

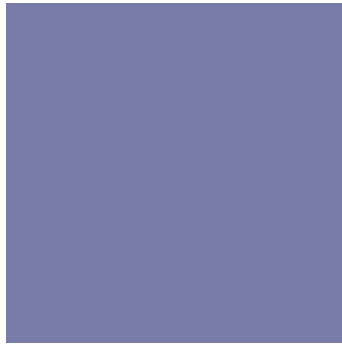
Cambodian Village Scholars Fund



OVERALL

Since 2005, we have provided both English and Cham language instruction to children in the village of Sre Prey, Cambodia. Our program has grown from initially educating about 50 children (ages 9 - 18) to over 130 students today. Overall, the Fund has financed the studies of more than 300 children.

In 2010, the Fund began supporting a few exceptional alumni of the English program as full-time university students. We currently provide 10 students with tuition, books, and a group study facility in Phnom Penh including computers, and other services. An additional four English class alumni also attend university through private means.



WHERE

Sre Prey Village

Lying about 90 minutes from the capital, near the Tonle Sap River, Sre Prey village is an ancient farming community, established in the late 1600s. The vast majority of its 2,000 villagers earn their living by farming rice and/or operating microenterprises. The average income is about \$30 a month, and homes have no running water. In this subsistence farming community, generally most of the boys fail to finish high school, while the girls usually drop out even before starting high school-level studies. In the short time since our program began there has been a trend toward more students completing high school.

WHO

The Imam Sann

Sre Prey is a Cham Muslim village. The Cham are a largely disenfranchised and impoverished minority in Cambodia, comprising less than 2% of the population. The period under the Khmer Rouge brought tremendous devastation both to the people and their cultural heritage. Anecdotal evidence from survivors of the Khmer Rouge genocide suggests that the Cham perished at a far

greater rate than other Cambodians; by the end of Pol Pot's regime, roughly 70% of the Cham had perished, compared to 25% of the general population. Also Cham cultural leaders and material culture had been targeted for extinction with shocking success. Cambodia's Cham Muslim population, though largely Sunni, nevertheless contains two major groups: the so-called "orthodox," which make up over two thirds of the Cham, and the "traditional," which includes the Imam Sann. Sre Prey is one of these "traditional" Imam Sann communities, which practices a very liberal form of Islam infused with animistic traditions. The adherents of Imam Sann, for example, pray once a week rather than five times a day. They also preserve the ancient spoken and written Cham language in both daily and ritual life. Only about 25 Imam Sann villages remain in Cambodia today. In recent years, foreign missionaries have come to Cambodia trying to convince local Muslims to adopt a far more orthodox, i.e., fundamentalist, form of Islam, including the veiling of women. However, the Imam Sann have refused to change their cultural practices along with the accompanying financial inducements from these foreign interests.

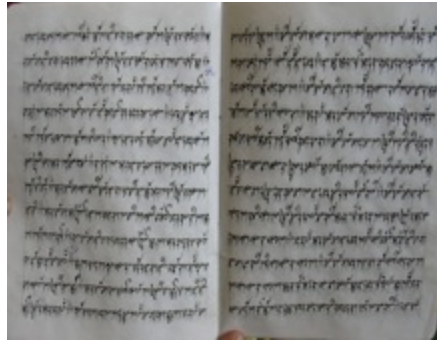
WHAT

The English Language Program

This program is without charge and open to all local students whenever they are free to attend the classes. Sre Prey's children are called upon to help their families with child care, harvesting, and other chores, in addition to their public school studies. Thus, some children are regular students in our English classes, while others attend sporadically. Most of the students are Cham but recently some Buddhist children have come. Our teacher, Kly Husen, had once been a high school teacher who left teaching to become a rice farmer for financial reasons. After he was recruited to give English instruction, the Fund's founders sponsored him to earn his bachelor's degree in English. He now teaches 15 one-hour classes a week, working around students' schedules at public school. On average, just under 40 children attend each of Mr. Kly's classes.

