

# Invest in Leadership Today for Change Tomorrow

## I U M I E N S C H O L A R S H I P F U N D N E W S L E T T E R 2 0 1 3

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- 2013 Scholarship Applications are now available at [www.limccenter.org](http://www.limccenter.org)
- Applications must be postmarked by May 6, 2013
- This year's event is on June 21st in Oakland
- We need your help: Become a sponsor/donor to IMSF

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### E V A R S A E L E E , C L A S S O F 2 0 0 6

Receiving the IMSF scholarship in 2006 was a tremendous honor for my family and I. Not only did the monetary reward give me the opportunity to relieve my financial burden by purchasing books and supplies during my freshman year, but more importantly, the IMSF scholarship provided me the community support to pursue higher education. The scholarship was a direct community investment in my success and education. Although the Lu Mien community is small in size, its ability to foster a culture that encourages its youth to pursue higher education is immeasurable. With the theme this year, "Invest in Leadership Today for Change Tomorrow", community programs and support

such as the IMSF play a huge role in the success of Lu Mien leaders, and give the Lu Mien community as a whole, the representation we need to break the barrier in higher education and professional attainment.

College was an unforgettable experience that was marked by struggle, self-growth, and discovery. I spent four years at the University of California, Berkeley and graduated in 2010 with a degree in Integrative Biology (Go Bears!). During my years at Cal, I was met with a high degree of adversity. However, my ability to overcome such hardships was built around the supporting communities I surrounded myself with. Being the first in my family to

graduate from a university, I have learned that success is fundamentally driven by your context, and by understanding where it is that you come from.

I am currently working in a clinical lab at Monogram Biosciences where we focus on HIV and HCV research and development. I am also currently working with VeriHealth as an EMT, and plan to expand my patient care experience towards becoming a physician through a joint MPA/MPH program in the near future. With time, I hope to further serve our community as a primary healthcare provider and educator.



2012 IMSF Recipients:

L to R: Eric Saechin, Annie Saetern, Tiffany Chao, Cheng Saechao, Channelle Jose

*"The IMSF scholarship provided me the community support to pursue higher education."*



## I U M I E N S C H O L A R S H I P F U N D N E W S L E T T E R 2 0 1 3

### P R I N C E T O N C H A O , C L A S S O F 2 0 0 5

My experience in college so far has been great. I'm still learning a lot about myself and trying my best to study and enjoy the life of being a college student. Currently, I am working towards transferring to a 4-year university and attaining my bachelors degree in Criminal Justice.

The Lu Mien scholarship was a great help towards my tuition and books. It is no secret that college is very expensive even with financial assistance. I am very thankful to have been chosen as a 2005 recipient from the Lu Mien community. It was an absolute honor to be granted this scholarship

from IMSF. Receiving the scholarship really made me recognize the support that our Lu Mien community has for us young scholars. They believe in us, and they want us all to succeed.

If I could say one thing to this year's recipients, it would be to work hard and to commit yourself to achieving your goals, and making your dreams a reality. We all have the potential to be anything we want. Since we have our whole community behind us, we must achieve anything we choose to pursue. I would also like to thank all the people who donated to this fund,

and also to encourage the people of our community to continue to donate to this cause. After all, we are the future of our Lu Mien community. Without all of your support and belief in us, none of this would be possible. We are all leaders because we've taken this next step in pursuing higher education.

My biggest contribution to IMSF would be to finish college and continue to support future applicants in their journey towards their goals.

Thank you to the IMSF and the Lu Mien community. It has truly been a blessing to have

been able to receive such an honor.



*"Receiving the scholarship really made me recognize the support that our Lu Mien community has for us young scholars."*



*"It feels good when you are recognized for your accomplishments and winning the scholarship gave me the extra drive to work even harder in college."*

### F O U P H A N , C L A S S O F 2 0 0 9

I am in my senior year at UC Santa Cruz and my experience in college has been great. I met a lot of great friends and even got a job on campus. I came to college with the goal of getting a job after I graduate and I have already accepted an offer to join the Management Trainee Program at Cintas Document Management.

Winning the scholarship meant a lot to me because I tried very hard in school and receiving the scholarship was validation that my hard work paid off. It feels good when you are recognized for your

accomplishments and winning the scholarship gave me the extra drive to work even harder in college. The IMSF scholarship helped me a lot in my first year of college by helping me pay for books and other expenses.

I would like to help the Lu Mien youth realize that going to college is possible. We need to guide our youth on the right path to college because there are too many that are not graduating from high school and living at home with their parents, whom are already struggling. I would also like to help the

students in college find internships and have a career after they graduate.

The work that IMSF does is extremely important to the Lu Mien community. Offering scholarships to high school graduates is very helpful because there are many families who do not have much money and any financial help means a lot to the family and the student.

We need to invest in the youth today so that in the future they can give back to the Lu Mien community. The Lu Mien community is all about helping one another and we need to keep this tradition going, so that the youth know we are here to support them.



2009 IMSF Recipients:

L to R: Johnson Saeturn, Julie Saeturn, Vincent Saephan, Kami Saechao, Nathan Saepanh, Kae Siew Saeturn, Fou Phan

## FARMTA SAELEE, CLASS OF 2000

The scholarship allowed me to not only prove to myself, but to my parents that I had so much potential. My parents always believed in me and my education, but winning an award made it palpable. The actual monetary award helped with purchasing text books and took some pressure off my shoulders as my only other financial support was Financial Aid.

