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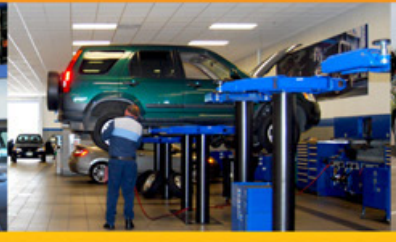
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Lar Yang pictured with his son Cody Yang (left) son Alex Yang (center) and nephew Ben Lee (Right)

If there was one thing I have learned from publishing Txhawb over the last 7 years, it would be that there are so many rich stories within our community. They each need to have a voice so they can strenghten, empower and remind us that the Hmong community has much to celebrate and be proud of. These stories serve as invaluable tools to inspire our children to aspire to reach their dreams.

Each of us needs something to believe in. I truly and passionately believe that if we all committ a little of ourselves to give back to our community, we will all benefit from the fruits of our labor. This is the main reason I work really hard to do my best in putting together Txhawb. Piecing together this publication is a lot harder than most imagine. We all must believe that our community has a long way to go before we can be a strong community and I am committed and will continue to do my part to help strengthen it, shape it and to build a stronger future for our children.

The past, the present and the future are all connected by one straight line. As a collective Hmong community, we survive in the present, not sure of our past and uncertain about our future. Our past history is so important in defining our future. Yet our past has so many missing holes. If you ask our youth about their identity, the majority continue to have no idea. Yet they long for something to believe in, to belong to and to feel a part of. We all need to work together to stress the importance of our culture and history and to connect the missing pieces so we can paint a full complete picture of our history that we can pass on to the next generation. This is the one thing, we all need to believe and invest in. We can not wait because it will not happen by itself. We need to be proactive and engage this process.

The future of our culture and community is at a critical crossroad. Timing is vital, because with the passing of each generation of elders, we lose more knowledge that can not be replaced and more pieces of our history that disappear forever. In 2014, a team of young professionals along with myself will initiate the Hmongstory 40 project. Please learn more about it in the coming months on our website: www.txhawb.com and www.hmongstory40.com and please do what you can to support it.

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Thank you to all the contributors, writers, photographers and my sales team. I apologize for pushing you guys so hard at times. I only want you to reach your full potential.

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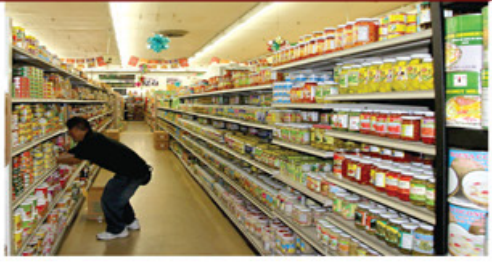






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TABLE OF CONTENTS

22 THE PHA MOUAVANGSOU STORY
STARTING OVER

34 WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT
TRADITIONAL HMONG WEDDING

52 FENGLALY LEE, M.D.
PASSION TO SERVE

64 HMONGSTORY 40
HMOOB 40 XYOO

73 DIRECTORY
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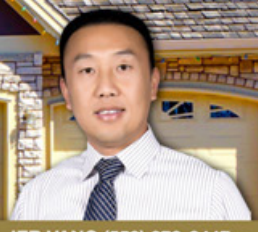
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STARTING OVER

THE PHA MOUAVANGSOU STORY

Written by Seng Alex Vang *Photos* Joaquin Hernandez

AT ONE TIME IN LIFE, PHA MOUAVANGSOU WAS A HIGH SCHOOL DROP-OUT, DIVORCED SINGLE DAD, AND OFTEN GOT INTO TROUBLE HANGING OUT WITH THE WRONG CROWD.

But his exceptional journey to get to where he is today breaks the mold, reaffirms that you can still reach your full potential as an adult later in life. He refused to let his past and hardships define who he is. He once was afraid to tell people his life story and experiences because of the challenges he had to overcome in life. He identifies himself and others who share these experiences as "sleepers," or people who never reach their full potential because no one has awaken them up. He attributes this to a number of factors, such as the lack of parental supervision, mentors, and support from schools. Today, Pha Mouavangsou is Dean at ITT Technical Institute in Clovis, California.

Growing up Mouavangsou was the middle child of a family of nine children and as a result was often overlooked. He felt he belonged to that forgotten, lost generation of middle children whose parents were struggling with adjusting to a new life in America. He did not have much parental supervision and too much free time. During most of his teenage years he lived with an older married brother more so than with his parents, even though they all lived at the same apartment complex. He recalls "I was always shifting around not in one stable location as a middle child and was often forgotten in the family."

He recalls the years of his youth fondly; especially how fun it was to hang out with friends who also provided protection from other ethnic groups of gangs and bullies. He goes on to explain how back then, even if he or his peers had wanted to avoid that kind of lifestyle, getting pulled into it and getting into trouble was too often the only option. Not all of them were gangbangers, shared Mouavangsou, but some of his older friends were true gangsters and knew what they were doing. He attended McLane High School and felt not much was expected from students labeled as failures. Mouavangsou shared that "my ex-wife's brother-in-law started a gang and I use to hang out with them. We got in trouble, did crazy stuff, and fought with other gangs."




School
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For Mouavangsou, the reality check that forced him to reassess his life occurred when someone drove up next to his parked car and fired two shots point blank into his car. He states, "I was right between the bullets; both missed me by inches." Despite his having been shot at, the compassion in him led to his wondering, "What would happen to my child if I had died?" After this incident his parents decided to send him to live with a cousin in Arlington, Texas. At the time he was only 17, but had already dropped out of high school during his senior year and was married with one child. While in Texas, Mouavangsou and his wife had marital problems and decided to go their separate ways. After two years in Texas, he returned home to Fresno with his son but he was quickly drawn back to the cycle of feeling lost and hanging out with his old friends.

A second wake-up call for Mouavangsou took place when his son had a school assignment that asked the students to write about a hero in their life. Although at the time Mouavangsou was a high school dropout, had no job, and hung out with friends who were equally as directionless in life, his son chose him as his hero. Mouavangsou realized then that if he was encouraging his son to go to school, he had to do so himself. Mouavangsou decided to go back to school and attended Fresno's Caesar Chavez Adult School in 1997 and completed his GED in approximately 5 months. He was very determined and finished quickly. After completing his GED, Mouavangsou attended Fresno City College. While taking classes there he was also a member of the Hmong Student Club. However, Fresno City College still didn't have many services that provided him with much direction. The best thing that happened to him at Fresno City College was meeting his current wife, Amie Vang. After a year of school he did not feel he was going anywhere so he withdrew and chose instead to work.

Mouavangsou believes that the turning point in his education career was when he attended Heald College in 1998. For the first time in his life he saw success - he actually got decent grades and the staff there was supportive. His experience there helped him to prove he wasn't the failure people had labeled him as and provided him the opportunity to improve his life. To this day he tells his students, "When you tasted some success, you like it, because it's better than failure." Mouavangsou graduated with his Associate Degree in 2002 and reentered the workforce but still felt that without a higher degree he would not be able to get any good jobs. He found work in sales but even then the jobs he found were ones where he wasn't able to make decisions.

These circumstances pushed him to continue bettering his life, so he decided to pursue more schooling. Mouavangsou made this critical decision in 2005, the year DeVry University opened a campus in Fresno. He returned to school and earned both a BA in Business Management and a Masters of Business Administration at DeVry University. His decision to major in Business was inspired by his insight into the success of corporate America and his belief in the opportunities that this degree would provide a competitive edge for himself. He also wanted to better his public speaking skills and to work towards improving himself. So he extensively read, listened to, watched and studied various motivational speakers. After telling his story to the Dean at Institute of Technology, he was given an opportunity to teach a course. He taught a professional development course on motivation and worked with students who shared a similar background as his.

Although education allowed Mouavangsou to get jobs that enabled him to support his family, he realized his true calling was teaching and mentoring so he decided to pursue a job that would allow him







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to achieve his passion. Mouavangsou describes, "I was working two jobs and I couldn't wait to get off my full time job in sales to go work in my part-time teaching job." He soon found himself burning out working both jobs and had to make a decision. Fortunately when the opportunity opened up for a Program Director at Institute of Technology, Mouavangsou applied for and was given the position. This new job allowed him to do what he enjoyed doing and also provided him with professional growth. "This opportunity allowed me to change my life completely because as you are mentoring others you are bettering yourself as well," said Mouavangsou.

Mouavangsou has found that education provides the opportunity to get involved in the community





and to give back. He realized how important education was to his life and wanted to help others change their lives too. Education changed his life because it helped him to look at his community as a whole and to understand his role in the greater scheme of things. Mouavangsou has since served on several committees, such as the Children's Services Network and Fresno County Social Services Advisory Board. He was aware that networking would help pull himself to the next level. He joined Leadership Fresno and was part of Fresno Leading Young Professionals (FLYP). He encourages others to partake of these opportunities. During this time Mouavangsou became Associate Dean at Heald College for a brief period. Mouavangsou was recently selected by Fresno Business Street Online as an individual for the 40 under 40 Program, which spotlights 40 individuals who are successful and under the age of 40. He believes these are all good experiences and that he has learned much from meeting new people and networking.

The past several years Mouavangsou has also been involved with the Mayor's Learn 2 Earn program as well as the Adult Education Taskforce. The program has featured Mouavangsou's life story as a motivational tool to inspire others. Mouavangsou is able to identify with how many adults feel when they can't go back to school or don't have the opportunity to change their circumstances to better their future. He understands a lot of their needs because he had gone through much of the same things. Mouavangsou firmly believes education opens peoples' eyes and can help the next generation to do better.

This success has allowed him to revisit burdens of the past. "For some young professionals, it is difficult to get involved with the community because of their past," Mouavangsou explains, "some may feel they are persecuted and pushed away from the community for doing something deem bad or unacceptable in the past." Mouavangsou shares growing up he was the often the first to do many things that his own immediate and extended family labels as not acceptable. Mouavangsou acknowledges, "I was one of the first in my family to drop out of high school, the first to be shot at, the first to be divorced, and the first to be a single parent."

MOUAVANGSOU HAS FOUND THAT EDUCATION PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY AND TO GIVE BACK.

Mouavangsou reflects back on how identity or culture clashes shaped some of his own experiences. He feels Hmong parents don't understand the idea of the individual, nor do they understand the need for individual freedom not taught in schools. Hmong parents are too often strict and harsh on rules and responsibilities, which is usually the cause of some youth to rebel against parental controls. This lack of parental realization of individual freedoms often leads to many youth's reliance on their friends for social and emotional support. These friends often become family, especially because these youth's parents are not able to understand what their kids may be going through.

One challenge Mouavangsou sees in the elders, or the first generation, is their inability to recognize change. For good or bad people can change and be different. He stressed for change in the community in the need to recognize second chances and to accept people's past. He understands elders find it harder to change but feels to be able to move beyond this, people have to move on and accept past mistakes. He notices the shift in the mentality of the younger generations, how they are more accepting of the idea of moving on. When he began the journey that has led him to where he is today, he was scared to tell others his life story and experience due to perceptions

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people had of him as a former high school dropout, troublemaker, and "sleeper." He describes one of his best friends and himself as "sleepers." Today his best friend is currently a medical doctor in Seattle and Mouavangsou is Dean of ITT Institute of Technology.

He often cites a popular Native American proverb that guides his life. "When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life in a manner so that when you die the world cries and you rejoice." Mouavangsou believes one cannot let the past and its hardships define who they are. He goes on to say we can define ourselves by the actions you start today. Mouavangsou's advice is for people to challenge themselves to reach their full potential and to let them know it's never too late to want to change our lives. His personal life story exemplifies that it is never too late to start your life. If anything, he wants the readers of this article to know that everyone has the potential to change their life if they so choose to.

In the closing of our conversation, I asked Pha, "what was the most inspiring moment in your life that has allowed you to push yourself to find so much success?" Pha recounted with this short story:

"I had a conversation a few years ago with my father. My father told me that he was sad. When I asked him why. He stated that of all his peers, he is the only one that does not have a son with a doctorate degree. He stresses that he had four sons and each of us are able individuals.

He tells me that of the four sons my eldest brother was much older and would not be able to pursue this dream of his. My second oldest brother was a mute and my father didn't expect him to reach this dream. My youngest brother is still lost and unsure of what he wanted to do in life yet. He concluded that this means, if I did not accomplish this for him then he would never see his dream come true.

I was in shock that after all we have been through, my father would entrust his dream in my hands. I was the one who fought with my father the most out of all my siblings. I was the one that brought so much shame to his name and embarrassed him through my actions. Throughout my whole life, my father and I never spoke much. We never really had a relationship.

At this moment I realized that it doesn't matter how you start life, but rather who you become at the end of your life. Up to that point, I have never done anything that my father could be proud of. This conversation motivated me to do something my father can be proud of. This moment pushed me to start the Bachelor's Degree program at Devry.

My father never got to enjoy my accomplishments or see me succeed. In the fall of 2006, a few months after we had this conversation, my father passed away. This point was just the very beginning of my educational career. I never got my chance to make him proud and to allow him to enjoy and celebrate in my success. I regret that moment every day and every day I wish my father could see what I've accomplished. This is the motivation that keeps me striving to be better, motivating me to become better. I stress to everyone, live in the moment, because when the moment passes, you can never get it back. Strive every day to be the best that you can be, because we never know what tomorrow will bring. Regardless of your circumstance in life, it's never too late to strive to become someone better. Never too late to pursue your education! Never too late to become the person that everyone wants and needs you to be."

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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

TRADITIONAL HMONG *Wedding*



Written and Photos by Youa Vang

Photos Styled by Susan Vang-Xiong

Makeup and Hair by Tasha Bertucelli
Models: Nao Thao Moua and Kevin Vang

Every time the shutter opens in my camera, I'd like to think that something beautiful was being captured.

Whether it is the details of embroidery on Hmong textile, the expression of a smiling child, a flower dancing in the wind, or a happy couple sharing their first moment as wife and husband; I've become familiar with and anticipate that instant so it can be captured in time. I started my career as a photographer shooting landscapes as I was taken by the colors of sunsets and moonrises; shortly after, I fell in love with weddings. There is just something unexplainable about the exhibition of love from everyone present on the day that two people plan to unite as one. Having been in the wedding industry for several years, I have been blessed with the opportunity to work with many people from different backgrounds. Some of the most meaningful weddings I feel that I have shot however were where the couple implemented something into their day because it was important to the history of their family. You might say I feel that way because of my Hmong American roots and love for sharing culture and history; nevertheless I cannot disagree with you.

I have only become more knowledgeable and appreciative of the traditional Hmong wedding *(tshoob)* within the last couple of years as it is my duty to know what to capture for Hmong wedding clients. Before then, what little I knew about it can be equated to something like background noise; similar to that of reading and writing in Hmong, because it is unnecessary knowledge unless one had somewhere to use it so no one takes the time to consider learning it. In general, a *tshoob*





has many detailed steps that must be taken in order to complete and its components stem from a long history of stories and lessons. When a Hmong couple plans to marry, it not only ties them together however it joins their two families and extended family. The success of their marriage is intricately woven together with strings from an entire community with the hopes that having a foundation this strong, it will be very difficult for them to separate. There are so many things happening behind what most can see than just the drinking and feasting. The problem is that the younger generations are not educated on the matters unless they were considering becoming an officiant or were actually planning to marry. And even then, one will not be able to grasp everything because there is so much information that it can be overwhelming.





"In the Hmong community, people come to see you when you are born, when you get married, and when you pass away; everything is connected and why some of the ritual songs and customs must be done in a specific way."

