We hope this newsletter finds you and your loved ones well. This has been a busy year for Harpswell, with a stellar new entering class, great alumnae accomplishments, curriculum and program enhancements, special visitors, new program staff, and our first program evaluation.

After our first ten years, Harpswell has graduated 119 young women leaders from our two dormitories in Phnom Penh. Over 60% have gone on to receive graduate degrees, and as many as 65% work in the public and non-profit sectors. Our graduates include lawyers, project managers of NGOs, journalists, teachers, government staff, and business entrepreneurs. We are exploring ways to continue to support these alumnae. In the summer of 2017, we will launch a major new program in leadership training for young professional women from all ten countries in Southeast Asia.

Harpswell could not be where it is today without the partnership, financial support, and wise counsel of so many of you. We are grateful for all that you have done to help launch these extraordinary young women on the path to bright futures as change agents and leaders. Please read on to learn more.

HARPSWELL NEWS

On October 30, 2016, Harpswell welcomed eleven new students and their families for New Student Day. Our new students come from ten different provinces and will study law, architecture, medicine, engineering, psychology and international affairs. New students and families heard from staff and alumnae, and enjoyed student musical performances.

Harpswell is pleased to announce the Harpswell ASEAN Program in Women’s Leadership, an annual two-and-a-half week summer institute for thirty young professional women, aged 25-30 from the ten countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The program will be based at the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in Penang, Malaysia, and will be organized in partnership with the Center for Research on Women and Gender at USM. The pilot program will be held this July.

Impact Analysis of Harpswell’s first Ten Years. In the last year, former leadership resident Clara Péron and her Berlin-based consulting firm Value for Good created a monitoring and evaluation framework for Harpswell, resulting in demographic and impact surveys from 57 alumnae and 78 students. The statistics gave our leadership team a wealth of information about Harpswell’s impact, as well as plenty of data for programmatic decision making.

WAKE, the Women’s Alliance for Knowledge Exchange, held a workshop in May to empower women through technology. Tech experts from the US, Ukraine, and India talked about their experiences working in STEM and taught students how to use social media and technology for professional advancement. In October, WAKE awarded Harpswell a grant for student-produced autobiographical videos.

In March, Frances Beinecke, former president of the Natural Resources Defense Council, led a Leadership Seminar on her experience as a woman in a position of leadership and the importance of environment protection and sustainability.
THE HARPSWELL FOUNDATION

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Approximately 83% of students are the first generation in their families to attend university. The students’ parents earn well below the national average.

The main source of income of students’ families is farming (53%), small-scale selling (30%) and teaching (23%).

97% of students feel that Harpswell has helped them learn how to become a leader.

Average monthly income of the alumnae is three times the national average of women.

87% of alumnae were top students in their class while at university.

Virtually all alumnae feel that Harpswell taught them how to become a leader.

Over 60% of alumnae have advanced degrees.

After leaving Harpswell, 54% of alumnae received scholarships or went on exchange programs.

Older alumnae work mainly in the private sector, but as many as 65% of all respondents work in the public and non-profit sectors.

More than 80% of alumnae respondents actively volunteer and support their families and communities.

DORM NEWS

On October 23, alumna Menghun Kaing (2011), who now works at the Asia Foundation, hosted a networking event for Harpswell students. Over thirty professionals working in Phnom Penh came to offer advice and make connections with our students.

On November 6, Katja Nelson, former Manager for Mobile App Sales Strategy at Twitter, and Renay Loper, Associate Director in Global Pro Bono at PYXERA Global, led Leadership Seminars about their career paths and challenges and successes in their fields. Katja also led social media workshops in each dormitory on using technology for professional networking.

Former Leadership Resident Jojo Lam reports: “Harpswell invited me back for a second term in April, and I gladly accepted the chance to see BT in action after spending time at TT. With the help of LR Katy Davis, Jennie Le, and Sara Hendrix, we brought back the social impact Project Proposal Competition at both dorms. Together, we raised $900 to support three winning initiatives. We look forward to seeing the proposal project competition become a part of the new Civic Engagement curriculum in 2017.”

Music at Harpswell. LR Jocelyn Labombarde has created a music study program for the Harpswell women. Beginning in summer 2015, when she bought a piano for the TT dorm and taught sight reading and gave lessons, Jocelyn identified a music school that would take as many as 21 students for weekly study. Jocelyn returned this past summer, and bought a second piano for the BT dorm, found a guitar teacher for four students, and moved the piano study to the famous Sronos Music School, with eleven students and three alum studying piano, two studying violin and five studying guitar. Program Director alumna Leaphea Yang, a piano student herself, encouraged the formation of Harpswell’s first Music Appreciation Club. We are deeply grateful to Jocelyn, who has also energetically and generously raised the funding for the music program.

