

(San Francisco, CA)— For the past 15 years, Nguyen Van Hung, once a homeless drug addict, has dedicated his life to helping street children survive AIDS in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. *Teacher*, a documentary film by Leslie Wiener, is the story of his fight against an epidemic that claims its victims by the millions, and of the innocent children and teenagers trapped in a global nightmare. *Teacher* will have its U.S. broadcast premiere on Sunday, May 9, 2010 at 10 PM on *Global Voices*, a new series produced by ITVS International and airing on the PBS WORLD digital channel (check local listings). *Teacher* can also be watched online for the first seven days after broadcast on PBS Video (<http://video.pbs.org/>).

Teacher revolves around the frenzied yet passionate life of 54-year-old Nguyen Van Hung, better known to the street children as “the professor.” The camera follows Van Hung, founder of the SMILE Group for children affected by AIDS, in his round-the-clock struggle to put meaning and hope back into their young lives. From weddings to funerals, maternity to palliative wards, Hung races against time. He wins, he loses, but he never stops running.

Director Leslie Wiener provides insight into a world problem on a very human scale. *Teacher* is the riveting story of a human being fighting an epidemic, a threat to humanity that most of us in the West like to believe has been conquered.

About the Filmmaker

Born in New York City in 1951, Leslie Wiener completed a master’s degree in communications and documentary filmmaking before moving to France in 1983. Wiener’s passion for Vietnam was ignited in the 1960’s when, as an adolescent, she actively participated in the anti-war movement. Her first visit to Vietnam in 1994 reconfirmed that passion. She has since made five documentary films in Vietnam ranging from the *Lonely Planet Travel Film* (Globetreckers on PBS) to *Children of Peace*, a series of films on the rapid economic development seen through the eyes of 10 children in different regions throughout Vietnam.

Her most recent documentary is a feature-length film for French Television entitled *A Case Against Agent Orange*. The film tells the story of an ongoing lawsuit in American courts brought against all-powerful chemical companies such as Monsanto and Dow Chemical by the Vietnamese Victims of Agent Orange, a group who accuse the companies of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The film follows the American and Vietnamese lawyers as they work together to develop their strategy to condemn the chemical companies. Shooting for the film took place in the United States, France, and Vietnam.

About *Global Voices*

Global Voices is produced by ITVS International and began airing on the PBS WORLD digital channel on Sunday, April 26, 2009 at 10 PM. This 26-week series brings an internationally themed documentaries made by U.S.-based and international filmmakers to a national audience. This season, the series will feature the U.S. premieres of six documentaries funded by ITVS International, as well as encore broadcasts of other acclaimed ITVS programs. In addition to the PBS WORLD



broadcast, select episodes will be available online post broadcast — via iTunes, Amazon, Netflix, and on PBS's Video player through <http://video.pbs.org>. For the complete lineup and schedule, visit www.pbs.org/globalvoices/.

About ITVS International

ITVS International is a division of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) that promotes an international exchange of documentary films made by independent producers, bringing international voices to U.S. audiences and American stories to audiences abroad. Through a unique public-private partnership called the Global Perspectives Project, ITVS International administers the International Media Development Fund (IMDF) and *True Stories: Life in the USA*. The IMDF funds international producers and supports the American broadcast of their programs. *True Stories: Life in the USA* promotes a series of American independent films to audiences around the world. ITVS created the Global Perspectives Project in 2005 with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the U.S. Department of State. More information about ITVS International is available online at <http://www.itvs.org/international>.

About PBS WORLD

PBS WORLD features documentary, public affairs and news programming from a number of public television's award-winning signature series and acclaimed independent filmmakers. Produced and distributed by PBS, WGBH Boston, and Thirteen/WNET New York, in association with American Public Television and the National Education Telecommunications Association, PBS WORLD launched on 55 stations across the country, representing 24 licensees and reaching more than 27 percent of U.S. households. In most markets, PBS WORLD programming is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Programming on PBS WORLD includes such popular and critically acclaimed series as *American Experience*, *Frontline*, *History Detectives*, *Nature*, *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, *Nova*, *Scientific American Frontiers*, and *The Tavis Smiley Show*.