The only people who have extensive training in the matters of Hmong weddings and funerals are the *mej koob - txiv xaiv* as it is one of the main roles they play solely in the Hmong community. Even a *mej koob* can tell you that they have yet to see all possible scenarios after many years of practice therefore a regular person will never fully understand a traditional Hmong wedding. I had the privilege to sit down with a couple of them in order to learn some of the cultural pieces and timeline of a tshoob. To start with, the Hmong have traditionally followed in the animist belief where there is the perception of an interconnectedness of all living things and spirits. In some western references it is also known as Shamanism as the shaman plays a big role in rituals. The processes of a tshoob are deeply rooted with the religion, so it is understandable then for those who have changed religion to choose not to have a *tshoob* yet that does not mean you cannot have one if you choose to. *Mej Koob - Txiv Xaiv*, Bee Yang simply said that "in the Hmong community, people come to see you when you are born, when you get married, and when you pass away; everything is connected and why some of the ritual songs and customs must be done in a specific way." In that case, when a person decides to marry, it is a very important third of their life journey; therefore the ceremony must be performed correctly.

When I was in college, my little sister ran off with her boyfriend to marry. In the evening after she did not come home; two men came to our doors to ask to speak with my parents and give them the news of her decision *(fiv xov)*. My parents automatically knew when the messengers arrived with a *sis ceeb*, the stripe string that decorates a Hmong woman's turban, and some money that a wedding will be in the works. In historical times, arrange marriages and engagements were the only acceptable ways to marry someone. Young couples who were unable to marry their true love usually ended tragically like Romeo and Juliet until one couple decided to run off together. According to a folktale, it was said that as they reached the edge of town, the bride gave her *sis ceeb* and the groom

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gave his pocket silver to a farmer and asked him to bring it to the bride's parents. The tradition of the messenger *fiv xov* and couples getting married in this "runaway" fashion came from this instance.

Mej Koob – Txiv Xaiv, Chue Ka Yang noted that women just wear their sis ceeb today because the fashionable turbans come with one however it was not always worn this way. He said "The *sis ceeb* in a way is similar to that of a wedding ring when referencing American culture. Only a woman who is still single will wear the sis ceeb as a married woman no longer has hers because it has been handed over in the process of the wedding."



I have always noticed the *sis ceeb* and how it was tied with the umbrella and used by a mej koob while performing his rituals and songs however never knew the significance of it. Bee Yang shared with me another folktale highlighting how an orphan received an umbrella from a dragon king from the heavens. Without going into much detail, it was said that when he opened the umbrella after arriving on earth, a fortune poured out along with a house and a beautiful bride who awaited him inside. The umbrella then is used in Hmong wedding ceremonies because it symbolizes the wealth and future of the couple.

Even though some respectable folks in the community prefer their daughters to receive a proper engagement, the runaway wedding is presently most common as the youth do not know better. I interviewed Susan Vang-Xiong of Circle of Events, a wedding planner who is Hmong, because fusion weddings may be the new way for the modern Hmong bride and groom. According to Vang-Xiong, a fusion wedding is one where different elements from one culture are fused with another one in order for a couple to have the best of both worlds. The key thing she noticed that helped her and her parent's accomplish their dream *tshoob*, because she and her husband had a proper engagement arrangement, was being open to having dialogue with the elders. I could not have agreed more with them about open dialogue as her tshoob was among some of the few that I have shot that really incorporated details from both her love and passion to design with that of the traditional tshoob. Because people are getting married at a more mature age and are able to make smarter choices; it should be easy to openly communicate with elders in order to come up with the best solution for planning their *tshoob*.

To back track a little, about a year after I had begun my photography business and have shot a handful of American weddings, my brother called me to let me know that he was getting married. My initial reaction led me to ask about a venue, the décor, a dress, and other wedding vendors. He was finishing school at the time so he told me that he would be unable to have an elaborate white dress wedding but would instead have the simple at home *tshoob*, in which my parents will assist him with. Hearing that, I went into that typical careless feeling that I believe many of us have as Hmong youth or Hmong women. I told him to call back once the elders figured out a date.



"The sis ceeb in a way is similar to that of a wedding ring when referencing American culture.

Why did I say Hmong youth? That is because in general, the youth only care to know when a wedding is so that they can come eat, drink, and visit with relatives. Why did I say Hmong women? I figured that if he was going to just have a tshoob, that all he would need me for are my hands to help cook. My parents took care of all the planning and gathering of the important figures like the mej koob, the maid of honor *(naim tais ntsuab)*, the best man *(phij laj)*, and the relative to represent them *(niam txiv lav tshoob)*. They also took care of all the other details too like the menu, the guest list, and pretty much he and his wife just showed up.

On the morning of their hand tying ceremony *(hu plig)* at my parent's house, I woke up ready to cook because it was my responsibility as a daughter and sister, and then the photographer in me kicked in. I soon realized that the women preparing the food were having the same interactions as the ones at the American weddings I am hired to shoot. The couples especially love candid moments like this and others that they miss because they were not present. I thought to myself as to why my brother did not hire a photographer to capture this day, even though it was just their tshoob? A million thoughts rushed through me as I realized, this *tshoob* was just as important if not more important than the handful of other weddings I have captured up to then as it too was a once in a life time event.



With social influences playing a big role in our decision making, young couples have been pushed to want to celebrate their personalities in this romanticized way. Having just a traditional tshoob does not cut it because couples feel that they are not important in the process as you can see with my brother and his wife's tshoob. Some couples feel as though they are just being pushed around through it by their parents and the wedding officiators.

I attended a white dress church wedding of a friend of mine several years ago. One of the other guests that attended the wedding with me was Hmong. She leaned over and noted that she was saddened that in the Hmong culture, we do not have things to pass on to our daughters because our friend, the bride, was wearing her grandmother's veil. In that moment, a melancholic feeling came over as I wondered about what things I would receive from my parents. I suddenly realized there was so much that could be passed down that we just do not appreciate because it is not sentimentalized in mainstream media like a veil or white dress. I first reassured her that the only reason our parents may not have items to pass down is because they may have gotten lost in the war and other hard times. Secondly, I pointed out that if our parents had the opportunity that they would pass down things like a *sis ceeb*, their original Hmong silver neck piece or *xauv*, other pieces of jewelry, and even their traditional Hmong clothes. My friend looked down at a golden bracelet that her mother had given her for graduation and told me in realization that she never appreciated it more than she did in that moment.

Being the photographer that I am, I take my gear with me everywhere, so I asked my parents to relieve me of cooking duties as I wanted to gift him these memories.

My mom was hesitant to lose a pair of food preparation hands to someone who was going to do nothing but carry around a camera. My brother eventually saw the value after I explained to him that in ten years when he looks back at the cellphone photos, he would be disappointed that I was present and did not snap a few photos. Unlike some of the weddings I have captured with small elements to the day that I did not know were important yet still took a photo of anyway, I had been to enough tshoob celebrations that I knew there were some key things I had to put in focus. My brother's *tshoob* was my first Hmong wedding I photographed, why I have fallen in love with the simple yet rich traditions of our culture and the rest was history. During the post processing and reviewing his images, I was speechless of my own work as it was the first time I could recollect in my memory that a plain at home *tshoob* could be captured in such beautiful light. My brother's *tshoob* photos were beautiful and I thought to myself, it should be captured in this way, however why has it not been done before? Why some modern couples tend to choose either not have their Hmong tshoob and/or choose to have an entire separate reception, is because they want their wedding to be as unique as them. Mainstream wedding vendors have also glamorized the American white dress wedding celebration and have made it much more desirable even if couples do not practice the faith.



Through time, without a formal way to preserve the Hmong culture, most of the colorful and desirable pieces to the Hmong wedding have been lost. Both *mej koob* told me that it used to be that when a Hmong woman arrives at the groom's house, after a three day rest period, the hu plig ceremony would take place. Immediately the day after, they would have the tshoob at the bride's parent's home. For the trek, the groom's parents would have packed a basket or kawm with a meal as well as have a bag of uncooked rice, some salt and oil, and a blanket. It is said that in the old days, the groom's family would throw a big feast and bring an entire feast to share with the bride's family. With no way to keep the tradition alive during historical hard times, the items in the kawm were created to represent this traveling feast.

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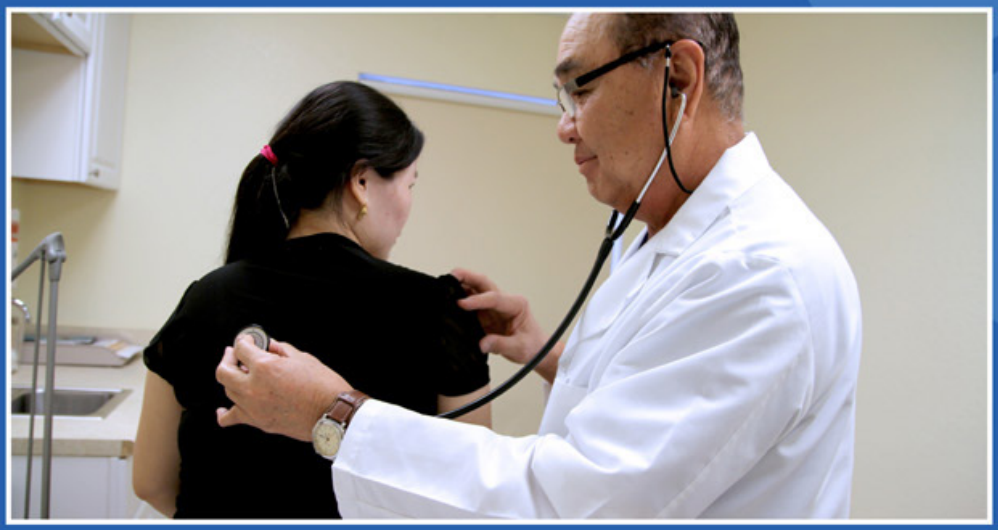
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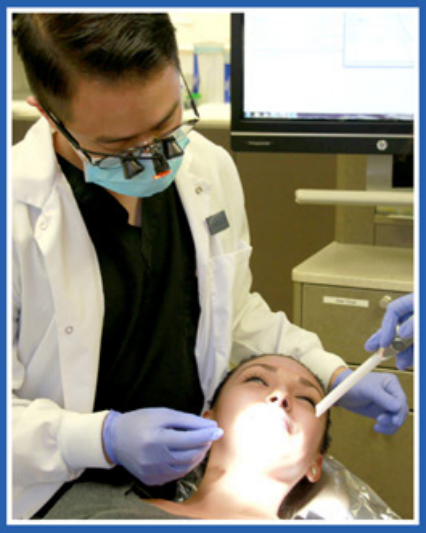
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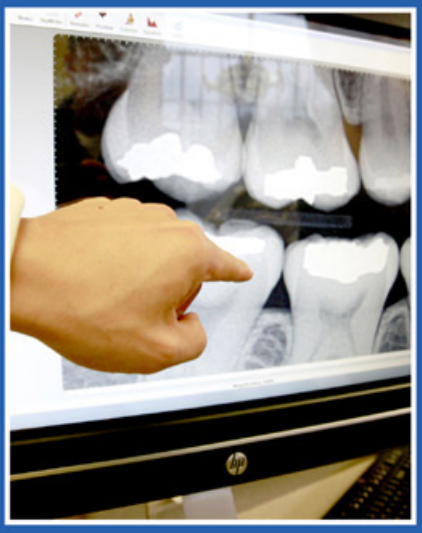
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Observing this change in how things are done to accommodate, Vang-Xiong notes "going into our future with trying to keep alive what is meaningful to us, we might have to pick and choose what our priorities are in the same way our elders decided that the best way to keep that tradition alive is creating the kawv with the items. It's exciting to be a Hmong American at this time as we are shaping the future of how things should be done. Who says the modern Hmong bride and groom can't have it all?" Bee Yang even said "we are no longer in hard times, if we wanted to have these traveling feasts, we can and should! We just really need to educate our people about the history of our beautiful culture."

A while back, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to cover my very first Chinese fusion wedding. The ongoing discussion I had with the couple and their parents throughout the day was how terrible they felt for not inviting more than a handful of their relatives and close friends. Similar to the Hmong, it is respectable for them to invite their extended families and community to such an important occasion. The couple said they would have to throw a party at a later date however they kept their wedding day very small in order to not lose the intimate detail of the tea ceremony that they chose to do in honor of their parents and grandparents. Then recently I captured a Punjabi wedding where three consecutive days were dedicated to the celebrations and feasting. Carefully planned, the days had specific deadlines that had to be met in terms of ceremonial and ritualistic pieces that were performed at a specific time in their temples. Down to the tiniest of details like the bangles that the bride wore, you can tell that every piece to the wedding was well thought out.

In revision of the other Asian weddings I have captured above, both the young couples were unaware in the very same way Hmong couples are about the traditional details. From attending other weddings in their youth, they were exposed to a little and knew what was expected of them however asked many questions as the elders took care of the rest. Like Hmong parents, these parents played a big role in making sure that everything took place as planned and the couple just showed up. The difference with them however is that they took hold of their wedding and made it uniquely theirs because there were elements that the parents did not plan for like the look and feel of the day.

Being Hmong in the wedding industry, I feel as though I am obligated to educate couples about the *tshoob* because there is so much one can do in preparations for the big day. Ultimately the Hmong American wedding just needs to be redefined and more valued. The industry has not been invested in greatly as compared to other Asian American communities, but there is a big market for it. Bee Yang noted "It is unfortunate to see that we do not give more thought to weddings as we do funerals but that's because in our history, a good passage into the afterlife is more important. That's not to say that we shouldn't make weddings a bigger deal into our future because we are heading into a more positive time. I think that we should invest into creating a hall specifically to rent out for weddings, have our young fashion designers create the white dress fused with Hmong designs, and make the *tshoob* just as fabulous, if not better than the $20,000 funerals we hold." If young couples only knew how beautiful our history is, they would appreciate the little details and get lost in planning their special day.

If you are thinking about planning your tshoob soon, some hot trends Vang-Xiong has seen in the Hmong fusion wedding scene that she shared with me are the custom invites in Hmong and English, sweet stations, Hmong themed wedding cakes and cupcakes, wearing mom's old piece of jewelry as their "something old", fusion foods, more organized buffet stations with chafing dishes, seating for guests, tables and tent rental, a basic linen, fresh flowers and arrangements, a program with speeches and dances, and even renting a hall to have the hu plig and tshoob ceremonies. "One of my best investments was hiring a professional wedding photographer just to capture my backyard Hmong *tshoob*. It warms my heart when looking back at the small forgotten details of the day," she says as she notes it has not been acknowledged however documenting the tshoob is also very important to preserving our history.

photography



In trying to keep costs down, the venue is usually the last thing on any couple's mind if they can have their tshoob at their parent's. Vang-Xiong mentioned that even if the *tshoob* is done at home, some savvy brides have set up an entrance table for when guests arrive to sign in to create a more formal setting. "We've always had cookie and fruit trays at our *hu plig* ceremonies, I decided to put a twist onto the cookies with these little Hmong people cookie heads," says Vang-Xiong as she shared her unique cookies and that they can be custom ordered however creative friends and family can easily make them too. A lot of modern couples have resorted to Pinterest or wedding blogs to find do-it-yourself (DIY) items to decorate or add that last finishing touch to their wedding. Creating a nice look and feel, even in the at home *tshoob*, will make and shape Hmong weddings to become a more valued entity in our community.



My family recently changed their faith because of a spiritual sickness of one of my younger sisters.

Shortly after, my baby sister was be wedded, my father jumped up quickly to tell the messengers who came to *fiv xov*, "With my new faith, we do not need to discuss a price. Just invite me to the party when the young couple throws their wedding celebration at church." In that instant, my mother's heart fell to the ground as she felt as though all she has invested into my little sister was worth nothing. As I mentioned before, it is hard to try and separate the religious part to the cultural part of a *tshoob* however my parents had performed the same ceremony for four out of their seven kids before they changed their faith, and my mother did not feel right to not give my baby sister the same blessing. Without performing the spiritual pieces like the *hu plig* ceremony, my mother was able to organize a beautiful *tshoob* for my sister and her husband involving all the important figures.