In 2005, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from San Jose State University. My college experience was invaluable in many ways, from the lifelong friendships made to learning how to be an independent adult. Coming from an immigrant family, going to college made me feel like a part of American society.

I am very proud to be a Mien American. The perseverance of our people is much to be admired. The majority

of our families arrived to the US with many challenges. Most never received a formal education, which made learning English and getting a job very difficult. However, growing up I remember the support our families received from government programs such as Welfare, free health clinics, and school work programs. Programs like IMSF provide us the aid we need to stand on our own two feet and ensure the success we all strive for.

I realize the success of IMSF is dependent on the support of our community and generous donors. I will continue to make donations and encourage others to do so as well.

Currently, I am a registered nurse at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco in the Ambulatory Care Unit, periodically taking the role as charge nurse. I value my work as it

has challenged me in ways I would never have imagined and helped me grow as an individual. I now feel like I am a contributor to this society, and this was made possible because of programs such as IMSF.



*"...the success of IMSF is dependent on the community and generous donors."*

## JESSICA SAECHAO PAK, CLASS OF 2003



*"IMSF serves a great purpose because it focuses on our future generation..."*

Before graduating from high school, I had applied for several scholarships. Although I was fortunate enough to be awarded other scholarships, receiving the IMSF Scholarship meant a little more to me because it meant my community was promoting higher education and supporting the future of their younger generation. Since I was commuting more than 30 miles each way to campus, the IMSF Scholarship helped me pay for gas.

After graduating from UC Berkeley in 2007, I began work as an Assistant for a Pension Firm. Today, I am their Plan Consultant. I love what I do and plan to grow in this field.

In retrospect, choosing to complete my undergraduate degree at UC Berkeley was the best decision I could have made for myself. At the time, I doubted whether I had made the right choice to stay in the Bay Area. I grew up in East Oakland and had every intention of leaving to Southern California. I wanted to be independent and to experience a new setting. Being on campus with thousands of intellectual minds and seeing so many underprivileged students like myself who also grew up in the Bay Area inspired me to challenge myself and test my limits. It allowed me to see that not every person from what is deemed the "ghetto" is destined to fail.

Our Lu Mien community has continued to attain success in developing social awareness of our heritage in the United States. More importantly, our community has delivered programs that foster the growth and preservation of our culture. This progress can be attributed to the investment of those individuals eager to see the success in our community.

By investing in the development of leadership skills today, we promote better changes in our community tomorrow. I believe that IMSF serves a great purpose because it focuses on our future generation which without them would lead to a depleting culture. Donations, whether it be monetary or time is essential and rewarding as well. I served as Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer for LIMCA from 2010 to 2012. In the near future, I hope to become more involved.



2011 IMSF Recipients:

L to R: Kimberly Saepan, Annie Saechao, Bryant Phan, Michelle Saechao & Megan Saeteurn



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**I M S F M I S S I O N S T A T E M E N T**

The Lu Mien Scholarship Fund (IMSF) was formed in May 1997 by the Lao Lu Mien Culture Association (LIMCA) to address the educational needs of the Lu Mien community. The purpose of the IMSF is to provide financial support for Lu Mien students in pursuit of higher education and to encourage Lu Mien youth to be leaders in the Lu Mien community. The scholarship aims to propel students to excel through ways that are not provided by conventional awards.

Over the past 15 years, IMSF has awarded over 96 scholarships, totaling more than \$60,000 to students who have demonstrated financial need, academic excellence, and/or leadership qualities. Such giving would not have been possible without the generosity of people such as yourself.

Please join us in support of this unique program with a donation, attendance at the scholarship event, or both. This year's event will be held on Friday, June 21st, from 6:00-9:00 PM at Lake Merritt United Methodist Church, 1330 Lakeshore Avenue, Oakland, CA.

**M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C O - C H A I R S**

The year 2013 marks a milestone for the Lu Mien Scholarship Fund, as we will be awarding our 100<sup>th</sup> recipient at this year's scholarship banquet. We are grateful to have been able to support so many well deserving Lu Mien youth since our founding in 1997.

IMSF's mission is to support our Lu Mien youth as they pursue higher education and obtain the knowledge and tools to be successful. This is our investment in our young leaders and the future of the Lu Mien. We would like to thank all of our generous donors and supporters who have made the scholarship possible!

The Lu Mien community has made

great strides in the short time we have been in the United States. Upon arriving as refugees, we faced many challenges yet persevered and have been able to make great achievements with the great gift of education. Many individuals have achieved a number of degrees, are working professionals, and are active community members.

In the years to come, there will continue to be many college bound Lu Mien youth. And as we all know, the need for financial assistance will be ever prevalent, thus the work of IMSF will also continue. We hope that you enjoyed reading the recipient testimonials in this newsletter and will contribute to IMSF's cause. Thank you again to all of our sup-

porters and we hope to see you at the scholarship banquet on Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>!



Jimmy Chao  
 IMSF Co-Chair

Julia Saelee  
 IMSF Co-Chair  
 2006 Recipient