Harpswell students have created three new clubs, including a Music Appreciation Club, a Public Speaking Club, and two different levels of Book Clubs, in addition to an AutoCad Club for engineering students.

This past summer, Harpswell students volunteered and interned with different organizations and studied at various universities in Cambodia and abroad. Samphors Ngeth and Chea Smon volunteered for Cambodia Youth Action and taught English in Siem Reap and Kampot. Seyha Doeurn, a fifth year student at the Institute of Technology in Cambodia majoring in Food and Chemical Engineering, spent the summer researching Micro Fuel Cells and Plant Microbial Fuel Cells at the Siridhorn International Institute of Technology in Thailand. Likhouch Leap traveled to Vietnam with Global Village to better understand globalization and international development.

Students at Teuk Thla Dormitory held a debate on November 6, under the guidance of Leadership Resident Katie Elliot, as part of Harpswell’s new debate curriculum, which was written by Alan Lightman and introduced in 2015.

In addition to English classes, students now have the option of also taking French classes in both dormitories. Many of the university science and engineering classes are taught in French.
ALUMNAE NEWS

Len Leng (2014) spent the past year as a photojournalist at Voice of America, and has published a number of articles. Len actively mentors and encourages Harpswell students interested in journalism careers. http://www.voacambodia.com/a/group-trains-young-to-battle-corruption/3403434.html


In October, the Harpswell Alumnae Association (HAA) traveled to Kampot Province for its first annual retreat. Students had the opportunity to catch up on each other’s lives, hiked Bok Kor Mountain, and brought school supplies to the children at the Kampot Traditional Music School for Orphaned and Disabled Children.

Harpswell Post-Graduate Support Program. In May, the Harpswell Trustees approved the beginning of a post-graduate support program, recognizing the importance of providing continuing support and mentorship to our alumnae as they become leaders. This initiative, headed up by Trustee David Roe, is in the needs assessment phase.

US Fellows. This year, five Harpswell graduates are studying at US colleges: Ieng Malin and Ly Sereyrath at Bowdoin; Buth Srey nich and Chhoeum Pisey at Christian Brothers University; and Theng Sokuntheary at Agnes Scott College. They are being mentored by former LR Maggie Doyle, our US Fellows Program Coordinator, as well as former LR Jocelyn Labombarde in Memphis and alumna Kim Sokngim (2010), in Georgia. Many thanks also to Harpswell Supporter Catherine Neiner, who has been an outstanding mother to all in Georgia.

LEADERSHIP RESIDENT NEWS

Rachel Collins recently made partner at her London firm and has a 9-month-old daughter named Jemima. Shannon Yar bourogh got married in August and in lieu of wedding gifts, she and her now husband, Abraham, created a charity wedding registry and raised over $1200 for Harpswell! They are expecting their first child in November. Shannon’s wedding band was made by former LR Jen Boschma, who started a jewelry company that creates custom pieces for non-profits.

Samara Chamble is living in Melbourne, Australia, working with freshmen students studying abroad at Northeastern University. Jessica Lander just finished co-authoring a book on family engagement in schools titled, “Powerful Partnerships: A Teacher’s Guide to Engaging Families for Student Success.” Jojo Lam, who is working for Teach for Cambodia, is sharing a house in Phnom Penh with former LRs Jennie Le, Sara Hendrix and Harpswell alumna Len Leng.

STAFF NEWS

In March, Harpswell alumna, attorney Leaphea Yang, class of 2011, joined as our first Program Director. In this role, Leaphea has brought tremendous energy and dedication to the role, mentoring the students, working with the LRs, helping Senior Manager Varony Ing with recruiting, and meeting with students in small and large groups to talk about leadership and dorm life. In August, Trustee Kara Lightman Anthony began work with Harpswell part-time as Harpswell’s Communications Officer, working on social media, the new Website and communications. Harpswell alumna Sopheap Phourn ’15 joined the TT staff as Assistant Manager in May, taking over for Sokeang Chheng ’10, who left to become office manager at an NGO in Phnom Penh. NY-based intern Catherine Traynor graduated Hunter College, and is now teaching English in Southeast France. Cat connected us with our new intern, Jennifer Ulloa, who, like Cat, is a senior in the Macaulay Honors College at Hunter College.
The Harpswell Foundation

TO CONTRIBUTE

We are deeply grateful for your support, and hope that you will continue to share our vision of making the world a better place by supporting women’s education.

With all best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season,

Alan I. Lightman

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Varony Ing, Senior Manager
Sophal Som, Manager, BT Dorm
Leaphea Yang, Program Director
Kara Lightman Anthony, Communications Officer

Madeleine Jacobs
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We are deeply grateful for your support, and hope that you will continue to share our vision of making the world a better place by supporting women’s education.

With all best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season,

Alan I. Lightman

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