One of the meaningful pieces to a *tshoob* that is there but not visible is the support from the entire community and the extended family. Everyone who comes and joins in on your celebration or surrounds your marriage is rooting for it to succeed and stay strong. If I had to do it all over again, which I plan to do some day when I meet mister right, I would still pick having a *tshoob* over the white dress celebration that has no real meaning to me and my elders. It was the way my mother and her mother got married, I see no other way. Youa Za Yang, a local Fresno shaman and Txhawb Magazine associate publisher said it best when he noted at the end of our meeting,

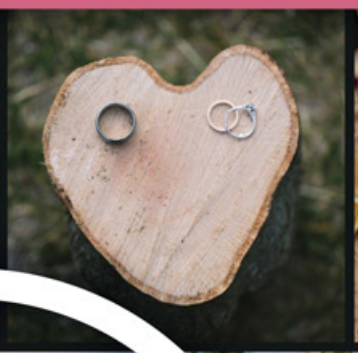
"The youth is infatuated with what is presented to them in American media but they have to remember that, 'that is theirs' and that we have to remember our roots in order for us to keep our culture alive because 'this is ours...Hmong *tshoob* is how your parents were wedded and it's how their family began and it will be how you can honor your ancestors, honor your identity and honor your parents."



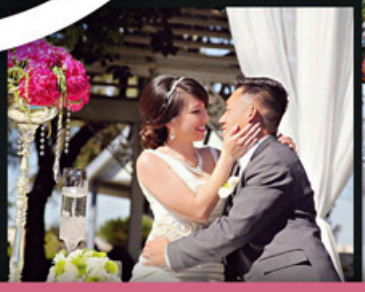


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PASSION TO SERVE

FENGLALY LEE, M.D.

Written by Seng Alex Vang *Photos* Youa Vang

MOST PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEY WANT TO DO IN LIFE OR MAY TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME TO FINALLY DETERMINE A CAREER PATH. FOR DR. FENGLALY LEE, SHE ALWAYS KNEW AND DECIDED EARLY IN LIFE THAT SHE WANTED TO BECOME A MEDICAL DOCTOR.

Dr. Fenglaly Lee is currently the only Hmong woman who is a Medical Doctor in Obstetrics and Gynocology (OB/GYN) in Fresno County and is the new owner of Omni Women's Health Medical Group in Fresno, California. She explains that, "at a young age I always wanted to be a doctor, I was always interested and admired people in the health care field and it was my only career choice." Through dedication and determination, Lee has remained committed to a very demanding career, overcoming many life-challenges, and passionately serves the community.

Lee grew up as the middle child of nine and was the eldest daughter. Lee shares that growing up with four older brothers and having the responsibility to take care of four younger siblings strengthened her to be courageous, competitive, and determined. She remembers that during many of her family's early experiences visiting doctors they had to endure long hours of waiting to meet with doctors who didn't understand the Hmong culture or language. These early experiences inspired her to want to know why this was the case and helped shape the kind of doctor she wanted to be. She also knew she wanted to work in low-income and underserved clinics. Lee states one of her core beliefs is that "you really make a difference working in low-income and underserved clinics because you are serving people who needed assistance the most."

When she was growing up in the 1980's many Hmong girls were getting married as early as 13 or 14 years of age. She was afraid to get married and afraid not to have a choice. Lee saw many of her relatives and friends get married and









"BEING A HMONG DAUGHTER, I FACED A REAL CHALLENGE OF NOT FINISHING SCHOOL."

not finish high school. She states, "Being a Hmong daughter, I faced a real challenge of not finishing school." Lee went to ask her middle school principal to let her skip the 8th grade so she could go to high school and graduate. At first the principal was hesitant about her request. She then showed the principal her yearbook and pointed out all the Hmong girls who got married and did not finish high school. After their conversation the principal decided to let her skip the 8th grade to attend high school. Lee went on to not only graduate from McLane High School, but she also graduated as valedictorian.

The fear of not finishing school was a real challenge that Lee wanted to overcome. She felt another challenge for her was having to decide daily whether to focus on school or to go to work on the farm to help her parents. Like many other Hmong families, her family relocated to Fresno to farm. Her father, Karleng Cherta Lee, mother Mao Thao and relatives started Cherta Farms. Lee shares that her father was supportive of her determination and allowed her to participate in after school activities and get involved in student clubs instead of going to the farm. Lee believes that these experiences really open up a lot of opportunities for her to meet different people and in learning to look for resources and develop leadership skills. Although she feels bad for not going to work at the farm with her parents, being involved opened up doors for Lee. One opportunity that she pursed was volunteering at hospital emergency rooms at the age of 14. This experience really exposed her to what it would be like to work as a medical doctor in the emergency room.

After Lee graduated from McLane she attended the University of California, Davis for four years and graduated with a degree in Physiology. After that she applied to UC Davis Medical School. She states, "It was the only school I applied to and I got accepted into my only choice." When asked what it was like to be married during college and medical school, Lee replies, "Going to school and choosing this demanding career was not easy without a supportive husband. It was difficult as a struggling young couple because we were both going to school and working toward our careers." She goes on to mention how the two were already struggling then, and how their situation got more difficult when she had a baby during her first year of medical school. Her husband, Long Lao was majoring in criminal justice and decided to leave school to work as a probation office to support the family. They decided one of them had to work while the other pursued their career.

After she completed medical school at UC Davis they knew they had to come back to Fresno where they still had family who could help to watch their kids while they worked. Unfortunately her father passed away before she was able to tell him that she successfully completed the medical program. Although she was not able to tell him, she believes he would be proud because he always supported her and knew she had the determination to finish. Another reason she returned to Fresno was because she was accepted into the medical residency program at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Fresno Center.

Lee completed the four-year residency program at UCSF Fresno Center, often working up to 130 hours a week. She points out that today there are regulations that prevent residents from working that many hours. The residency program provided her with knowledge and hands-on surgical training. She performed surgeries and learned to look for possible outcomes that could result in accidents or unexpected occurrences. Lee explains that in the

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LEE ALSO CHOSE TO RETURN TO FRESNO BECAUSE SHE HAD A STRONG PASSION TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY AND TO DO THE MOST MEANINGFUL WORK.

residency program there is always someone at hand to help, and residents shadow doctors to learn from, you also report to others at the next level. You also could always go to someone for support because there are experienced volunteer doctors on hand to assist. "You have to perform surgeries over and over to the point that it becomes as normal as driving," states Lee.

When asked why Lee chose to become an Obstetrics and Gynocology (OB/GYN) medical doctor, which is considered to be a demanding, high-risk occupation, she replies her decision was influenced by the fact that the lives of the mother and infant are always in potential danger. She explains that in the medical program she had a choice between going into OB/GYN or Pediatrics. She admits that at first she did not think she could actually perform surgery on patients but through determination she overcame that challenge. She understands it is a field that is known for the highest rate of malpractice lawsuits and requires a lot of insurance coverage. Even with all the proper preparation and information provided OB/GYN's could still be liable if something goes wrong during surgery. Through it all she remains committed to doing the best job she can and to provide high-quality care to the community.

Lee also chose to return to Fresno because she had a strong passion to give back to the community and to do the most meaningful work. As she looks back through her past college application and other scholarships, she recalls she always wrote that she wanted to become a medical doctor to serve low-income underserved communities. She firmly believes in following through and holding herself accountable to what she says she is going to do. Therefore she chose to work in a place where there was the most need and the program at the UCSF Fresno Center provided that opportunity. She explains that working in the clinics that serve 99% Medi-Cal patients allows her more training by working with the highest risk and patients with the most need.

After she completed her residency program Lee did had an opportunity to work in North Fresno and open a clinic with some friends, but they told her they would not see Medi-Cal patients on-call. She was frustrated and explained, "I could not tell my sisters or relatives I could not see them and only accept private insurance coverage." She decided to work instead in a clinic that served Medi-Cal and low-income patients knowing she would have to work extra hand and have to see more patients. She joined Omni Women's Medical Group and helped build up the clinic over the past six years. When the leading doctor retired the clinic was sold to her earlier this year.

Lee explains that some clinics only accept private insurance coverage and cap their Medi-Cal or low income patients to 10%. "Sometimes I have to see about 40 patients a day compared to only 10-15 at

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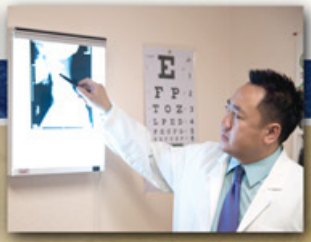
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LEE WANTS THE COMMUNITY TO UNDERSTAND THAT DOCTORS SHOULD BE A PARTNER IN MAKING HEALTH CHOICES.

a private insurance clinic," states Lee. She asks, "Who else will I serve if I am not committed to serving my own community?" Through these experiences she now understands why the wait time was so long when she used to take her parents to doctor visits at Medi-Cal clinics. She explains you do not have a choice to go anywhere else and sometimes you cannot because of the language barrier. Lee realizes that there may be more money and better opportunities to advance in opening a clinic in another location but she would not feel the satisfaction of doing the best she could to serve the community.

Lee wants the community to understand that doctors should be a partner in making health choices. She takes pleasure in having the opportunity work with clients in the high risk emergency room and in all process of pregnancy. She explains, 'It is about making the best decision, not just about providing the care but also educating the patient to understand their health decisions." Since she is the only Hmong woman OB/GYN in Fresno when she goes to work she views it as if she is going to see friends and family. Lee understands it may be hard to draw the line and there are both positives and negatives working with relatives. She shares she has delivered multiple children for several dozen Hmong families and for one of her patient, Lee has delivered all five children for that family.

Throughout her medical career Lee always had to deal with many challenges of self-doubt, such as the feeling of never being good enough or having enough confidence. She concludes that people may compare what is success and what is not, but she doesn't mind because in the end she enjoys advising and educating her patients. Now as the new owner of Omni Women's Medical Group, she is at a point in her career where she doesn't feel she needs to prove herself anymore.

Lee encourages others who are interested in pursuing a career in the medical profession to take every opportunity to challenge themselves and learn the next steps to accomplish their goals. Lee advises "If someone asks for help just go and do it. It will open the door to new opportunities." You know the work you do makes a difference when you feel it in your heart.





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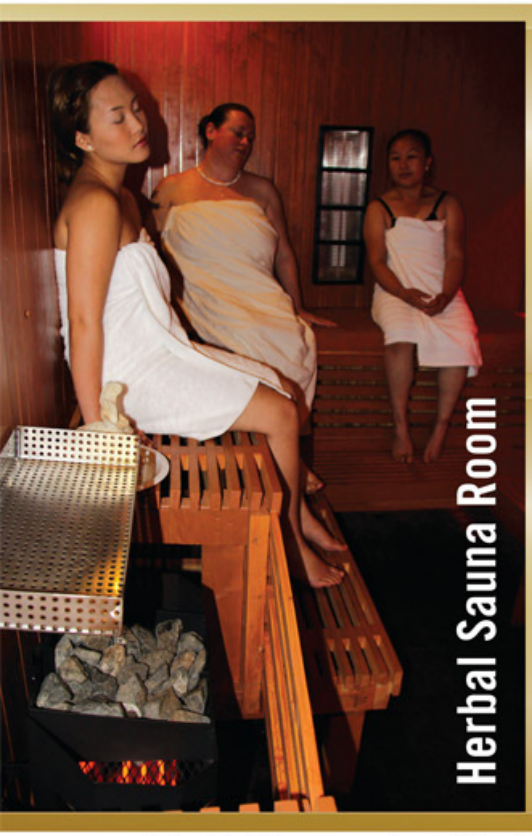
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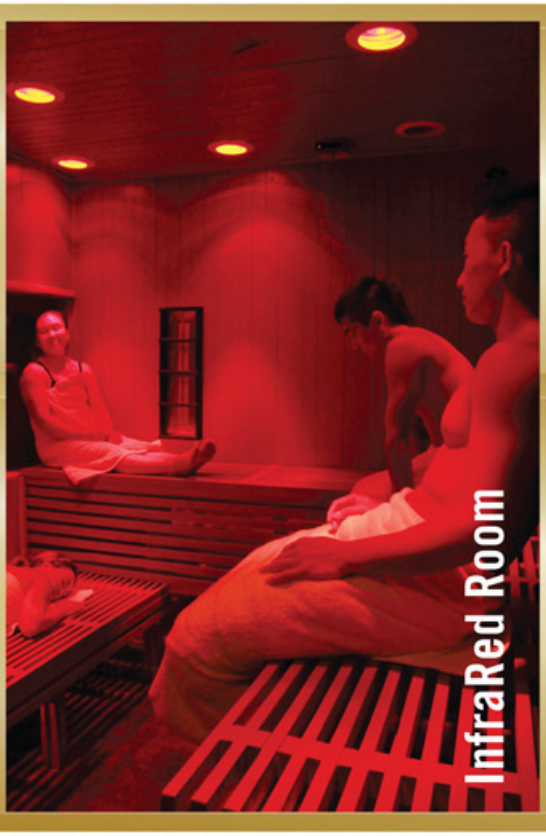
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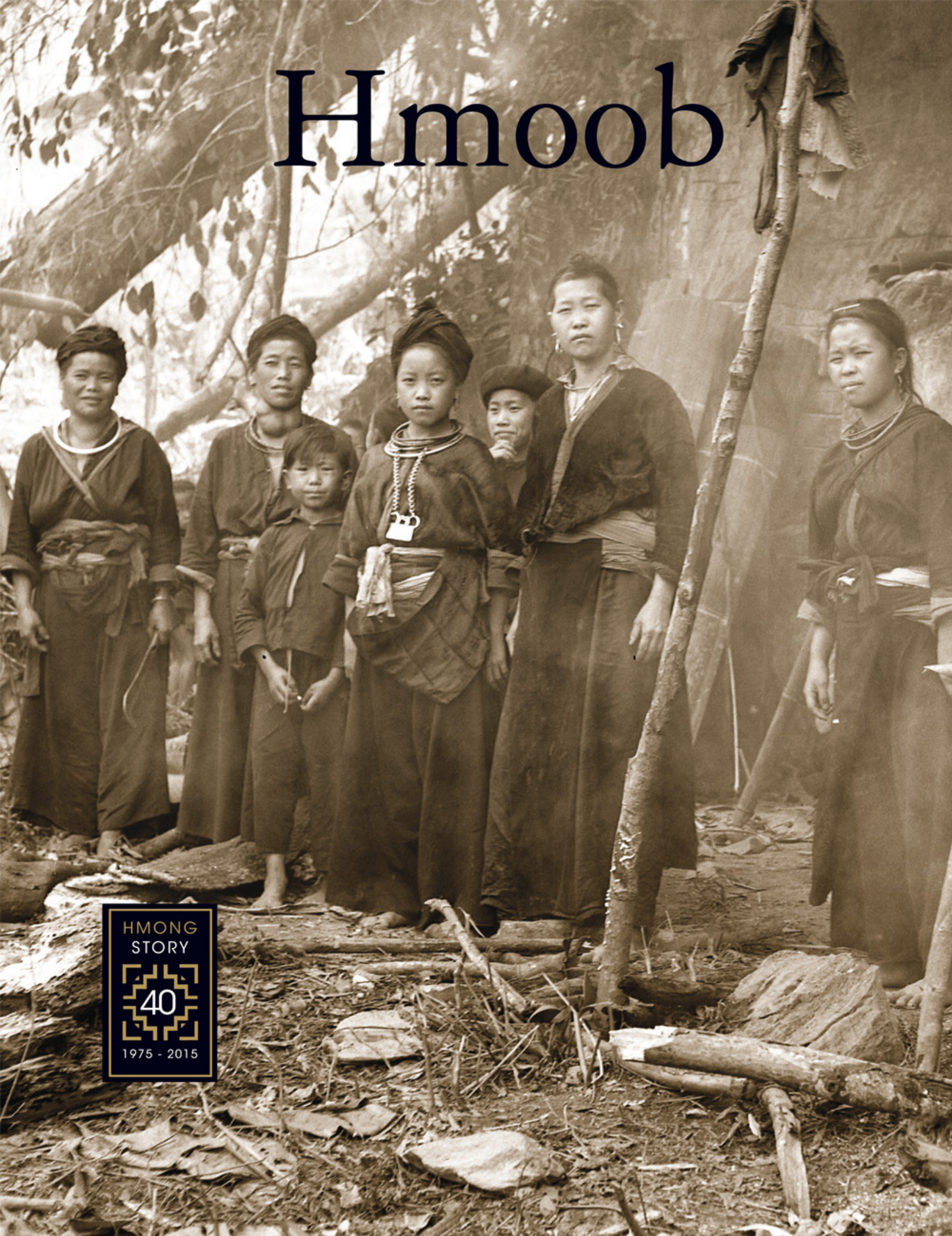
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Raws li keeb kwm ceev tseg thiab niaj hnub no uas peb tseem taug tau, Hmoob ua lub neej nyob rau Tuam Tshoj teb tau ntau tiam. Hmoob nyob muaj ciam dej ciam av uas yog Hmoob tug. Hmoob kuj muaj kev coj noj coj ua xws li muaj tus huab tais Hmoob, nom tswv Hmoob, thiab kev thooj siab koom ntsws ua ib haiv. Hmoob yog ib haiv neeg nyiam nyob muaj kev ywj pheej kom txhob muaj lwm tus neeg caij tsuj quab yuam Hmoob. Hmoob kuj nyiam nyob rau yav toj siab ua noj ua haus. Sab teb chaws Tuam Tshoj kuj yog muaj tsov rog sib txeeb ciam dej ciam av ntxhov hnyo. Yog li, Suav thiaj tuaj ntxeev txeeb Hmoob lub tebchaws, txov Hmoob tus huab tais thiab kev coj noj coj ua, thiab rhuav tshem lub neej Hmoob kom haiv Hmoob tu noob. Hmoob lub neej thiaj tawg ua sab ua sua khiav mus nyob raws toj roob hauv pes deb deb ntawm Suav kom Suav txhob tuaj caum tua tau Hmoob.

