

STUDENT SPONSORSHIP UPDATE

for 2010-2011

MORE GRADUATES ENTER UNIVERSITY

In the 2010-2011 school year, 40 of our sponsored students are attending university. This is thrilling because these students are often the first in their village to go to college. Only 6% of students in Cambodia finish high school, and even fewer continue to higher education.

Our students are motivated to improve life for the poor in Cambodia because our program encourages the students to focus on how they will help their communities. Many of our students want to become teachers, nurses, or doctors, or work in humanitarian organizations as lawyers, social workers, accountants, or computer experts, or translators.



Kop carries water to his house

We dearly want to make higher education a reality for these bright and promising young people, and we can support a student in university for just \$1500 per year. But providing a university education for these motivated young people has nearly doubled the cost of supporting our students, from about \$36,000 per year to \$77,000. We can't imagine a better investment in the future of Cambodia. Please donate to our University Student Fund.

STUDENT WORKS TO DEFEND RIGHTS OF THE RURAL POOR

Sien Sok-Ny has natural leadership abilities and wants to help her country improve. She was president of the Student Club in Pursat province, where our sponsored students meet to help each other with their school work, practice English, and discuss current issues in Cambodia.

When she learned that illegal land grabbing and destruction of natural resources was destroying the livelihood of rural people, she decided to circulate a petition from a national human rights organization with a message to Prime Minister Hun Sen. First, it thanked the Prime Minister for making a statement against illegal land grabbing, logging, and fishing. Then, it encouraged him to enforce the policy. She collected signatures from students and teachers.



Our students in Pursat province

One day the principal of the school came to Sok-Ny, took away her petitions, and told her to stop that activity. He said the Prime Minister would not fund their school if she continued. Next the District Governor tried to bribe her into stopping.

Then the principal tried to intimidate her. He called a special meeting, made Sok-Ny to stand in front of the whole school, and blamed her. "I did nothing wrong," she replied. Sok-Ny stood her ground, graduated from high school, and is now attending university. We are glad that Friendship with Cambodia can support caring students like Sok-Ny!

TOUR GROUP VISITS STUDENTS IN THEIR HOMES

In January 2010, Friendship with Cambodia led a trip to Cambodia to visit our humanitarian projects along with beautiful cultural sites, including the ancient stone temples of Angkor Wat. We spent time in rural Kampot province and visited a few of our sponsored students in their homes. To get to Phem Kop's house, we walked on a foot path that followed the dikes between the rice paddies to get to Kop's home. His family was there to greet us and offered us fresh coconuts, opened at the top so we could drink the refreshing juice with a straw.

Next we visited Yet Hel, and met her mother and grandmother. Hel hopes to become a medical doctor. Sponsor Liz Lorber was able to visit her student, Noun Siev-Mey, on our trip. When we arrived, Siev-Mey's mother was tying thatch to patch the roof of their small hut. Seeing the students in their homes gives us a better understanding of the poverty they live in and how hard they are working to overcome the challenges in their lives.



Liz and her student