Leadership Development

HND views leadership as a process and a tool to creating progressive and proactive change within the Hmong American community. Leadership and leader development of are integral to the mission and vision of HND. As such the organization seeks multiple ways to provide services and programs that will develop the next generation of Hmong American leaders and the communities they reside in. Through leadership initiatives that encompass training, networking, educational opportunities, sharing of information and resources and hands-on development, HND is able to empower the Hmong American community to build upon their strengths and embrace new leadership ideologies and to take on leadership roles. HND recognizes that young and old Hmong leaders face special challenges in bridging the generations, economic and education gaps, and traditional political factions that exist within the community. They need a place where they can learn the skills that will help them work across the gaps in an inclusive manner to integrate their concern about the Hmong community into opportunities to create change within the larger communities in which they live. In recognizing this gap in the community, HND seeks to develop leaders and enhance the leadership development efforts of its partner agencies through education, advocacy, and youth development projects such as Hmong Action and Visibility in Education Project and the Hmong Women's Circle / Hmong Men's Circle. Above: HND at 2007 SEARAC Leadership TrainingHMONG ACTION AND VISIBILITY IN EDUCATION PROJECT

- Nationally, Hmong is the third most spoken language of English Language Learners (ELL) students, only behind Spanish and Vietnamese.
- In Burke County, North Carolina, Hmong students make up 67% of all Asian students in the district. One of the major challenges identified by Hmong parents and students in North Carolina is that there are too few Hmong teachers and paraprofessionals in the schools. Community members report that Burke County schools have not been able to recruit qualified Hmong teachers to work with their growing Hmong student population. North Carolina has also been granted permission to postpone federal requirements calling for highly qualified teachers. State education leaders say the requirement is unrealistic because of the chronic shortage of certified teachers.
- In CA, Hmong children scored significantly below the mean on academic achievement tests and are at a substantial risk for not completing school. Recognizing the impact of existing statistics on the future of the Hmong American community, HND developed the Hmong Action and Visibility in Education Project (HAVE Project), a student and parent education mobilization program created to address the growing trend of low academic achievement among Hmong American youth across the country. The HAVE Project is carried in partnership with three local partners, Hmong Women’s Heritage Association in Sacramento, CA; the Southeast Asian Vision for Education in Merced, CA; and the United Hmong Association of North Carolina in Hickory, NC. The HAVE Project provides training, technical assistance and resources to local partner agencies so they can incorporate education advocacy into their existing programs with Hmong parents and students. The long-term goal is to develop a fully engaged Hmong American community, where low-income parents, students and community members can actively stay involved in the civic process. By working on education, HND hopes the project will lend itself to other important issues that impact low-income Hmong American communities.To receive additional information about the HAVE Project, please contact Nou Vang at (202) 797-9105 or nvang@hndinc.org.

HMONG WOMEN'S CIRCLE / HMONG MEN'S CIRCLE PROGRAMAbove: HWC / HMC National Convening at 13th Hmong National ConferenceDeveloped as a response to the rising and alarming number of domestic abuse and homicide/suicide cases within the Hmong community in 1998, Hmong Women’s Circle (HWC) began as an after-school extracurricular activity in four schools in the St. Paul area and served approximately 60 Hmong girls during its first year. Currently HWC is replicated in Sacramento, CA; St. Paul, MN; and Minneapolis, MN. Due to the success of HWC, the Hmong Men's Circle (HMC) was piloted in late 2003 in St. Paul, MN and is now being replicated in Sacramento, CA and St. Paul, MN. In 2007, HWC and HMC sites served a total of 250 youth. While there are many programs that try to reach Hmong youth, there has never been a program model that has integrated the issues and cultural identities of Hmong female and male teens into a comprehensive curriculum. HWC and HMC are innovative programs that use an inside-out model to build character and address the needs, concerns, and talents of Hmong adolescents. The program also addresses systemic support available to Hmong youth so that they become engaged, educated, and empowered to make healthier choices. Through HWC and HMC, young Hmong women and men are given the opportunity to question, explore, and assess their identities in order to understand their family and cultural values, develop their own identities and values, increase self-esteem, and develop insights into relationships with their families, school, and members of the opposite sex. This exploration helps HWC and HMC participants to individually distinguish what qualities of the Hmong culture and traditions they would like to celebrate and respect and what aspects they would like to change in a positive and productive manner. HWC and HMC believes that by helping young people better understand, accept, and celebrate their identities as Hmong-Americans, they will be more motivated to learn and will utilize these tools to enable them to make responsible life decisions and take on leadership roles within their homes, schools, and communities.For more information about the HWC & HMC Curriculum and program replication process, please contact Nou Vang at (202) 797-9105 or via email at nvang@hndinc.org. Above: MN HWC Site, Girl Scouts of Greater WI & MN River ValleysOTHER LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

- 14th Hmong National Conference in Appleton, WI
- Sawv Cees: Emerging Young Hmong Leaders
- National Hmong College Student (NHCS) Leadership Network
- Annual Educational Scholarships & Internships For additional information regarding leadership development projects/programs, contact HND at (202) 797-9105 or via email at info@hndinc.org.