Vim Hmoob yog ib haiv neeg nyiam kev ywj pheej tsis nyiam lwm tus neeg tuaj caij tsuj, yog li ib txhia Hmoob thiaj pib khiav tawm Tuam Tshoj teb los mus rau sab Es Xias Qab Teb Hnub Tuaj (Southeast Asia) xws li sab qaum teb Nyab Laj, Nplog teb, Thaib teb thiab Phab Mab teb thaj tsam li yav 1740 tawm ntawd. Raws li keeb kwm ceev tau tseg qhia tau hais tias thawj pab Hmoob khiav los nyob rau hauv lub teb chaws Los Tsuas yog thaj tsam li ntawm xyoo 1815 ntawd. Hmoob los mus nyob rau yav toj siab los ua teb raws tej toj roob hauv pes deb deb kom haiv neeg loj (Nplog) txhob tuaj cuam tshuam thiab caij tsuj Hmoob lub neej.

Yaj yeeb yog ib yam tshuaj uas Hmoob siv pab rau kev mob laug thiab lwm yam mob. Hmoob los mus nyob rau yav toj siab rau tej chaw uas zoo cog yaj yeeb heev. Nyob rau lub sij hawm no, teb chaws Los Tsuas thiab Nyab Laj tab tom raug teb chaws Fab Kis kav. Lub sij hawm ntawd, yeeb yog ib yam uas muaj kev siv loj heev nyob rau hauv lub teb chaws Nyab Laj thiab teb chaws Suav. Yog li, feem ntau yog cov neeg Suav thiaj li tuaj yaum kom Hmoob ua teb yeeb kom ntau es lawv tuaj yuav Hmoob cov yeeb mus rau sab Suav teb. Yaj yeeb thiaj li tau yog thawj yam qoob uas Hmoob paub cog los ua lag luam nrog Suav.

Hmoob los nyob rau Los Tsuas teb tau ze li ntawm 100 xyoo kuj tsis muaj dab tsi txawv txav ntau. Feem coob nyob rau yav toj siab xwb tsis muaj cuab kav tuaj rau yav tiaj nrag hauv cov nroog uas tsis muaj Hmoob. Hmoob los ua teb cog qoob loo

tu tsiaj txhu xw li qaib, npua, nyuj, thiab nees xwb. Cov ua tau yaj yeeb los kuj ua muag rau Suav xwb. Tsis tas li, Fab Kis kuj ho pib sau se ces feem coob ntawm cov Hmoob tsis muaj nyiaj them lawv thiaj sau cov yaj yeeb los them ua nqe se rau Fab Kis vim lub sijhawm no Fab Kis thiab As Kiv muaj kev sib tw txog lag luam yaj yeeb loj heev nyob rau sab Es Xias (Asia). Thawj tug Hmoob uas muaj lub koob sawv hauv lub tebchaws Los Tsuas yog Kiab Toom Muas Tooj Ntxawg uas Fab Kis tau tsa nws los saib xyuas cov Hmoob nyob rau sab Xeev teb. Dhau li ntawd los, Fab Kis kuj tau tsa Lauj Npliaj Yob los ua tus saib xyuas cov neeg Hmoob nrog rau Muas Tooj Ntxawg. Txog rau xyoo 1917 uas Kiab Toom Muas Txog rau xyoo 1935, Kiab Toom Lauj Npliaj Yob tau tag sim neej yog li Fab Kis thiaj tsa Tub Npis los tuav ua tus kiab Toom tshiab. Nyob rau lub sijhawm no kuj tseem tsis tau muaj kev ywj pheej los kev muaj vaj huam sib luag los ntawm cov Hmoob thiab Nplog. Hauj lwm Fab Kis tso rau Tub Npis yog kom nws los saib xyuas cov se uas cov Hmoob them tuaj rau Fab Kis. Vim nws muaj kev kawm me ntsis, Tub Npis thiaj ua tiag muab kev koom tes thiab pab Fab Kis kom Fab Kis pom thiab paub txog Hmoob lub siab dawb thiab kev koom tes es kom Fab Kis ho rub Hmoob kom muaj vaj huam sib luag li cov Nplog thiab. Yog li, Fab Kis thiaj li qhib



Lo Bliayao *Photo Courtesy of* Tua Vang



Photo Courtesy of Vajtsua Shouayang/VTSY



Touby Lyfoung *Photo Courtesy of* Tua Vang

Tooj Ntxawg so hauj lwm vim nws laus thiab muaj hnub nyoog lawm, Lauj Npliaj Yob thiaj sawv los tuav teg hauj lwm ua tus kiab toom saib cov Hmoob nyob rau sab Xeev. Nws kuj tsis tau ua dabtsi ntau thiab tsuas yog Fab Kis xaiv nws los nrog Fab Kis ua hauj lwm ua ke, kom nws los nrhiav sau cov Hmoob los ua cov kev tsheb vim Fab Kis xav kom txoj kev mus los yooj yim rau ntawm lub teb chaws Nyab Laj thiab Los Tsuas. Hmoob raug Fab Kis siv los ua tej hauj lwm hnyav heev ua cov kev tsheb tab sis Fab Kis kuj them nyiaj tsis ntau tsuas yog txaus Hmoob coj los them se rov rau Fab Kis thiab xwb. Tsis tas li ntawd, Fab Kis kuj rub se hnyav heev rau Hmoob them. Muaj qee tsev neeg them tsis tau se thiaj tau muab lawv tej menyuam muag kom tau nyiaj los them cov se rau Fab Kis. Yog li ntawd, thiaj muaj ib pab Hmoob sawv los tawm tsam Fab Kis yuav kev ncaj ncees uas niaj hnub no sawv daws tseem paub tias yog kob tsov rog Paj Cai.

Ua ntej xyoo 1922 ntawd Hmoob tsis tau muaj ib tug twg uas tau kawm ntawv dua li. Thawj cov me nyuam Hmoob uas tau kawm ntawv nyob hauv lub teb chaws Los Tsuas yog 5 tug me nyuam ntawm Muas Nom Tub tsev neeg uas lawv pib kawm nyob rau sab Xeev teb. Tau tsis ntev, thiaj muaj ob tug me nyuam Hmoob ntawm Lis Foom tsev neeg thiaj pib kawm nyob rau hauv Fab Kis lub tsev kawm ntawv qhia cov me nyuam yaus nyob rau hauv lub nroog Xeev. Ob tug me nyuam Hmoob no yog ob kwv tij, ib tug muaj lub npe hu ua Tub Npis hos tus thij ob hu ua Tub Ntxawg. Nyob rau tib lub sijhawm no Kiab Toom Lauj Npliaj Yob thiaj xa nws cov tub mus kawm ntawv thiab. Ntawm ob peb tug me nyuam Hmoob mus sib tw kawm ntawv no tsuas yog Tub Npis thiab Tub Ntxawg nkawd thiaj li kawm tiav es nce mus rau qib siab xwb. Tub Npis thiaj tau tuaj kawm ntawv txog kev tsim cai (administrative law) nyob rau hauv lub nroog Vias Cam (Vientiane). Hos Tub Ntxawg thiaj yog thawj tug Hmoob uas kawm tiav nyob rau hauv tsev kawm ntawv qib siab (college) nyob rau teb chaws Los Tsuas lub sij hawm ntawd.

lub puav tsev kawm ntawv rau yav toj siab kom cov me nyuam Hmoob muaj kev kawm ntawv thiab. Nyob rau sab Looj Hej ntawd thiaj muaj li ntawm rau xya tus me nyuam Hmoob thiaj li pib mus kawm ntawv. Ib tug ntawm cov me nyuam Hmoob no muaj lub npe hu ua Vaj Pov.

Xyoo 1944 mus rau 1945 ntawd, yog lub sij hawm uas Kob Rog Ntiaj Teb Zaum Ob (World War II) tab tom ntxhov hnyo. Yog li cov Yiv Pooj (Japanese) thiaj tuaj tua cov Fabkis nyob rau sab Nplog thiab Nyab Laj. Lub sijhawm no Fabkis thiaj li tau txais kev nyuaj siab thiab tws kev tas vim lub teb chaws Fab Kis los tab tom raug kev puas tsuaj los ntawm kob tsov rog no. Yog li Tub Npis kuj muaj lub zeem muag xav kom Hmoob muaj lub koob lub npe thiab kom lwm haiv neeg saib taus Hmoob, Tub Npis thiaj kom cov Hmoob muab kev koom tes pab cov Fab Kis. Lub sijhawm no thiaj muaj ib tug me nyuam Hmoob muaj hnub nyug li ntawm 15 xyoo, hu ua Vaj Pov no, thiaj yog ib tug uas taug cov xwm txheej ntawm cov Yiv Pooj es qhia rau cov Fab Kis thiab Tub Npis rau lub ciaj uas lawv tau mus pw nkaum nyob hav zoo hav tsuag.

Tom qab Kob Rog Ntiaj Teb Zaum Ob xaus lawm, Fab Kis muaj kev hwm txog Hmoob tej txiaj ntsim uas Hmoob pab cawm cov Fab Kis. Fab Kis thiaj qhib kev rau cov Hmoob mus kawm ntawv ntxiv thiab ho rub Hmoob mus ua tub rog rau ntawm Fab Kis los tiv thaiv Hmoob cov ciam dej ciam av vim lub sij hawm no tab tom muaj cov Viet Minh (Nyab Laj qaum teb) sawv los ntxeev teb chaws thiab tawm tsam Fab Kis. Fab Kis thiaj muaj kev txib thiab cia siab heev rau tus me nyuam Hmoob hu ua Vaj Pov no; thiaj txhawb Vaj Pov kom nws muaj hwj chim rau hauv sab tub rog los tiv thaiv lub teb chaws. Txog rau xyoo 1954, Fab Kis thiaj swb kob rog rau Nyab Laj qaum teb nyob rau Diam Bias Fus (Dien Bien Phu) yog li Fab Kis thiaj ua ib siab thim tawm hauv sab Es Xias Qab Teb Hnub tuaj lawm.

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Tom qab Fab Kis tawm lawm, tog Koom Sam muaj lub zeem muag txeeb kom tau tswj tag nrho sab Es Xias Qab Teb Hnub Tuaj ntawd. Yog li lub teb chaws As Mes Li Kas thiaj li mus hloov Fab Kis chaw txheem kom sab ntuj ntawd txhob poob mus rau tog Koom Sam (Communist). Vim nws tej txiaj ntsim thiab tus peev xwm nws pab rau Fab Kis, As Mes Li Kas thiaj tuaj thov kev koom tes ntawm Vaj Pov kom nws nrog txheem tiv thaiv tsis pub tog Koom Sam ntxeev kom tau lub tebchaws Los Tsuas. Yog li pib xyoo 1961 txog ntua xyoo 1975, Vaj Pov thiaj coj feem coob ntawm cov Hmoob nrog rau cov Nplog, Lwb, Pub Thawj, Co thiab lwm haiv neeg me (minorities) nyob hauv lub teb chaws Los Tsuas sawv los tiv thaiv lub teb chaws kom txhob poob rau tog Koom Sam.

Thaum xyoo 1961 ntawd As Mes Li Kas tab tom xa riam phom thiab khoom tua rog tuaj rau Vaj Pov thiab cov Hmoob nyob rau



Photo Courtesy of Vajtsua Shouayang/VTSY

Paj Doos teb chaws Los Tsuas. Thaum no muaj ib tug me nyuam Hmoob muaj hnub nyug thaj tsam li ntawm 17 xyoo nrog rau nws txiv, hu ua Yaj Mi Nus no, thiaj tuaj thov Vaj Pov kom tso nws tus tub mus kawm ntawd vim tsov rog tseem tsis tau loj thiab tsis tau muaj dab tsi ntau. Yog li Vaj Pov thiaj tso Yaj Mi Nus tus tub nqis pem toj siab tuaj rau nram nroog Vias Cam tuaj mus kawm ntawv lawm. Vaj Pov kuj pom lub zeem muag tib yam nkaus li Tub Npis Lis Foom thiab, nws thiaj qhib kev thiab txhawb kom cov me nyuam Hmoob muaj kev kawm ntaub kawm ntawv. Vaj Pov thiaj thov kev pab cuam los ntawm tsoom fwv As Mes Li Kas, nws thiaj tsa cov tsev kawm ntawv nyob thoob plaws rau yav toj siab thiab thiaj xa nws cov tub rog uas paub ntawv mus ua xib hwb qhia ntawv rau tsoom me nyuam Hmoob thoob plaws txhua txhia qhov chaw. Ib tug ntawm cov xib hwb qhia ntawv no muaj lub npe hu ua Lis Lwm.

Txog xyoo 1966, As Mes Li Kas muaj ib qhov kev qhia tsav dav hlau tua rog rau cov Nyab Laj qab teb. As Mes Li Kas xav kom Hmoob muaj cov mus kawm thiab yog li lawv thiaj hais kom Vaj Pov xaiv ob tug Hmoob uas paub ntawv As Kiv zoo tshaj plaws mus kawm. Vaj Pov thiaj txiav txim siab xa Lis Lwm thiab Vaj Tuam nkawv mus kawm. Raws li paub thiab teev tau rau keeb kwm cia nyob hauv ntiaj teb no, Lis Lwm thiab Vaj Tuam nkawv yog thawj ob tug Hmoob uas kawm tiav tsav dav hlau ya nruab ntug. Tom qab nkawv kawm tiav lawm, As Mes Li Kas kuj qhuas cov Hmoob heev vim lub neej Hmoob nyob toj siab ua neej tuav taum txhob thiab hlau xwb es ua li cas Lis Lwm thiab Vaj Tuam nkawv yuav kawm tiav tsav dav hlau tau zoo heev. Lis Lwm thiab Vaj Tuam nkawv tus peev xwm thiaj li qhib txoj kev rau coob Hmoob tuaj kawm tsav dav hlau ntxiv nyob rau sab Thaib teb.

