DEAR FRIENDS

We hope this season finds you and your loved ones well.

It is hard to believe that another year has nearly come and gone. We’ve seen 17 strong young Harpswell women graduate our program and welcomed 18 outstanding students just starting their university careers. Harpswell has also had a year of growth and development, with substantial changes in our Cambodian staffing model, the hiring of talented new staff, enhancements to the Cambodian program, the establishment of an Alumnae Resources Program, improvements in the Leadership Resident Program, and the successful launch of the Harpswell ASEAN Program in Women’s Leadership. Our impact and geographic footprint are growing, and we are excited to share this Newsletter with you.

HARPSWELL NEWS

Harpswell ASEAN Program in Women’s Leadership. This 12-day immersion training program for outstanding young professional women, ages 25-30, from the ten countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is off to a strong start. Our July pilot at Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang, in partnership with the Center for Research on Women and Gender at USM, was a big success, and we are now recruiting 25 participants for the 2018 program, which is scheduled to take place from June 24-July 5. The greatest take-away was the strong sense of community among the women, and the continuing communications and networking on What’sApp and Facebook. Since the program, one participant started her own project in her home village in the Philippines with middle school girls to identify and solve community challenges.

Class of 2017. In June, the 17 members of the class of 2017 graduated from Harpswell. Eleven of them decided to move into the new Alumnae House. Three are in the US as Harpswell US Fellows. Two are working for NGOs (Transparency International and Springboard for Cambodia), two are pharmacists, two are working at a law firm, two in engineering (one at a steel construction company), the rest are at a start-up, an IT training institute, a home tutor, and one has started at Harpswell as an Assistant Dorm Manager.

Class of 2021. On October 21, Harpswell welcomed the 18 members of the Class of 2021. All were brought by their parents or relatives, and spent the day signing commitment letters, reviewing rules and policies with staff, and enjoying a lunch cooked by students and staff.

The new students are from 10 different provinces, and are evenly split between STEM and Humanities majors. This diverse class is attending 11 different universities and have chosen 15 majors including medicine, sociology, architecture, international relations, Thai language, Japanese language, law, bioengineering and chemistry. They are a delightful group of young women, who understand Harpswell’s mission and are eager to participate in all that Harpswell has to offer.

The mission of the Harpswell Foundation is to equip young women in Southeast Asia with leadership skills, education, and a supportive network. We envision a new generation of women leaders who inspire and create positive social change.
STUDENT NEWS

Sotheavy Chhouy was a member of one of the winning teams of the SmartStart Young Innovator Program. Her team's project was the Ligo Mobile App, an app that allows users to learn basic Khmer by repeating phonics. Sotheavy's team won $4,000 to implement their project and will receive six months of training with IT and business experts provided by Smart for Cambodia.

Students Sokanha Ly and Bunhourng Tan were part of the first place team at the Cellcard Lab Competition. Their project, "Eco-plastic," turns plastic waste into usable products. The Cellcard Lab is an annual 6-week program for young entrepreneurs created and run by Impact Hub Phnom Penh.

Harpwell student Sievlan Len won a spot in The Global Undergraduate Exchange from the US Embassy. UGRAD provides one semester scholarships to outstanding undergraduate students from around the world for non-degree full-time study combined with community service, professional development, and cultural enrichment.

Sok Sothearat attended the Syngenta-USAID Asia Student Connections 2017 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The USAID-led conference provided a platform for participants to discuss their role in advancing technology to address food security challenges in the Mekong region. You can watch Sothearat’s video discussing her story and the program here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MG7ajO0ToV0

Debate. Students Ying Srey Pov and Noeun Sony organized a public speaking and debate event for first year students in August. Students Sony, Bouytieng, Chinhchin, Sophearath, and Thida acted as mentors for their younger sisters. The debate was a huge success and an invaluable lesson for the first year students in public speaking.

WAKE, the Women’s Alliance for Knowledge Exchange, has matched our students with women mentors in the technology industry to complete two student autobiographical videos. The first video, about Sivkim Cheam, can be watched here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8yaQKpkmfY. The second video about Srey Pov Ying is on our homepage.

Cultural Activities. With the support provided by the Susan McKinnon Foundation (SMF), Harpwell students and LR have been making good use of an enhanced cultural activities budget. They’ve had activities ranging from museum visits, rock-climbing, group swimming lessons, networking events, visits to social enterprises, concerts, dance performances, documentaries, night markets and tours around Phnom Penh for the new students.

