



NEWSLETTER

Coral Tree Education Foundation, Inc.

Fall 2017

www.CoralTreeEducation.Org

Our school construction is complete and classes have begun

A picture is worth a thousand words. We are so excited to share these photos from our school. The entire village community, including its elders, officials, and parents strongly support of our school. They are very grateful and profoundly moved to see such a beautiful building in their village, for they know that their hopes and dreams for their children may now come true. Not only our school is a school for the children, it is the center of hopes and dreams for their families and the community.



After 6 months of construction, the students and teachers are happy to be back to school. They salute their country's flag and sing the Cambodian national anthem each morning before class begins. Our school is one of the few buildings in Cambodia that has both electricity and a ramp for wheelchairs.





The children are very excited, but their parents are even more happy (some were in tears) the first time they came to see the school. They said that they have never could imagine such a beautiful building would find its place in their humble village. It is an indication of their belief that because they are so poor, their children do not deserve such a school.



The villagers came to bless the building. It is Khmer tradition that the building be blessed for the safety and well-being of the occupants, in this case, our students and their teachers.

Programs at our school

Restrooms - It is very difficult for those of us living in the First World to imagine how the 300 students and teachers have been able to function without decent restrooms. We are fortunate that our generous friend, Ilona Merli of Los Gatos, is funding the entire cost of the school restroom now being built. The restroom will have 8 stalls with hand washing basins on the outside of this building accessible for us to teach children about the importance of hand washing, hygiene and disease prevention.



An image of the construction activity at the restroom building. The project is estimated to be completed in January. Note the rusted sheet metal building in the background! It is the school library which is ready to fall over and there are no books.

Our students were happily lending hands during construction of the restrooms. They lined up to collect bricks closer to the construction site because it was inaccessible by dump truck.

Educational Programs - We will be installing five desktop computers in our school. Many children and parents are very excited. Some people are sending their kids to our school now that they heard we will have computers and English programs. We have our **VP of Educational Programs, Ms. Julie Montgomery**, working on different plans for these programs. Julie is currently a teacher at one of the top ten high schools in the Silicon Valley. She also has extensive experience working in Africa school. We are in good hands with her help.

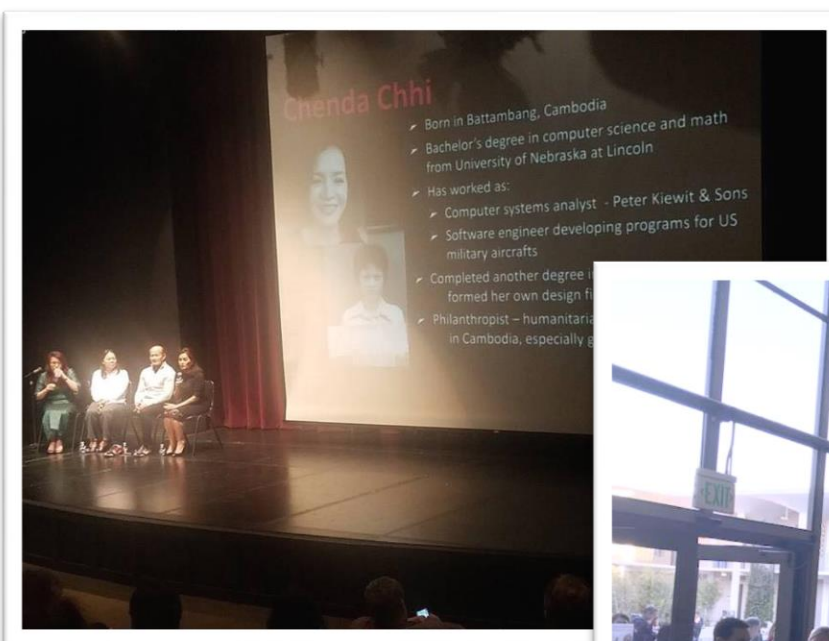


Scholarship Program

We have added two additional students for our college women's scholarship program this year. This program, while the fastest route to making a big difference in lives of young women who have great potential, is moving slowly due to lack of funding. Thanks to the generosity of the **Tim and Starleen Wood Foundation**, we were able to aid two more students this year. The women selected need financial support for without help, their lives would just stay where it is. They have demonstrated ambition and a strong desire to give back. There

are some obstacles along the way for some of these women in our program, so **Phearom Oun, our VP of Scholarships** who is based in Siem Reap, and Chenda are working closely with the students to ensure their success in school. They are women who have great potential to make a difference in their own lives and in their communities, but are still young and shy and have not had real directions of how to best reach their potential. Both our new student recipients this year are young women who grew up half of their lives at an orphanage, and who have a strong desire for higher education.