Tau 14 lub xyoos uas As Mes Li Kas tuaj tuav Vaj Pov tes kom muaj kev sib koom tes tiv thaiv lub teb chaws, nws yog ib lub sij hawm uas hloov Hmoob lub neej los lawm ntau tsav yam. Ua ntej ntawd Hmoob ib txwm nyob toj siab xwb. Vaj Pov los qhib txoj kev rau Hmoob muaj lub neej vam meej thiab lom zem heev nyob rau lub nroog Looj Ceeb. Hmoob muaj kev ua lag luam; muaj kev kawm ntawv rau coob leej ntau tus; muaj ntau yim Hmoob nqis tuaj nrog Nplog nyob ua ke hauv lub nroog Vias Cam; muaj cov ntxhais Hmoob kawm ua cov tu thiab saib xyuas cov neeg muaj mob thiab raug mob; muaj tug puav poj niam Hmoob thiab ntxhais Hmoob txawj tsav tsheb; thiab Hmoob thiaj pib muaj noj tsiab peb caug seev cev koom kev lom zem nphau ntho. Nyob rau xyoo 1972, thawj tug me nyuam Hmoob nyob hauv ntiaj teb no uas kawm ntawv tiav qib PhD yog Yaj Daus (Dr. Yang Dao); tus menyuam Hmoob uas nws txiv coj nws tuaj thov Vaj Pov ntawm Paj Doos kom cia nws tuaj mus kawm ntawv. Cov kawm tiav Bachelor kuj muaj tug puav. Cov Vaj Pov xa thiab muaj kev pab cuam tuaj mus kawm ntawv nyob rau lwm lub teb chaws los kuj muaj ob peb tug thiab.

Nyob rau xyoo 1975 ntawd lub teb chaws Los Tsuas thiaj li muaj kev puas tsuaj yog li lub teb chaws thiaj poob mus rau tog Koom Sam lawm. Yog li, Vaj Pov thiab cov Hmoob thiaj li khiav tawm lub teb chaws Los Tsuas tuaj ua neeg tawg rog nyob rau hauv lub teb chaws Thaib. Tom qab ntawd, feem coob ntawm cov Hmoob thiaj tuaj ua dua lub neej tshiab nyob rau lub teb chaws As Mes Li Kas. Ib txhia kuj mus rau Auv Tas Lias (Australia), Khas Nas Das (Canada) thiab Fab Kis (France).

Lub 2 hli ntuj xyoo 2013 no txwm nkaus 40 xyoo ntawm kev cog lus nyob rau Pas Lis (Paris) teb chaws Fab Kis uas xaus Kob Tsov Rog Nyab Laj thiab kob rog nyob hauv lub teb chaws Los Tsuas. Qhov kev cog lus no tsis ruaj ntseg thiaj ua rau peb lub teb chaws poob mus rau tog Koom Sam es peb thiaj li khiav tawm tuaj pib dua lub neej tshiab nyob rau lub teb chaws As Mes Li Kas, Khas Nas Das, Fab Kis thiab lwm lub teb chaws.

40 xyoo xwb hloov thiab tig lub neej Hmoob mus rau kev vam meej thiab txoj kev ua neej mus lawm deb heev. 16 lub xyoo tom qab peb Hmoob khiav tawm lub teb chaws Los Tsuas tuaj nyob As Mes Li Kas no xwb peb muaj thawj tug Hmoob uas los nrog haiv neeg Mes Kas sib tw ua nom ua tswv. Tus ntxhais Cua Lis nyob hauv lub nroog Mi Nis Av Paus Liv (Minneapolis, MN) yog thawj tug Hmoob sib tw yeej los ua ib tug thawj tswj ntawm tsev kawm ntawv (school board). Dhau li ntawd mam ua ntu zus muaj coob tus uas teev tsis tas npe los sib tw yeej ua city council nyob rau txhua txhia qhov chaw. Hais txog cov nyob hauv xeev Kas Lis Faus Nias (California) thawj tug yog tus tub Nplooj Xyooj nyob lub nroog Fresno. Tus ob yog Nom Pus (Noah) Lauj nyob lub nroog Merced. Thaum xyoo 2000, muaj tus tub Hmoob lub npe hu ua Lis Pov Xyooj yog thawj tug me nyuam Hmoob uas raug xaiv los mus ua ib tug sawv cev thiab pab tswv yim rau tuam thawj tswj teb chaws President Bill Clinton. Xyoo 2001 kuj muaj tus ntxhais Hmoob muaj lub npe hu ua Mim Muas sib tw yeej, uas yog thawj tug Hmoob, los tuav hauj lwm nom tswv nyob rau hauv lub xeev Mes Nis Xaus Tas (Minnesota) ua ib tug xes nes tawj (State Senator). 10 lub xyoo tom qab Xes Nes Tawj (Senator) Mim Muas los tuav txoj luag hauj lwm xwb, tus tub Hmoob Nplooj Xyooj uas ua city council nyob lub nroog Fresno kuj tau yog thawj tug me nyuam Hmoob sawv los mus tso npe sib tw ua nom rau hauv Congress nyob

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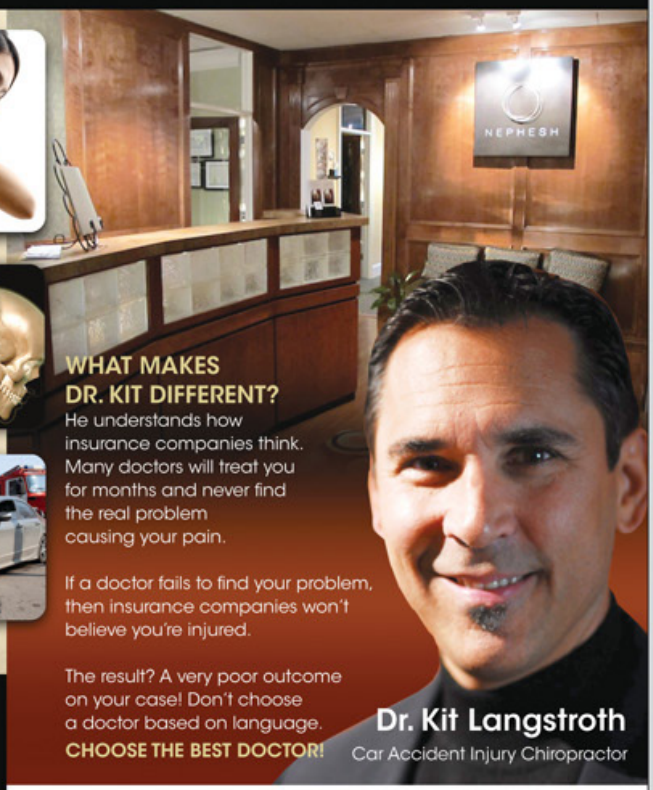
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Photo from Collection of Tua Vang

rau tuam ceeb Washington DC. Tsis muaj txoj hmoo nws kuj swb lawm tab sis nws tau cog cia qhia rau keeb kwm nyob teb chaws As Mes Li Kas no hais tias nws yog thawj tug Hmoob Mes Kas los sib tw ua nom nyob rau hauv Congress. Tauj ntawd, Nom Pus (Noah) Lauj nyob Merced kuj tau yog thawj tug Hmoob Mes Kas los tso npe sib tw ua tus tswv zos (mayor) rau xyoo 2013. Tsis muaj txoj hmoo nws kuj tau swm lawm.

Dua li ntawm Hmoob kev ua nom ua tswv lawm kuj muaj kev vam meej hais txog ua lag luam thiab kawm txawj kawm ntse. Niaj hnub no yauv luag txhua lub zos uas muaj Hmoob nyob ces tsawg kawg nkaus los yuav tsum muaj ib lub khw Hmoob muag khoom noj haus. Hmoob kev nplua nuj kuj los mus lawm deb heev. Thaum Hmoob tawm lub teb chaws Los Tsuas feem coob li ntawm 90 feem pua (90%) yog cov txom nyem thiab tsis muaj ib qho nyiaj hlo li. Niaj hnub tam sim no twb muaj tug puav Hmoob uas muaj nyiaj txog ntawm lab duaslas (millionaire). Hmoob kev kawm ntaub kawm ntawv los puav leej vam meej los lawm ntau heev. Twb muaj cov Hmoob los tuav hauj lwm ua thawj xib hwb nyob rau hauv cov tsev kawm ntawv. Kuj muaj cov ua xib hwb qhia ntawv nyob rau qib siab hauv University huv tib si. Raws li ntaub ntawv ceev tau cia los ntawm lub tuam txhab Hmong Christian Fellowship, tam sim no muaj txog li ntawm 381 tus Hmoob uas kawm tiav dov tawj (doctor). Cov dov tawj no puav leej xam cov kawm tiav PhD, PsyD, EDD, DC, MD thiab lwm yam. Cov kawm tiav ua kws kho mob (MDs) xwb twb muaj txog 64 leej.

Lub neej Hmoob, hais tias tsis ntev no los kuj los lawm tau ntau tiam thiab ntau phav xyoo lawm. Txij li Hmoob keeb kwm teev tau cia nyob Tuam Tshoj tau ntau phav xyoo los txog ntua rau xyoo 1972, uas tsis ntev ua ntej Hmoob tawg teb chaws nyob Los Tsuas, Hmoob nyuam qhuav muaj ib tug tub Hmoob kawm ntawv tiav qib siab xwb. Nyuam qhuav tau ze yauv luag 40 lub xyoo tom qab Hmoob tawg teb chaws tawm Los Tsuas xwb Hmoob kev kawm ntawv tiav qib siab twb nce los ze 400 leej uas kawm tiav dov tawj lawm. Cov kawm tiav master los muaj txog li phav tus. Cov kawm tiav Bachelor los kuj muaj ntau phav leej. Kev lag luam muaj nyiaj muaj txiaj los puav leej los lawm deb heev.

Raws li kev tshawb fawb thiab ceev tau cia los ntawm Center for Hmong Studies nyob rau xeev Mes Nis Xaus Tas (Minneasota), xam tag nrho peb haiv Hmoob nyob ntiaj teb no xwb muaj kwv yees li ntawm 11 lab (millions) tus Hmoob. Peb Hmoob As Mes Li Kas muaj kwv yees li ntawm 300,000 tus. Kev vam meej ib puas tsav yam ntawm Hmoob lub koob lub npe yog cog kiag rau cov Hmoob nyob lub teb chaws As Mes Li Kas vim peb yog cov nyob rau lub teb chaws vam meej thiab muaj txoj kev vaj huam sib luag. Xyoo 2015, tsoom tub ntxhais Hmoob txawj ntse nyob lub teb chaws As Mes Li Kas no npaj siab yuav los nthuav tawm thawj zaug hauv Hmoob As Mes Li Kas keeb kawm los qhuas thiab tshua txog peb lub neej Hmoob yav tas dhau los thiab 40 xyoo uas peb tawm lub tebchaws Los Tsuas tuaj pib dua lub neej tshiab nyob rau lub teb chaws As Mes Li Kas. Pib lub xyoo no cov tub ntxhais Hmoob uas muaj kev koom tes npaj siab los nthuav tawm qhov "Hmongstory 40" yuav pib los npaj nqua hu tsoom niam txiv kwv tij neej tsa Hmoob sawv daws kom muab kev koom tes es xav thov sawv daws tej duab qub los sis cov ntaub ntawd BV thiab ntaub ntawv tawm Thaib teb tuaj rau lub teb chaws As Mes Li Kas no. Leej twg muaj Hmoob tej tsoos tsho qub qub los sis tej khoom ntiag tug ntawm Hmoob los xav thov sawv daws muab kev koom tes rau cov tub ntxhais hluas Hmoob ntawm Hmongstory 40 no es lawv yuav npaj ziag no kom mus txog ntua thaum xaus xyoo 2014 seb yuav nthuav tawm tau dab tsi qhia thiab qhuas txog peb lub neej Hmoob nyob rau teb chaws As Mes Li Kas no tau 40 xyoo.

TXOG NTAWM TUS SAU NTAWV:

Vaj Tuam yog ib tug tub Hmoob yug tom qab xyoo 1975. Nws tseem yog ib tug me nyuam mos ab xwb thaum lub caij uas nws niam thiab txiv tau khiav mus nkaum nyob hav zoov hav tsuag hauv lub teb chaws Los Tsuas. Xyoo 1979, nws tsev neeg thiaj khiav tawm tuaj txog rau Thaib teb. Nws tsev neeg tuaj nyob rau lub yeej thoj nam Noom Qhais thiab Vib Nais tau 9 lub xyoo nkaus ua ntej mam tawm tuaj rau teb chaws As Mes Li Kas. Nws tuaj loj hlob thiab kawm ntawv nyob rau sab qaum teb Kas Lis Faus Nias (California). Thaum nws muaj hnub nyug 16 xyoo nws thiaj pib muaj kev xav paub txog keeb kwm ntawm nws haiv neeg Hmoob hais tias yog vim li cas tiag es txij nws xeev xwm los ces twb ua neej nyob yeej thoj nam lawm xwb. Nug tej laus los lawv tsuas hais tias "vim Nyab Laj tuaj txeeb peb teb chaws ces nyob tsis tau es thiaj khiav" no xwb. Xyoo 3 uas thaum nws tseem kawm ntawv nyob rau haub University, nws thiaj pib tshawb fawb thiab taug txog kob tsov rog "Secret War" nyob rau hauv lub teb chaws Los Tsuas thaum xyoo 1961-1975 ntawd. Los tau kaum tawm lub xyoo no nws thiaj taug thiab nrog coob leej ntau tus neeg uas paub txog cov xwm txheej ntawd zoo tham. Nws thiaj nrhiav tau ntau yam ntaub ntawv, duab thiab video uas ceev tau cia txog thaum lub sijhawm kob tsov rog "Secret War". Nws yog ib tug ntawm tug puav cov tub ntxhais Hmoob Me Kas uas los tshawb thiab ceev tau cov keeb kwm no zoo cia. Ntseeg tau lawm hais tias nws yuav yog tib tug uas tshawb thiab ceev tau cov duab ntau tshaj plaws hais txog ntawm Hmoob keeb kwm ntawm kob tsov rog "Secret War". Nws npaj siab thiab muaj kev koom tes yuav nthuav tawm nws cov khoom tshawb fawb rau qhov Hmongstory 40 no. Cov duab thiab khoom nws muaj no feem ntau yeej tsis tau muaj neeg pom dua li los sis yeej tsis paub hais tias muaj ceev tau cia li. Ziag no nws tab tom los npaj tsim kom tau ib daim dab neeg (documentary) txog kob tsov rog "Secret War" thiab yuav los sau ib phau ntawv txog Nais Phoo Vaj Pov thiab tsoom Hmoob tej txiaj ntsim raws li nws kev tshawb fawb.