Leadership Seminars. Dr. Vannarith Chheang of the Nippon Foundation (also a trainer in the Harpwell ASEAN program) and Jojo Lam, former LR and co-founder of Teach for Cambodia recently gave Leadership Seminars. Vannarith spoke about his life story, his work at a think tank, and the value of networking and of combining STEM with non-stem work. Jojo spoke about her leadership journey and life path.

Partnerships. We’ve renewed our agreement with Cambodian Living Arts, who are running one arts workshop (traditional music and dance) each quarter as part of our Leadership Seminar series.

The music program, started by former LR Jocelyn Labombarde, continues to thrive, with students taking piano, violin and guitar. They perform at every opportunity, with the guitar players accompanying singing at many events.
ALUMNAE NEWS

Alumnae House. The new five-bedroom Alumnae house houses 12 new graduates, including Alumnae Resources Program Coordinator, psychologist Rada Chhorn, class of 2011. In addition to providing mentoring and guidance, Rada has instituted rules, work duties, meetings and cleaning routines. She has created a monthly Sunday night Family Dinner, to which all alumnae in Phnom Penh are invited. The Harpswell Alumnae Association now meets at Alumnae House, and visiting alumnae from the provinces often stay there. We thank the Susan McKinnon Foundation for the funding for Alumnae House.

New HAA Leadership Team. In late August, the five members of the new Harpswell Alumnae Association were elected. They are Eng Chandy ’13, President; Hun Lina ’13, Sleepover Program Coordinator; Tum Sereyroith ’14, Database Manager; and Phet Sopanhchakpor ’14, Finance and Administrative officer. Alumnae Day will be held in Phnom Penh on January 14.

US Fellows Program. This year’s three US Fellows are Ang Sivlong and Doern Seyha at Christian Brothers University and Try SOPhea at Agnes Scott College. They are thriving, despite experiencing the hurricane emergencies in the fall, and having to learn about US emergency preparedness procedures. The students will be visiting Boston, New York and Washington over the Christmas break. Thanks to all of our hosts and volunteers who will be taking them around!

Networking. In June, Harpswell celebrated International Children’s Day by inviting alumnae and their families to the Great Hall of Women for games and “baby networking.” Lifelong friendships were formed and it was a wonderful opportunity for our alumnae to reconnect. Check out our Facebook page for some adorable baby photos!

LEADERSHIP RESIDENT NEWS

This year we’ve had some fantastic LRs from all over the world. They are Natalie Hench, Sara Rolen, Stephanie Beja, Eleanor Brakewood, Astin Altenburg, Ursula Melicherova, Sirianna Santacroce, Lucie Menz, Leah Condemi, Lauren Albright, Idalia Gonzalez, Laura Talbert, Amna Yameen, Tanya Shahjedian, and Kamila Novak.

We’ve had LRs from Sweden, Russia, Pakistan and the US, and have now been receiving a steady stream of applicants through CIEE (the Council for International Educational Exchange), a US government-funded entity which among other programs places US citizens in teaching positions in developing countries.

STAFF NEWS

Harpswell has made several major staff changes in the past year. Moul Samneang, our new Country Director, has been doing a fantastic job and has smoothly transitioned into this new role. We also welcomed alumnae Suon Raksney (’10) as the new TT Dorm Manager and Din Vutha (’10) as the new BT Dorm Manager.

Maggie Doyle, former Leadership Resident, is Harpswell’s new LR Coordinator in addition to serving as our US Fellows Coordinator. We’ve also asked Jojo Lam, former LR, to serve as a part-time Phnom Penh LR Coordinator. Jojo has been invaluable resource to the LRs as they adjust to life in Phnom Penh and learn their work duties at Harpswell.

Harpswell is always looking for smart, talented young women who are interested in living and working at our dorms as Leadership Residents for 3-6 months. Please visit our website for more information. http://www.harpswellfoundation.org/leadership-residents/
In September, we launched our first capital campaign to ensure Harpswell’s long-term sustainability. We are delighted to report that we have already raised 75% of our goal, and you will be hearing more about the campaign in the coming months.

We are deeply grateful for your support and continued commitment to our mission.

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

[Signatures]

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Phally Touch, Administrative Manager
Viphea Reth, Assistant Manager, TT
Rada Chhorn, Alumnae Resources Coordinator

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Our new website is up and running. Check it out!