Events



Showing of "First They Killed My Father" - Coral Tree was invited to cohost a movie screening event with College of San Mateo because of mission and because of our connections in the SF Bay Area. Some 300 people



showed up. Chenda, our president, was among the panel after the screening. The movie and discussion have brought more awareness of the devastation of the genocide in Cambodia. Thanks to Angelina Jolie, the producer and director of the film, for her love for the Cambodian people. The Khmer people are especially proud of Loung Ung (the author of the book the movie was based on) and Rithy Pahn the Cambodian French film director for helping Angelina make this important film to pay tribute to those lives lost and the survivors of one of the worst world genocides.

Upcoming 2017 Events – *Our events will be in the effort to raise funds for seemingly endless needs of the children at our school. We need books, computers, soccer field, playground, and teacher's trainings and additional teachers. Our biggest item on our wish list is a new library. And of course, fundraising for the scholarship for college women is an ongoing effort.*

Inauguration Ceremony - PLEASE NOTE that the dedication of the school and its official opening will be held on December 20th this year. It will be held at the school in Battambang Province! If you are in Cambodia during this time, you are warmly invited and encouraged to attend the ceremony. Please contact us if you will be joining us at the dedication to help us celebrate this impressive concrete accomplishment. **Chenda is heading to our project and to be with our students on December 10th. Please send her a message asap if you are interested in coming along.**

Stockton Dance Gala - Saturday, December 2nd will be held at the **Asia Palace, 8118 W Lane, Suite 105**. Thanks to the Khmer communities of San Francisco Bay Area, Modesto and Stockton for their support!

Upcoming 2018 Events



Spring 2018 Cocktail and Networking Event at BootUp Ventures in Menlo Park, CA. We are very grateful for the support of **Kevin Santiago** and **Britteney Reynolds** (with the great support of **Barbara Roth of Aryana Healthcare Foundation** for providing the venue for this exciting upcoming event now being planned. **BootUp Ventures** is one of the places where all the great things in the world of technology in the Silicon Valley happen. Please be looking for upcoming announcements.

Summer 2018 Cocktail and Networking Event at the Law Offices of Greenburg Traurig, LLP, in San Francisco. Do not miss this great opportunity to mingle with us and a group of likeminded folks on the 30th floor of the Embarcadero Plaza building, overlooking the entire San Francisco Bay and Golden Gate and Bay Bridges. We are now planning this event for Summer 2018. Thank you for your support, **Greenburg Traurig, LLP** and their business director **Mike Kovalich**, who is a member of Coral Tree's Board of Directors!

GT GreenbergTraurig

Financial



Coral Tree operates with great transparency in all areas including its financial affairs. Any financial inquiries can be directed to Starleen Wood (CFO), Chenda Chhi (President), or Mike Kovalich (Board Member/Finance).

Friends and Supporters

New Member of the Team

Coral Tree Education Foundation has added Mr. **Jonathan Leong** to its team of advisors. Jonathan has been a vital force behind all the nonprofit world of the SF Bay Area. He has been a recipient of Unsung Hero awards, not once but three times. Jonathan founded **Asian American Donors Programs Foundation** 28 years ago. AADP is still running strong, and it has saved thousands of lives of those who have terminal illnesses that require a matched donor of bone marrow. Jonathan is also a very successful entrepreneur for numerous businesses. We are profoundly grateful for Jonathan's willingness to join our Coral Tree family. You may find more information on Jonathan at <http://www.asianamerican.net/bios/Leong-Jonathan.html> and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jonathan-leong-46a200/>



A very special thank you to our major donors:



We are honored and grateful for the generosity of Matthews Asia and their employees. We have been informed their 2017 donation will be over 50% more than it was in 2016. We are very grateful for their support, trust and partnership in this endeavor. Matthew Asia's continuing and increased support is a great encouragement to us in carrying on our work.