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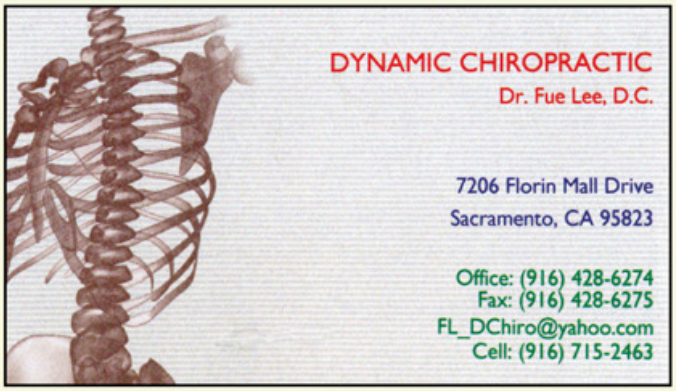
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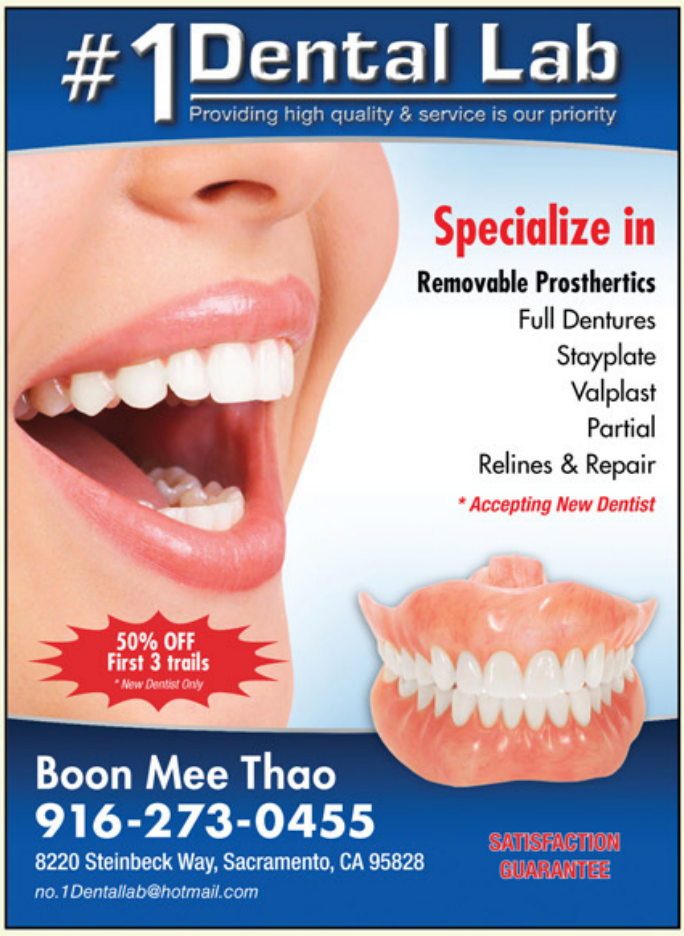
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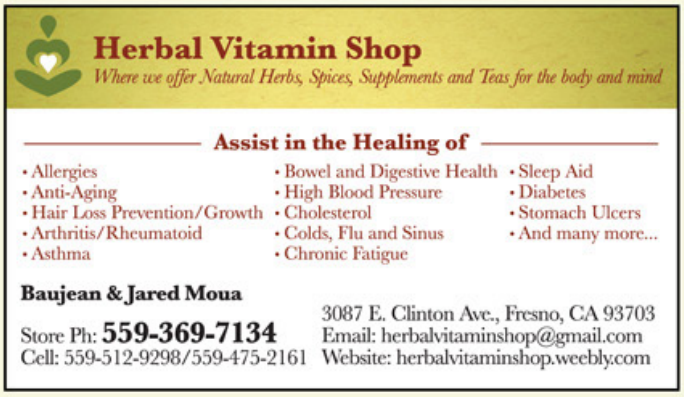
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Vang's Poultry
3272 N. Leonard Ave
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 801-8374
(559) 801-8598

Vue's Cattle Ranch
2612 Renn Ave
Clovis, CA 93611
(559) 708-6353

WJ Vang Cattle
12102 E. McKinley Ave
Sanger, CA 93657
(559) 681-5436

FARMING SUPPLIES

Ag Box Company
2006 W. Jensen Avenue
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 264-3421

Agri-Vallet Irrigation Inc.
Youa (Ntsuab)
3168 W. Belmont Ave
Fresno, CA 93775
(559) 486-1412

Amgro Fertilizer & Farm Supply
2323 S. Valentine Avenue
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 485-1788

Mazzei Nursery Inc.
308 E. Jenson Ave
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 2633-8952

Valley Ag & Specialties
2455 N. Fowler Avenue #1
Fresno, CA 93727
C (559) 960-6289
P (559) 264-2044

Valley Ag & Specialties
2634 S. Cherry Ave
Fresno, CA 93706
C (559) 960-6289
P (559) 264-2044

FEED

Academy Feed
494 S. Academy
Sanger, CA 93657
(559) 875-2855

Elm Avenue Feed
3595 S. Elm Ave.
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 441-0157

Golden Valley Feed & Pet Supplies
4571 E. Belmont Avenue Ste. A
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 493-9741

IGM Mill
Feed & Farm Supply Store
315 N. H St.
Fresno, CA 93701
(559) 495-6615

Kelly's Pets
1382 N. Cedar Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 252-6303





Yang Feed Store
4655 E. Olive Avenue
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 803-8684

MARKETS

A-P Market
3645 E Olive Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 268-2979

Asia Supermarket
4818 E Tulare Ave
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 252-7025

Asian One Grocery
4473 W Ashlan Ave
Fresno, CA 93722
(559) 271-5981

Asian Village Shopping Center
Bobby T. Vang
4903 E Kings Canyon Road
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 456-2844

Bingo Grocery
2143 E Belmont Ave
Fresno, CA 93701
(559) 498-0817

California Market
2848 E Belmont Ave
Fresno, CA 93701
(559) 264-0817

Family Market
3724 E. Olive Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 495-0452

Food Care Market
1441 W. Shields Ave
Fresno, CA 93705
(559) 225-3477

Food Empire
4109 N Clovis Ave
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 294-1430

Fresno Community Market
4825 E. Olive Ave
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 255-1299

Fresno Food Market
1047 N. Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93701
(559) 824-0580

Golden Bowl Asian Market
1221 N First St
Fresno, CA 93701
(559) 485-5593

Grandeur, Inc.
(Inside Khw Moos Loob)
4790 E Belmont Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 513-5174
(828) 234-3964

Jesse's Seafood Market
1810 N. First St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 497-5617

Kailee Market
Txawj Xyeem Lis
630 W Main St
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 722-7485

Keeb Hmoob Market
3035 E. Ashlan Ave
Fresno, Ca 93726
(559) 367-4136

Kevin 99 Cents Plus
4789 E. Olive Avenue
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 455-1977

Kevin 99 Cents Plus #2
5187 E. Belmont Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 255-0252

Lee Community Market
37 E 15th St
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 722-4254

Linda Seafood Market
1626 N. Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 237-4995

Lisa Starfish Company
3155 E. Belmont Avenue
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 237--3852

Orient Market
254 Broadway Ave
Atwater, CA 95301
(209) 357-0317

M&J's Gift Shop
4905 E. Kings Canyon
Fresno, CA 93727
(479) 221-4803

R-N Super Market
6745 N. Cedar Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 439-8044

Save More
4911 E. Kings Canyon Road
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 251-4075

Smokin' Postal
1210 W. 16th St
Merced, CA 59340
(209) 722-1055



Smart Save
Marvin Lee
211 W Main St
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 384-3819

Super T Market
1720 E. 21st St
Merced, CA 59340
(209) 261-2405

TC Fresh Meat Supermarket
Khw Moos Loob
4790 E Belmont Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 453-1038

TC Fresh Meat Supermarket
Khw Moos Loob
828 W Main St
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 580-4120

Thao's Food Market
4215 E Butler Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 453-0462

Tsim Neej
4791 E Tulare Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 253-1975

T & V Food Market
2306 N Fresno St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 229-0680

UC Oriental Market
235 W Main St
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 388-9921

Golden Apple Supermarket
4905 E Kings Canyon Rd
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 453-1920

MEDIA

Txhawb
2236 N Fine Ave Ste 101
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 454-1211
www.txhawb.com

HmongTV
4875 E. Oslin Ave
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 978-8019
www.hmongtv.tv

Hmong TV Network
1113 Dayton Ave
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 475-0045
www.hmongtvnetwork.com

HmongUSA TV
4960 E. Ashlan Ave
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 292-4960
www.hmongusatv.com

KBIF 900 AM
3401 W Holland Ave
Fresno, CA 93722
(559) 222-0900
www.asianradioam.com

Gilead Sciences/Awaken Interactive, Inc
8001 Irvine Center Dr Ste 400
Irvine, CA 92618
(949) 500-4212

New America Media
275 9th St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 503-4170 ext. 117
www.newamericamedia.com

MEDICAL

PHYSICIANS, M.D. & PRACTICE

BAART Programs
123 E. Street
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 268-6261

BAART Programs
3103 E. Cartwright Ave.
Fresno, CA 93725
(559) 498-7100

BAART Programs
59 N. Van Ness Ave.
Fresno, CA 93728
(559) 498-7100

Dr. Anong Y. Moua, MD
3152 N Millbrook Ave, Ste C
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 222-9500

Dr. Fenglaly C. Lee, MD
2210 E. Illnois, #201
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 266-2496

Dr. Hing B. Luong, MD
3240 E. Olive Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 486-4324

Dr. Lesley Xiong, MD
315 Mercy Ave Ste 400
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 564-3700

Dr. Long Thao, MD
700 W Olive Ave Ste A
Merced, CA 95348
(209) 384-8426

Dr. Apai, MD
1735-43 N. Fresno St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 233-3322

Elite Medical
Yer X. Vang
3111 E. Illinois Ave.
Fresno, CA 93707
(559) 907-8232
yer@elitemedicallife.com

Euroasian Health Center
3035 N. Cedar Ave.
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 229-3297

Kings Winery Medical Clinic
4929 E Kings Canyon Rd
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 255-6476

Mountain Family Health Care
5066 N Fresno St Ste 111
Fresno, CA 93711
(559) 226-6726

Ying Suen Kong,M.D. Internal Medicine
6079 N. Fresno St., #103
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 438-4388
FAX: (559) 438-9088

H-CARE Inc.
Dr. Tha Cha
125 E. Barstow Ave Suite 118
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 486-5290

OPTOMETRIST

Dr. Pa Houa Vue, O.D.
1011 W.Olive Ave
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 725-2352

SERVICES & EQUIPMENT

Respiratory Care Plus
2027 N Gateway Blvd Ste 110
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 266-9581

Scales Paramedical Services
Jim Thao
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 577-7856
jimthao71@sbcglobal.net

MOVIE PRODUCTION/RENTAL

PRODUCTION

Classic Video Production
1220 N Abby Ste B
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 240-1152

PX Entertainment
P.O. Box 1899
Visalia, CA 93279
(559) 303-3471
(559) 936-8863

Xiong Digital Production
Michael Xiong
5336 E Tower Ave
Fresno, CA 93725
(559) 977-2481

KV Production/Chalasia
Fresno, CA
(209) 261-0288

RENTAL

Hmong Video Rental
1148 N First St
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 375-6418

Suab Hmoob Productions
4903 E Kings Canyon Rd Ste 105
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 456-1086

NIGHT CLUBS

Aldo's Nightclub
617 W Belmont Avenue
Fresno, CA 93728
(559) 292-9000
Million Elephant Cafe & Bar
1153 N Fulton St
Fresno, CA 93728-3415
(559) 237-3832

Club Legends
3075 N Marca Ave
Fresno, CA 9370
(559) 222-2271

PHARMACY

PillBox Pharmacy
Xengxue Yang, PharmD
Pang X Yang, PharmD
2608 E Ashlan Ave
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 492-2162

PillBox Pharmacy
Xengxue Yang, PharmD
Pang X Yang, PharmD
317 West Noble Ave
Visalia, CA 93277
(559) 734-6747

El Portal Pharmacy
3377 G St Ste B
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 384-8880
Fax: (209) 384-8881

Care Rx Pharmacy
302 East Bullard Ave.
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 261-9888
Fax: (559) 261-9487

Fresno Pharmacy
4917 E Kings Canyon Rd Ste 102
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 255-8085

Modern Drug, Inc.
3250 E. Olive Ave. Ste B
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 268-2547

Ray Fisher Pharmacy
Mor W. Yang
6629 N Blackstone Ave
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 272-2638

Vina Pharmacy
2308 N Fresno St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 224-5210

PHOTOGRAPHY

Elite Photo Studio
3602 N Blackstone Avenue Ste 140
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 492-1466

Special Moment Photography
4583 E. Rialto Ave
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 824-2921

Split Horn Production
Pheng Yang
4903 E Kings Canyon Rd # 291
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 916-9872

StudioVue
4915 E Kings Canyon Road
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 708-8070

Youa Photography
Fresno, CA
(559) 708-8070
youaphoto.com

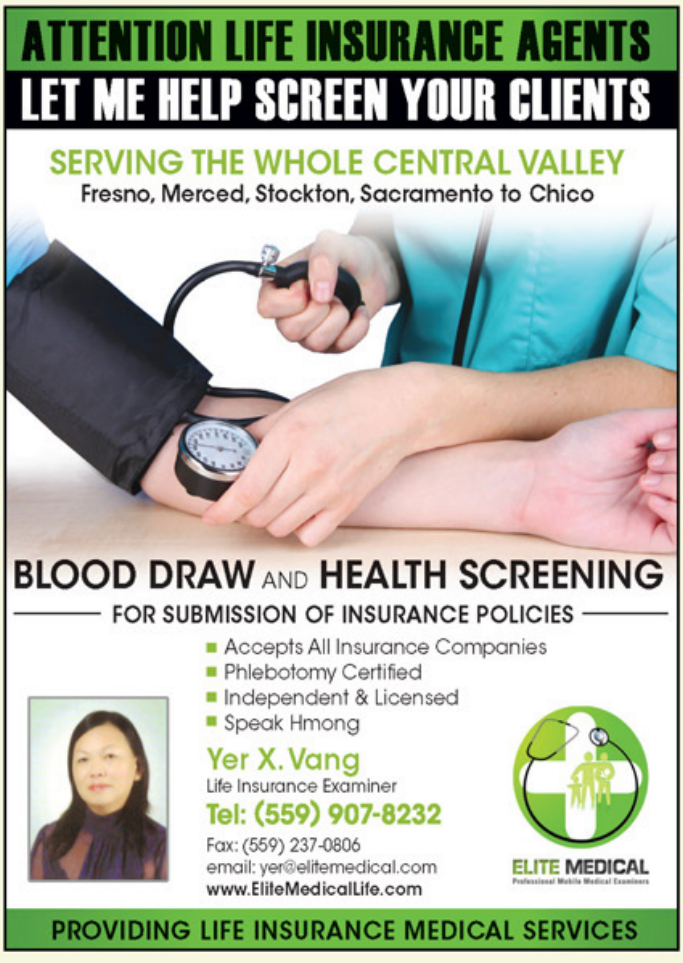
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

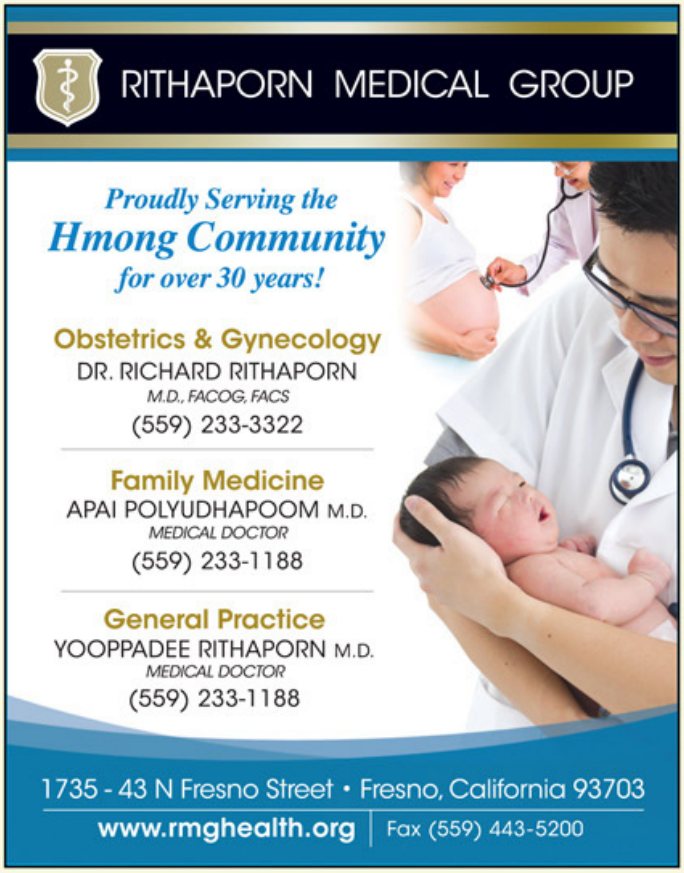
B.M.T. Watch Repair & Sales
Boun M Thor
1357 N First St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 443-1377
C-All Construction
General Contractor -CA Lic# 850685
2185 John Still Dr
Sacramento, CA 95832
Cherpov Yang (916) 868-1393
Sai Xiong (559) 790-6860
Nhia Leng Vue (559) 803-5062