The Cham Language Program

The Cham language program is devoted to teaching the written form of this dying language. Two imams and one lay person now teach Cham classes in Sre Prey and two neighboring villages to more than 100 students. Their services are offered on a voluntary basis and our program provides only supplies. No religious instruction is given in these classes.





The University Program

Any interested student from Sre Prey may apply for a university stipend. Our administrator tests all applicants on their verbal and written English skills (since most Cambodian universities teach at least partly in English). These scores and public high school grades are weighed against a well established “needs” scale (assessing level of poverty for the family). This information is reviewed initially by the administrator and Fund’s board, then in concert with community leaders we select one girl and one boy each year to receive assistance.

Once chosen, the Fund sponsors additional intensive college-level English studies for the students, followed by four or five years of academic study, depending on the particular university and field. Students must maintain passing grades to continue in the program.

Each year, every student signs a contract stating that after university graduation they will repay one third of the amount of their scholarship loan at no interest over a five-year period, in order to help sustain the program.

STRUCTURE

Program Administration

The educational programs are administered by our Cambodian, Cham, volunteer, Ysa Osman, an investigator at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. A former staff member at the Documentation Center of Cambodia, he is the author of three books on the Cham during the Khmer Rouge genocide and the contemporary Cham community.

FUNDING

These programs have been supported solely by donations from individuals since our start. When activities in Sre Prey began, funding needs were small because the program was supporting only its local English language program. Using seed donations, the Program purchased draft animals, which were rented to local farmers, and for several years the program became self-sustaining. However, with the introduction of inexpensive tractors, a strong growth in demand for the Fund’s services, and the establishment of college scholarships, funding needs have grown greatly and now grants are being sought.

Today, only one person receives any remuneration for his services: our teacher, Mr. Kly, who works part-time at the Sre Prey school and is paid \$1,300 per year. The Cham language teachers serve on a voluntary basis and receive only supplies. Likewise Mr. Ysa, our Cambodian administrator, and all of the Fund's board members are purely volunteers who receive no pay or benefits.

FUTURE

Our Mid-Range Goals:

- * Establish a self-sufficient fund raising system and develop a donor base to support the Fund over coming years.
- * Expand the Fund's present activities to include two additional Imam Sann communities over the next 3 years, including both English language and Cham literature education.
- * Improve services at Sre Prey, including a small library collection and access to computer and internet services.
- * Establish an appropriate level of administrative services to handle both grant and program issues on the ground in Cambodia.

Our Specific Goals:

- * **Expand the English language program to two additional nearby communities** - allowing increased use of Mr. Kly's time or his experience to train other teachers. Selecting nearby villages would allow the Fund to simplify logistics and keep administrative costs down. It would also promote inter-village communications. Community members would be able to meet, compare progress, share ideas on their children's education, and set priorities.
- * **Support local Cham language instruction in each additional village** - by continuing to defray expenses for educational supplies.



- * **Provide tuition for university degree programs for two students in each additional village** - over the coming years as dictated by the students' progress with English.
- * **Build a small library collection at Sre Prey** - including a selection of English and Cham language books that would be of interest to the communities, such as books on geography, history, and other educational subjects, plus vocational manuals, and books that would encourage good reading habits in young children.
- * **Provide access to computers** - by providing small stipends for students to access an "internet cafe" in a nearby village. We will develop performance criteria jointly with teacher Kly that students must meet to earn this opportunity, as well as expectations on its usage.
- * **Hire our administrator in a paid position full- or part-time** - presuming the level of administrative services needed and the funding available both remain high. Mr. Ysa has labored tirelessly for the past five years on this project, and he remains most interested in committing himself to the Fund on a full-time basis.

Meet Two Students



Sit Math was 24, the oldest of the students in the Sre Prey English class, when two of the founders came to visit in 2010. Typical of many Cham boys, he had dropped out of public school early, going to work to help support his family. After our English program began in 2005 he began studying with us, thereafter returning to public school as well. When we met him, even though a year short of graduation from high school, the founders, his teachers and his family recognized his maturity and academic abilities, and we came together to work out a way for him to skip a portion of his last year of high school and move directly into university.