Our Friends in the Nonprofit World

Coral Tree Education is young and we are growing and learning. We hope to bring fresh approaches to solving the problem of inadequate education in Cambodia, especially for those too poor to afford a high quality private education. In our work, we have met with other organizations who have shared their experiences. Among our friends **are Rite Aid, Tipping Points, One Sky, Trail Blazer, Friends Without A Border, and People Improvement Organization**. We are grateful to our friends for their support and help in carrying out our common mission of helping to make the world a better place.

President's Message



I must once again sincerely thank all of you on the Coral Tree team-volunteers, donors, employees, advisors, directors and officers-for your efforts in helping make the Foundation's initial work successful. Our team and I are very proud that after less than one year of focused fundraising we actually built our first school for 300 students. Thanks to our generous donors, and now we have, Ilona Merli, to thank for the restroom we are building for these poor children. The children and parents are very excited to learn that we are installing English and Computer programs in the school, which will incorporate arts and science and math education.

The needs of students we support are so great for they are much behind in many areas of their childhood education. Despite our ongoing fundraising efforts, we are not yet able to support all of our programs as much as I would wish. It is my hope that this will change in the upcoming months, as we are becoming more and more known and our network expands. Coral Tree now has followers on social media throughout the United States and the world. It is also my hope that we have earned your confidence and that you are more assured of the importance of our work and that you will continue your support.

I am personally committed. I am now personally carrying all the costs of internal operations. Every dollar donation goes straight to the projects and the students we support. When we applied for our tax deduction status, Marc Freed, our legal counsel, asked me how many hours I planned on putting into Coral Tree work. I estimated 10 to 20 hours per week. This has proved to be a huge underestimate. I sleep and breathe Coral Tree. I also underestimated the amount of joy that came from this work. I want to share this joy with you. I hope that if you have financial resources or time that you would consider joining me in this fulfilling endeavor. Joined efforts can be so powerful. I want Coral Tree to benefit everyone, donors and supporters as well as the children we support. I want each of the fundraising event to be a cause to celebrate life, enrich friendships and create family and community bonds. I hope

that eventually, Coral Tree is known for its community building, as well as for supporting education so as to help maintain global peace and prosperity.

Please remember that there are many different ways that you can help. Please contact us, we will help you find help Coral Tree. I encourage you to consider all of but not limited to the following:

- Ask your friends or your employers/employees to match your donations.
- Make Coral Tree a charitable organization of choice for all gift giving platforms of your companies.
- Tell people about Coral Tree.
- Connect me with people you feel may have an interest in supporting Coral Tree.
- Make a contribution on behalf of someone special.
- Ask people to send in donations to Coral Tree in lieu of gifts to you.
- Donate a building or rooms in the name of someone special to you.

If you have questions about or ideas for Coral Tree, please share them with me.

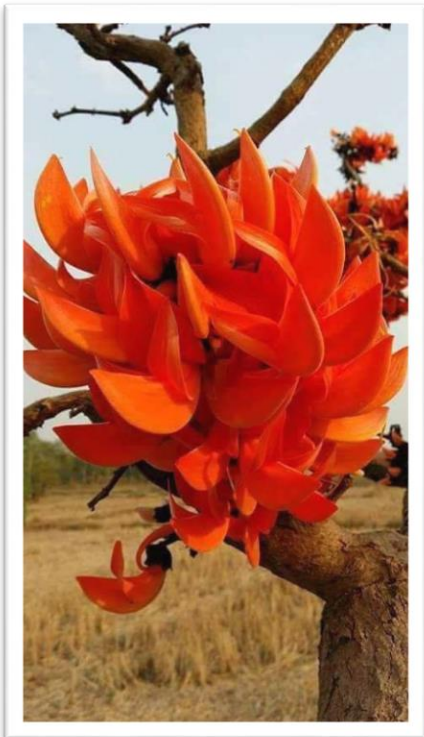
Thank you again for your support! Wishing you and your family a wonderful Thanksgiving and Happy Holiday Season!

With great appreciation,

Chenda

c.chhi.CTE@gmail.com

408-930-3333



HAPPY HOLIDAYS to you and your family!

We thank you for your support!!!

**From all of us at
Coral Tree Education Foundation**

"A Coral Tree is rough and odd in its shape, its flowers bloom only after all its green useful leaves have disappeared. Such an odd tree is much like the lives of the poor children of the world. With strong foundation, the blossoms from within each child, will emerge despite the hardship they must endure. Education is that foundation in their lives."

– Chenda Chhi

**Please consider a Holiday Gift to
Coral Tree Education Foundation**

Donate Now