California Dry Cleaner
Danial Her
606 N First St
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 441-1117

Central California Alliance for Health
Pamila Vang
530 W 16th St Ste B
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 381-5338

Central Valley Cleaning
635 Barstow Ave Ste 19
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 298-0701





Chang Homes
17616 Meagan Court
Springville, CA 93265
(559) 361-6499

Chang Import & Exports
1441 N Maple Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 361-9553

Chang Import & Exports
184 S Cloverleaf #B
Porterville, CA 93257
(559) 539-3226

D L Recycling, LLC
Dan Vang
7197 E Belmont Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 352-2302

DeVry University
May Cha
7575 N Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93720
(559) 777-0428

Fimax Networks
Yer Yang
4305 E Tulare Street
Fresno, CA 93702
(415) 609-9434

Fresno Merchant Services
Mike Vong
Fresno, CA
(559) 313-1111

My Décor Event Decorations
Dong Vang
3221 N Claremont Ave
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 284-0029

North Star Family Center
Kou Lee, MSW
5045 B N Palm Ave
Fresno, CA 93704
(559) 226-2273

Sonikk Boom Performance
Service/Parts/Apparel/Accessories
David Yang
Fresno, CA
(559) 577-7501
sonikkperformance@hotmail.com

Vang Child Care
Chai Vang
4229 E Rialto Ave
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 226-5983

EVENT PLANNER

Circle of Events
Fresno, CA
(559) 492-6307

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Wah Meng Moua
P.O. Box 6442
Visalia, CA 93290
(559) 623-7503

Lee Architect
3335 W Cardella Road
Atwater, CA 95301
(209) 723-3786

Valley Crisis Center
529 W 19th St
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 228-4456

Yang Handy Man
Kou Yang
Fresno, CA 93701
(559) 355-9465

JANITORIAL SERVICES

Lee's Janitorial Service And All In One Carpet Cleaning
Jon Vang
Fresno, CA
(559) 790-1240

T-Handyman Janitorial Services
Tou Vang
Fresno, CA
(559) 906-7786

FOSTER CARE

Karing 4 Kids
Feng Yang MSW
4930 E Yale, Ste 101
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 452-9500

Promesa Behavioral Health
7475 N. Palm Ave.
Fresno, CA 93711
(559) 439-5437

FURNITURE

Furniture & Mattress
4559 E. Kings Canyon
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 255-5557

Lifestyle Furniture Home Store
21 E. Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 228-0212

Sleep Train Mattress Center
Chuck Lee
4230 West Shaw Ave
Fresno, CA 93723
(559) 389-1232

Valley Remnants & Rolls
1820 McKinley Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 445-0206

PC REPAIR

DYX Network Solutions
2027 N. Gateway #107
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 250-1851

Express PC Repair
Lee C. Vang
Fresno, CA
(559) 313-4869

The Geeks
Sai Cha
821 N. Van Ness Ave
Fresno, CA 93728
(559) 485-4335

TruTech PC
TruFu Xiong
Fresno, CA
(559) 477-9486

YangPC Computer Center
4917 E. Kings Canyon
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 320-5945

TATTOO

So Fresh Fresno
4584 E. Tulare Ave.
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 312-0343

REAL ESTATE

New York Real Estate
Lee Her
1360 N Fresno St
Fresno, CA 93703
O: (559) 486-6001
C: (559)284-1724
www.newyorkrealestatebroker.net

Sherchia Realty
Victor K. Vue
1300 E Shaw Ave Ste 117
Fresno, CA 93710
O: (559) 224-6600
C: (559) 288-5867



Monterey Homes
Tonnah Her; Sales Representative
(559) 398-3547

Valley Partners Real Estate
Elyssa Fang
10 W Bullard Ave Ste 103
Clovis, CA 93612
O: (559) 326-4000
C: (559) 313-3297

Century 21
Samatha Xiongnhiathao
1415 W Shaw Ave
Fresno, CA 93711
(559) 244-6000 Ext. 125

Evergreen Communities
Tonnah Her
1817 Maryal Dr., Ste 100
Sacramento, CA 95864
Office: (559) 977-2003
Cell: (559) 398-3547

Future Realty & Mortgage
Soua Xiong
2050 N Winery Ave Ste 103
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 273-5233

Golden Key Realty & Mortgage
Cheng Vang
1300 E Shaw Ave Ste 121
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 224-2400
goldenkeyrealty@yahoo.com

Golden Stars Realty
Truly Yang
2318 W Sunnyside Ave Ste 8
Visalia, CA 93277
(559) 730-1888

Liberty Real Estate
Keith C Vang
634 S Chestnut Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 453-2501

Liberty Real Estate
1236 Cavalaire Court
Merced, CA 95348
(209) 489-5387

Summit Realty Group
Tom Hur
55 Shaw Avenue # 106
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 473-8278
www.summitrealtygrp.com

Summit Realty Group
Tor Lee
177 Riverside Ave
Newport Beach, CA 93663
(559) 681-4729
www.torlee@summitrealtygrp.com
www.summitrealtygrp.com

Villa Group
Pa Txhiab Lor
2904 N Blackstone Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 228-1800
pclor888@gmail.com

Yang Property Management
Youa Za Yang
P.O. Box 7608
Fresno, CA 93747
(559) 709-3122

Tonnah Her Real Estate Team
Tonnah Her
7625 N. Palm Ave #106
Fresno, CA 93711
(559) 389-3547

RESTAURANTS

Angkor Restaurant
4853 E. Olive Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 454-0887

Asian Café Thai
1244 N. First Street
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 268-5030

Bakery Delights
6749 N. Cedar Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 439-3204

Bangkok Thai Restaurant
235 A West Main St
Merced, CA 93540
(209) 383-9999

Boba Café
4917 E Kings Canyon Rd Ste 101
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 252-5829

B&K Asian Kitchen
1276 N First St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 273-3918

Chin's Kitchen
3039 N Cedar Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 229-3270

Douggy Fresh Pizza
4776 E. Kings Canyon Road
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 255-4100

Douggy Fresh Pizza
1585 N. Palm Ave
Fresno, CA 93728
(559) 237-3800

Doughboy Donuts
4575 E Kings Canyon Rd
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 252-4255

Forte Frozen Yogurt
319 W Main St
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 722-2947

Kousonh Cuisine
1234 N. First St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 443-7366

Huong Lan Sandwich & Pho
4985 N. Fresno St
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 221-8000
www.hounglanfresno.com

Legendary Pho Kitchen
4446 W. Ashlan Ave
Fresno, CA 93722
(559) 271-8889

Lucky Foods
635 N. First Street
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 2376638

Jasmine Restaurant
2633 E Shaw Ave
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 294-2199

New City Chinese Cuisin
1484 E. Shaw Ave
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 227-0896

Nut Pob
3720 E. Olive Ave
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 442-1870

Mom's Pies N Goodies
See Yee Her
7709 N First St
Fresno, CA 93720
(559) 439-6667

Masago Restaurant
3109 W Noble Ave
Visalia, CA 93277
(559) 735-9680

Mr. Papaya Kitchen
4903 El Kings Canyon Road #106
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 453-0709

Pho #1
1656 N First St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 233-9674

Pho #76 & Bakery
4793 E McKinley Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 255-2510

Pho 75 #2
3127 E McKinley Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 497-9261

Pho 90
2256 N. Fresno St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 248-9090

Pho 99
3141 E Mckinley Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 485-1233

Pho King #1
4579 E. kings Canyon Road #102
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 475-0765

Pho Laovieng
4767 E. Olive Avenue
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 389-0025

Pho N Seafood Restaurant
Doua Xiong
924 N Court St
Visalia, CA 93291
(559) 732-3663

Pho Paradise
1848 N First St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 264-9025

Pho Phuong Nine
4903 E Kings Canyon Rd #107
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 454-1762

Pocket 8 Sushi
9 W Alexander Ave
Merced, CA 95348
(209) 384-0212

Queen's Sandwich & Cake Bakery
3218 N. Fresno St
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 225-3192

Sushi N Pop
1788 E. Barstaw Ave
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 438-1690





Takashi Japanese Cuisine/ Sushi Bar
7675 N Blackstone Ave Ste 114
Fresno, CA 93720
(559) 449-0251

Thai Chili
75 Bullard #105
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 322-1050

Thai & Lao restaurant
2648 E. Ashlan Ave
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 221-8424

Thai Star
57 West Alexander Ave
Fresno, CA 95348
(209) 725-1958

The Packing Shed
5183 E. Kings Canyon Road
Fresno, CA 93723
(559) 252-3518

Zipangu
5096 N. West Ave
Fresno, CA 93711
(559) 432-5422

BUFFETS

A Star Buffet and Banquet
4984 E Kings Canyon Rd
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 255-2788

Chinese Grand Buffet
1121 W. Olive Ave
Merced, CA 95348
(209) 723-3618

Lin's Fusion
5155 N Blackstone Ave
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 222-8610

King Buffet
1901 E. Shields Ave #104
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 227-3888

Mitsui Buffet
117 W. Shaw Ave
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 323-9719

Tang Dynasty
2066 W Shaw Ave
Fresno, CA 93711
(559) 432-6118

SECURITY

Ace Guards
Fresno, CA
(559) 287-5836

SHOPPING CENTERS

Fashion Fair Mall
4841 N 1st St
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 224-1591

Fig Garden Shopping Center
5082 N Palm Ave Ste A
Fresno, CA 93704
(559) 226-4084

Fresno Super Mall
1050 W Olive Ave
Fresno, CA 93728
(559) 264-6498

Manchester Mall
3742 N Blackstone Ave
Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 222-9181

Merced Mall
851 W Olive Ave
Merced, CA 95348
(209) 723-3981

River Park Shopping Center
7628 N Blackstone Ave
Fresno, CA 93650
(559) 437-4855

Sierra Vista Mall
1050 Shaw Ave
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 299-5070

SPORTING GOODS

California Amer-Asians Resource Education
4305 E. Tulare St
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 260-9181

California Hunter Education Program
1220 N. Abby St Ste G
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 367-1688

Fisherman's Warehouse
4320 West Shaw Ave
Fresno, CA 93722
(559) 225-1838

Herb Bauer Sporting Goods
6264 N Blackstone Ave
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 435-8600

Impact Archery Inc.
1621 Railroad Ave
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 325-2320

John's U-Save Liquor
7274 N Blackstone/Minarets
Fresno, CA 93650
(559) 448-8849

Valley Rod & Gun
2704 Clovis Ave
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 292-3474

TAX SERVICES

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Mr. Sor Lor -Executive Director
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(530) 534-7474

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Fresno, CA 93702
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(559) 255-5309

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Sacramento, CA 95811
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(916) 635-6815

Southeast Asian Assistance Center
Laura Leonelli
5625 24th Street
Sacramento, CA 95822
(916) 421-1036

Southeast Asian Community Center
Philip Tuong Duy Nguyen
875 O'Farrell Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 885-2743

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1415 Koll Circle Ste 108
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 436-8438

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(559) 252-5566

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1284 E. Bullard Ave
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(559) 439-6530

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Chong Na Chang
1357 Mc Farlan
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Stockton, CA 95215
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Hmong Alliance Church
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Oroville, CA 95965
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Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 252-5823

Hmong Alliance Church of Modesto
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(209) 204-0976

Hmong Alliance Fellowship
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(559) 324-8707

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Roseville, MI 48066
(586) 855-7670

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Lansing, MI 48910
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(763) 574-2548

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Minneapolis, MN 55448
(763) 757-2616

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Minneapolis, MN 55448
(763) 754-7882

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(651) 765-2443

St. Paul Hmong Alliance Church
1770 McMenemy St
Saint Paul, MN 55117
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(530) 990-2582

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Olivehurst, CA 95961
(530) 415-8616

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1558 North 9th Street
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 487-1012
info@hmongnewyear.us

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Fresno, CA 93703
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Fax: (916) 921-9784

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Oroville, CA 95965

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Minneapolis, MN 55407-1750
(612) 724-3066

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995 University Avenue, Suite 220
St. Paul, MN 55104
(651) 603-6971

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Carnation, WA 98014
(425) 333-4393

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(608) 661-4098

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1032 W. Pioneer Parkway Ste 100
Arlington, TX 76013

Hmong American Community Association, Inc.
1421 N. Broadway Ste 116
Monomonie, WI 54751
(715) 232-9350

Hmong American Mutual Assistance Association
1718 Washington Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411
(612) 374-2694

Hmong American Association of South Carolina
Harry Moua
507 Foster Grove Rd
Chesnee, SC 29323

Hmong American Association of Portage County
Mai Khou Yang
101 Division Street, N. Ste E
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 341-3703
hmong_am_assoc@sbcglobal.net

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St. Paul, MN 55106
(651) 495-9160

Hmong American Partnership - Fox Valley
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Appleton, WI 54915
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Hmong American Partnership - Minneapolis
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(651) 291-1811

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3824 West Vliet Street
Milwaukee, WI 53208
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Green Bay, WI 54303
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Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
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P.O. Box 3810
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(586) 945-0868

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(651) 917-9937

Hmong Educational Advancement, Inc.
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Ge Xiong
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Yang Chee
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Westminster, CO 80030
(303) 429-8724

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Saint Paul, MN 55103
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Lao Family of Milwaukee
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(414) 385-3380

Lauj Youth Society
Sonja Mee Lor
995 University Avenue, Suite 213
St. Paul, MN 55104
(651) 644-2446

Southeast Asian Community Council
Cha Lee
555 Girard Terrace North
Minneapolis, MN 55405
(612) 342-1530

Southeast Asian Resource Center
1628 16th St. NW 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 667-4690

United Hmong Association, Inc.
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Thong Chai & Winton Xiong

txhawb profile

What started out as a small meat section inside KC Supermarket in 2005, after just nine months would evolved to become one of the most successful and largest Hmong markets in the Fresno area. "The main reason my family and I decided to start our business is to honor and fulfill my father's dream of owning a supermarket," said Thong Chai Xiong, owner of TC Fresh Meats Super Market – Khw Moos Loob. "My father, Winton Xiong, spent more than 17 years working in a supermarket environment and has always dreamed about opening his own store that could help serve the Hmong population and also be a resource for the Fresno Hmong community. With his many years of experience working in the grocery industry for a large supermarket in Sacramento, Winton carefully observed, learned, sacrificed and saved his earnings so that he could enable my family to realized the dream of someday owning their own store."

After many years of dreaming, in 2006, TC Fresh Meat Super Market – Khw Moos Loob, opened its doors for business and immediately surprised their patrons with their vast fresh variety of fresh meats, produce and Asian products. "What really sets our store from other Asian markets, is our extensive lineup of fresh meats and seafood. You would have to travel to larger stores to be able to get fresh live lobsters, crabs and lineup of so many types of fish at great prices. We offer a larger selection of fresh meats from pork, beef, and chicken in the best cuts and we always try to accommodate our customer's needs."