Math's father died when he was only two months old, leaving behind his mother, a much older widowed uncle, Math and his older sister and brother. Math's older brother is married and he too is a rice farmer. His sister is unmarried and works in a factory. She is now the sole support of their mother and uncle while Math is in university.

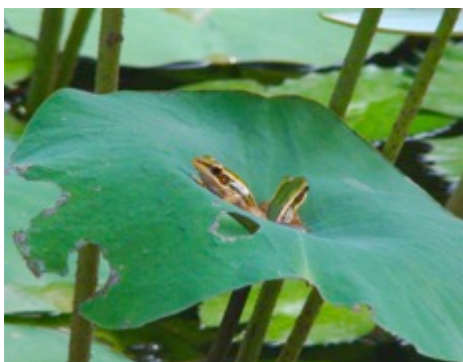


Sa Maly is another of the Sre Prey English students who so impressed the founders during their visit to Sre Prey. She too began university studies in 2010.

She comes from a family of four with one younger sister. Her father is 42 and a hard worker who has labored as a fisherman, a farmer, a brick-maker, a hammock seller, ice cream seller, fish sauce producer, chicken vendor. Today, he sells cloth from his motorcycle, traveling through many provinces. His change in jobs has been due to economic hardship. Her 44 year-old mother keeps house, and sells chickens; she has applied for factory work but been rejected due to poor eyesight.

Maly recalls that our English program took a major financial load away from her family as they tried to provide private English lessons for her before our arrival. Also she felt much safer being able to stay in Sre Prey with other Cham students while she studied rather than traveling alone to another town to take English lessons.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE HERE



We need *YOUR HELP!* with this project aiding the Cham children and young men and women in Cambodia as they struggle now, still 40 years after the fall of the Khmer Rouge, to maintain their heritage while participating in the twenty first century in a meaningful way. Their unique values are threatened by a call to fundamentalism on one side and the Western lure of flashy disposable junk on the other. Education seems the only way to maintain the best of the past and a reasonable direction for the future. And the world is diminished with the process of homogenization and standardization as language and customs die. **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.** You can help these youngsters help themselves. Help them learn; give them that tool, so that they can escape poverty and cultural extinction.



Small Money: It costs only about \$1800 per year to run the entire English Program in the village of Sre Prey. A university education including group study space, books, university tuition and university level English prep classes, costs under \$1500 per student each year.



A Founder's Perspective: As a university student in the 1960s, I have remained keenly aware of the massive damage inflicted on the Cambodian people during the Vietnam War, during which the US dropped over 2.7 million tons of munitions (vs 2 million tons used by the Allies in all of WWII), and including cluster bombs, some of which remain active today. These and other actions almost undoubtedly encouraged the rise of the Khmer Rouge with its own ensuing catastrophic consequences for the Cambodian people. My contributions are only a small reinvestment in a people and a country that have suffered beyond words. – DG

CONTACT US ANYTIME

There is much more information about us and our joint work at:

www.CambodianScholars.org

Cambodian Village Scholars Fund

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(GMT-8)



DONATIONS

We at the Cambodian Village Scholars Fund truly appreciate your participation in our educational projects in Cambodia. Many Cham children will benefit from your support and generosity.

- ☐ If you would like to donate **Electronically**, simply visit our secure website at CambodianScholars.org and there use either your PayPal account or Credit Card.
- ☐ If you prefer to have a Board Member **Call** you to discuss the program and a possible gift, please email us at **Info@CambodianScholars.org** or call us at 760-567-3664.
- ☐ If you wish to Donate by **Mail**, please use the following form:

Name(s) _____

Address: (Street) _____

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(Country) _____ (Postal Code) _____

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Email Address _____

Credit Card (Type) _____ Donation Amount \$ _____

(Number) _____

(Exp) _____ (CVP Code) _____

- ☐ Do you happen to know ANYONE ELSE who might be interested in supporting our work? If so, PLEASE give us their names or email addresses, and we will send them a copies of our brochure.