MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW STUDENTS LEAVE FOR VIETNAM ON ANZAC MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Eight Year 10 and 11 NSW students were today wished well by the Minister for Citizenship and Communities, Victor Dominello MP, as they departed on their study tour to Vietnam to learn about the service and sacrifices made by Australian Diggers during the Vietnam War.

Mr Dominello, who has responsibility for veterans affairs, said the trip is part of the Premier’s ANZAC Memorial Scholarships, which provides an opportunity for students with a passion for history and the ANZAC traditions to visit the battlefields in their textbooks.

“Australians served in the Vietnam War from 1962 until 1973, and these students will be stepping onto the same battlefields as the Diggers, who were not much older than they are, fought on during the conflict,” Mr Dominello said.

“They will bring back what they have learnt to their schools and to their communities so that the ANZAC legacy continues to be honoured and preserved.

“As a community, we should be particularly proud that this very diverse group of young people share a common passion for learning about and commemorating our proud Australian history,” Mr Dominello said.

The Vietnam tour is from 21 April until 4 May 2011, and will include visits to a number of sites of importance to Australia’s military engagement in Vietnam, including Vung Tau, Nui Dat, Long Tan and Binh Ba. The students will participate in an ANZAC service on the 25th of April.

They will be accompanied by John Haines AM, Returned and Services League New South Wales Branch representative and a Vietnam veteran, and Gary McKay MC, tour historian, Military Cross recipient and Vietnam veteran, as well as two history teachers.

Twelve other NSW students will be visiting Turkey, Greece and Crete later this year as part of the Premier’s ANZAC Memorial Scholarships.

“This pilgrimage will include one of our most famous battlefields, Gallipoli, as well as visiting sites in Greece and Crete where some 34,000 ANZACs fought in 1941 and more than 1,500 Australian and New Zealand troops lost their lives,” Mr Dominello said.