Thong Chai states that Khw Moos Loob's success is based on their business philosophy: to treat every customer like family. Thong credits that this is what sets TC Fresh Meats Super Market – Khw Moos Loob apart from the competition. "If you show them that you really care about their needs, provide great customer service and try your best to have the things they need in your store, customers will come back time and time again. "

Thong Chai hopes to share with the Hmong community that, "we as a community are finally starting to make a movement and we need to keep it moving. In order to do so, we need to educate our kids and encourage them to want more for their futures. The parents of today's society need to praise and really give our children the support they need to be and do better; as they are our future. We need for them to overcome all the changes that are currently in progress and make them better for the future; children have to have hope and continue to give the Hmong name a better meaning. Our Hmong business leaders and owners must give back to our community to start to strengthen it, because Hmong people always follow by example, as a business, the rest of your community will look up to you and watch what you do."

writer
Ivy Xiong

photography
Youa Vang

Thong Chai Xiong
Winton Xiong

TC Fresh Meat
Khw Moos Loob

4790 E Belmont
Fresno, CA 93702

559.453.1038



txhawb profile

Jamie Xiong-Vang

Jamie Xiong-Vang is the eldest of 12 children in a poor Hmong American family. She faced struggles many second generation Hmong Americans encountered growing up: living in poverty, being made fun for being the poor Hmong kid at school, not truly understanding what the Secret War was and what it meant for our people. Despite this reality, she decided in third grade she wanted to be a lawyer and indulged in her love of books. She married her husband in 9th grade and had her two elder children while still in high school. She was faced with the responsibilities of being a mother, wife, daughter-in-law, and student, and at one point believed her new roles required her to let go of her goals, but she decided to just work harder and sacrifice more.

writer
Andre Yang

photography
Youa Vang

Jamie graduated from Edison High School in Fresno, California in 1999 and applied to Fresno City College and California State University, Fresno, but she also sent an application to UCLA just to see if she could have gotten in. When the UCLA acceptance letter arrived she was ecstatic, but concerned such a drastic move would put too much a strain on her marriage. She discussed with her husband about the idea of moving away for her undergraduate studies and they both decided her attending UCLA would in the best interest of their family. Jamie completed her undergraduate studies at UCLA and Law Degree at Whittier School of Law. She has been practicing law in the Fresno area since 2006.

Jamie Xiong-Vang

Law Office of
Jamie Xiong-Vang

1500 W Shaw #200
Fresno, CA 93711

559.224.1600

Jamie worked for a period of time for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and helped countless numbers of immigrants through U.S. Customs and onto their flight towards their final relocation destinations. She saw various refugee groups of varying ethnicities come through the IOM, and noticed how most of these refugees each carried a suitcase or two of their life's belongings. The Hmong immigrants she helped, her own people, however, were so poor they carried a mere few rainbow-colored plastic bags of clothes per family of 6-12+ people. This impassioned her to work harder to serve her people. Jamie also used this experience to motivate her to do as much as she could to be a champion and beacon for the Hmong community, a guiding light that all accomplishments are possible with hard work and determination.

Being a woman, young, and Hmong American have all presented various challenges and obstacles to her career as a lawyer. She has noticed clientele dismissing her knowledge and experience because of age, ethnicity, and gender. Jamie has even had experiences with Hmong American clientele who appear to value her Juris Doctorate degree less than they did her male counterparts just because she was a woman. Regardless of this, she aims to always be truthful and treat everyone with respect and dignity. Jamie "believes that the universe returns to me what I send out, so I know that if I treat people fairly in this way, the universe will make sure that I do well, personally and in my business." Jamie recently opened up her own practice, the Law office of Jamie Xiong-Vang, where she runs a general practice, focusing on Criminal, Immigration, Bankruptcy, and Personal Injury cases.



NhiaYeu Cha

txhawb profile

"Since I was a kid, I've always knew I was different. My goals, my life purpose, and my vision have been focused towards creating something meaningful," said NhiaYeu Cha, owner of HmongUSA TV. Growing up in Long Beach, CA and having the opportunity of settling in the United States since 1976 gave NhiaYeu Cha an understanding of our Hmong peoples' dream, passion and struggle. At the age of 27 years old in 1992, he relocated to Fresno with his wife, Geena Ly Cha. He launched a local FM radio station called Hmong SouthEast Asian Public Broadcasting Corp.(HSEA Broadcasting) for the Southeast Asian community to help the Asian refugee assimilate into the American mainstream through educational programming but was sold in 1996.

With a background in nursing, business management, mortgage lending, insurance, and real estate, he started many businesses; 5 Star Video, Your Health Solutions Inc., Yeugeena Consulting Firm, Hmong Insurance Agency, Benchmark Mortgage, Network Realty and Mortgage, and Cha Enterprise Inc. to assist the many growing needs of the Hmong community in the San Joaquin Valley. Riding on the momentum of success, NhiaYeu Cha a resident of Sanger, CA with his wife, Geena and their four children, Bryen Saichou Cha, Eric Chueyee Cha, Cerena Sashei Cha, and Abby Pachia Cha, were very happy on their 6.5 acreages lake estate.

In the summer of 2011while vacationing in Disney World in Orlando, FL with his entire family, NhiaYeu realized that instead of retiring early, he can unite all the Hmong across the world through television. This local TV station will have programs that will be able to address all the Hmong issues, retain and document Hmong history and broadcast all the world events, news, and outreach to all the Hmong worldwide through technology such as the world wide web, smartphone, and Roku Box(Dishworld) all FREE. In December of 2011, HmongUSA TV was born.

Since the beginning of HmongUSA TV, NhiaYeu credits the viewers and their feedbacks and support for giving him motivation. He thanks the many volunteers who contributed their energy, time and talent to the TV. He also, thanks the many individuals who have donated money to support the many programs throughout the years. He thanks all the advertisers and brokers who supported the TV station. But, most important, thank the STAFF.

According to current data, HmongUSA TV is most viewed on digital 4.5 local, about 80,000 including the Lao community in the San Joaquin Valley . Other areas with the most viewers are Wisconsin, Minnesota, France, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, and Germany.

With such a young company, HmongUSA TV still needs volunteers, supporters and advertisers. But with NhiaYeu Cha, he created vision, hope, and dreams for the next Hmong generation. We ask him, how does he want us the general Hmong community to see him as..

"I would like to be seen not as anyone unique or special, but as a "Hmong" who is playing with a great team in this Hmong history movement which has struggled for many years, for decades and even centuries," said NhiaYeu.

writer
Ivy Xiong

NhiaYeu Cha

HmongUSA TV

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Khu Yang

writer
Andre Yang

photography
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I spent some time at the Sacramento Hmong New Years speaking with the considerate and kind-eyed State Farm insurance agent Khu Yang. We discussed his life, educational, and career decisions. Throughout this discussion he would make point to look over at and make references to his wife, children, and other family members, mentioning how each of them influenced the choices he has made. Khu was born in Laos and raised in Wausau, Wisconsin. All his life his parents reinforced the importance of family and higher education, constantly encouraging him with words like, "Your future lies on the tip of your pencil." and, "Never try and be better than someone else, because being better than someone else is always out of our control. Instead learn from others and never stop trying to be the best that you can be." Khu earned his Bachelors of Business Administration in Finance degree in Business from the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, and began work in the field as a banker. He had seen the success of those around him in the industry and figured he would try out being a loan officer and work towards one day owning his own business. After spending two years establishing himself in the field, he was approached by State Farm in 2008 and asked to join their company. Realizing State Farm's visions aligned with his own, he accepted the position.

Khu grew up in Wisconsin and built a strong, dedicated clientele there, but when he was approached a second time by State Farm and offered an opportunity to move to Sacramento to run his own office, he had to take some time to reconsider such a big decision. He thought about the one pivotal moment in his life he revisits for inspiration – when his wife and siblings were involved in a very bad car accident. His wife and younger brother were taken to a closer hospital, but his sister and another of his brothers were transported to two different hospitals two hours from one another. His parents decided to split up and have each go to the other two hospitals to left Khu, 19 years of age at the time, to care for his wife and younger brother. It was then he realized that he could lose his loved ones at any moment. Having experienced this, he never wanted to be too far from his parents and siblings, but he also considered how relocating to the larger Hmong community of Sacramento presented a greater opportunity to serve more of his people, so he consulted his wife and family, and everyone encouraged him to take the path best suited for him. He did and is now based in Sacramento.

Since his relocation to Sacramento, Khu has made it a point to involve himself in the community. He has made donations to local elementary schools and visited local high school such as Hiram Johnson High School to talk with students and parents about college. Khu would like for the community to see his office as the primary and preferred source for insurance and financial services. Focusing on assisting his clients with their needs and building strong relationships with them will drive his success. He tells me he feels most rewarded when community members and clients shake his hands or give him a hug after he's taken the time to listen to their stories and share his insight. Khu went on to mention he believes reputation as what you are perceived to be, but that character is what we actually are, which he considers to be much more important than what we are perceived to be. He ended the conversation by mentioning his belief that, "successful Hmong business owners and leaders lead by examples not only by giving back to the community but by the work they perform. Integrity will encourage others to follow."



Ka Chue & Ger Vang

txhawb profile

"There are always sacrifices that everybody has to make in order to achieve their goals and dreams," said Ka Chue, owner of KC Fashion. "Nothing good comes easy. Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and day out." Ka first arrived in the United States at the age of 16 and her dream was to become a doctor. Her father served in the military as a nurse during the Vietnam War which inspired her in wanting to become a doctor. She was placed in high school as a sophomore. "I faced a big challenge being that I spoke no English, had no formal education and didn't understand the culture," Ka said. "I realized then that my dreams of becoming a doctor were far out of reach, I was born in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Her next dream wasn't realized until she entered college. After enrolling in a few sewing courses at Butte College, Ka discovered she had a talent and passion for sewing and fashion. Ka married at a young age to Ger Vang and with six children, she needed a way to make ends meet. She decided to expand her sewing hobby by designing and making her children's clothes instead of purchasing them. Ka received much praise on her designs. She landed upon a newly found happiness and knew she wanted to share this piece of happiness with everyone in the community. She began to dream of opening her own store someday.

After completing her fashion design course, her family relocated to Sacramento. Although she wanted to open her own store, she didn't have the financial means to do so. Ka did the next best thing she could think of and started selling her designs at the flea market. After many years of dedication, sacrifice and sleepless nights, at the beginning of 2013 Ka was finally able to open her own store: KC Fashion.

KC Fashion offers a wide range of men and women clothing from formal wear to traditional Hmong clothing, as well as tailoring services. "We hope to foster an environment where the people in the Hmong community can feel confident that we understand their needs and the culture," Ka said. Throughout the years Ka and her family has received support from the community. KC Fashion holds raffles on special occasions and donates to many of the Hmong charities to show their appreciation to the community.

"I didn't have the privilege of getting a formal education but with determination and hard work I was able to successfully get this far," Ka said. "I came to America when I was 16 and have been able to make a career from my passion and hobbie. I encourage and hope that one day our youth will be successful in the mainstream fashion industry and represent us on one of the fashion shows on TV."

writer
Ivy Xiong

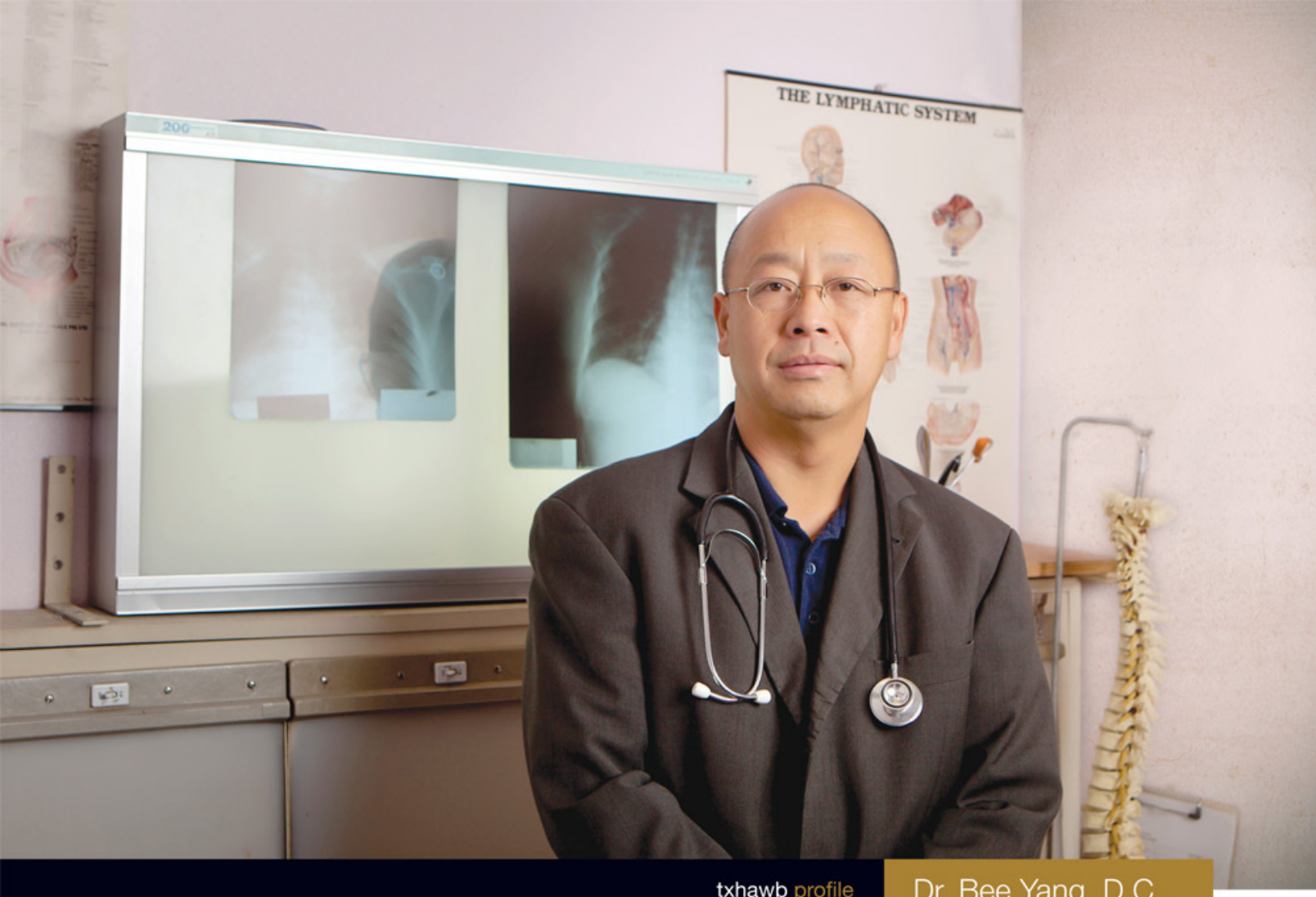
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txhawb profile

Dr. Bee Yang, D.C.

writer
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photography
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Dr. Bee Yang

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For as long as he can remember, Dr. Bee Yang has always had a strong sense to care for those around him. Growing up in a Christian household, Bee was brought up to serve and to always give back to the community. It came as no surprise when Bee chose to pursue a career as a chiropractor. "I like the idea of healing people without the use of drugs," Bee said.

Dr. Bee Yang graduated from Edison High School in 1987 and went on to complete his bachelor's degree after four years at UC Santa Cruz 1991. His education was complimented with his Doctorate of Chiropractic (D.C.) degree from Life Chiropractic College which was completed after another four years in 1995.

In 1996, Dr. Bee Yang became the first Hmong chiropractor in Fresno to open his own clinic: Best Care Chiropractic. Bee recalls that starting his own business was very challenging. "There was no one to look up to and no examples to follow and we didn't have courses in college that taught us how to run a business, just training to be doctors." When he first opened his clinic, Bee expressed that there was a lack of knowledge about chiropractic care in the Hmong community. "People used to come to me asking for medications and prescriptions." He worked hard to build his practice one client at a time and gradually helped the community learn about the many benefits that chiropractors could provide. "Most of my clients are car accident patients, but chiropractic treatments can help to address chronic pain, headaches, and sports injuries as well."

It's been 17 years since Bee first opened his clinic and since then, the Hmong community has progressed immensely. Dr. Bee Yang concludes, "Over the years, I have made a niche for my practice, and the key to running a successful business is Service; Be polite and always try to carry a conversation with all your customers." Best Care Chiropractic is open to all ethnicities, but the majority of business is from within the local Fresno Hmong community. "Thank you to all my past patients and I am happy to have had my community support my business all these years." Dr. Bee Yang encourages Hmong people to never forget who we are. "Know and remember where you came from and have a spirit of serving." In addition to being a great chiropractor, Dr. Bee Yang is also an accomplished musician who records and plays in the band at his church as well as local venues.

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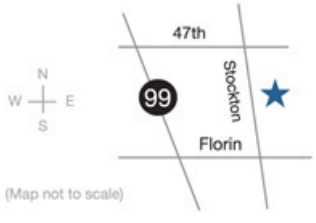
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