

Youth Star News

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Little by little – by SENG Sophat



I am Seng Sophat, a Chea Sim Kamchay Mea graduate in Rural Development. Currently, I am a Youth Star volunteer, Programme 19, serving in Kourk Ngoun Village, Tropaing Russey Commune, Kampong Svay District, Kampong Thom

Province. I am living with a host family that includes a grandmother, a grandfather and a grandson. What interested me the most when I first got to the village were children and young people. I could see from the beginning that young people in the village were not doing well. They were lacking in self-confidence, responsibility and had no sense of team spirit. Through observation and learning about the issues, I committed to helping them work together to become a useful resource for their community.

After living in the community for a month, I felt I was starting to become accepted by them. I got young people together, organized meetings and shared with them the mission and vision of Youth Star Cambodia. A Youth club was established soon after with 20 members. The club was recognized and supported by local authorities and people in the community. The structure was specifically designed to delegate different roles and responsibilities. In doing this I feel I have been sharing the knowledge I have gained both from university and Youth Star's training. As a result, through direct participation, the young people of the village have started to become more cooperative and responsible. They have also become more knowledgeable. The Youth club has been working on different projects to help the community; these include repairing the road and cleaning the schools and pagodas. Club members also help teach subjects like Khmer, Math and English to young children.

Upon my completion of the service, I sincerely believe that the club will continue to serve the community and young children.

It is important therefore that the club is formally registered and recognized by the Commune

UCH Sithea Met with the First Lady, Michelle Obama

On March 22, Uch Sithea, a former Youth Star volunteer, had the wonderful opportunity of meeting America's First Lady, Mrs. Michelle Obama. The First Lady came to Cambodia, one of the first eleven countries to be included in the *Let Girls Learn* Peace Corps initiative in the programme's first year. Mrs. Obama and the Peace Corps Director, Hessler-Radelet, saw close-up how community-driven solutions are changing girls' lives, a key component of the *Let Girls Learn* Peace Corps programme.



Sithea was standing near the First Lady after the Speech

Sithea was placed in Krang Veng Village, Krang Veng Commune, Kampong Trakek District, Prey Veng Province from February 2014 to March 2015. She was one of the most active of the Youth Star volunteers and she has achieved a great deal and made real changes in the community where she served. Sithea's work focused mainly on education and health. Out in the field, she devised and introduced many ways of inspiring young people to attend school, mobilize children and young people to become club members and organize

campaigns in the village to raise awareness of the importance of school enrolment. Her work has proved that young women like her can be change-makers in the communities where they serve. She provides a bright role model for other young female graduates through her commitment and enthusiasm.

Recognizing the hard work and achievements she has made, Sithea was nominated to meet Mrs. Michelle Obama. In line with the new initiative *Let Girls Learn*, Sithea has changed the life of young girls in the village by getting them to go to school and teaching them in the Learning Club. We could not be more proud of her work.

Youth Star's Gala Dinner 2015

Youth Star Cambodia hosted the 9th Gala on Friday, March 27th in the Intercontinental Hotel. All proceeds from the Gala go to strengthening and expanding Youth Star's programmes, helping to build the next generation of Cambodian Civic Leaders.



The theme was *The 60's in Cambodia*, a reminder of a golden age of Cambodian art in which musicians like Sin Sisamouth and Ros Sereysothea sang uniquely Khmer rock, Prince Sihanouk directed films and Jacqueline Kennedy visited the ancient Temples of Angkor Wat. We recaptured the elegant style they embodied.

At this year's Gala, we raised up to UDS 23, 102. We would like to thank all the sponsors and friends of Youth Star most sincerely for their support. Without their kindness, interest and generosity, the event would not have been possible.

Youth Star's New Vision and Mission

Our Board of Director's meeting in March adopted a new vision and mission for Youth Star. The mission reflects the new perception of volunteering and the social context in Cambodia. For the past 10 years, our work has been focused on education, youth development, health education, sustainable livelihood and good governance. From this point forward, the work will focus more on the promotion of literacy and the reduction of poverty.

VISION

Our Vision is that all young Cambodians will:

- Have the education and tools to participate meaningfully in the development of their country;
- Possess the values, skills, and inspiration to be leaders for the common good, and;
- Contribute to eradicating illiteracy and poverty in marginalized communities.

MISSION

Youth Star Cambodia's aim is to empower Cambodian youth as volunteers, to improve the quality of life in vulnerable communities through education and civic participation.

Youth Star Cambodia Alumni is Getting Stronger



Alumni post a picture after the semi-annual meeting

Youth Star Cambodia Alumni was officially established in 2008. A management committee was organised and a charter and by-laws for governing the association were agreed. Annually, the committee sets priority actions for promoting volunteering in Cambodia and for supporting Youth Star. The Alumni is a membership association for former volunteers and staff of Youth Star Cambodia. It offers an opportunity to these former volunteers and staff to remain a part of the Youth Star family and to continue to contribute to furthering the mission and vision of Youth Star. Former volunteers elected by their peers manage the Alumni Association. Today, the alumni have around 200 members, and this number is increasing every year. Recently, the alumni have restructured its managing body through an election. On 27th June, the team held a half-yearly meeting to reflect the work and set new priorities for the coming months.

Youth Club Organized International Children's Day

On 1st June, the Youth and Children's Club in Chhongkrong Village, Kratie Province, organized an exciting event to celebrate International Children's Day. Over 400 hundred school children happily participated in the programme. Involved institutions and people, including Youth Star Cambodia, the Department of Education, the Department of



Children are listening to the speech

Women's Affairs, local authorities, teachers and parents participated and presided over the event.

Mrs. Mora Gibbings, executive director of Youth Star Cambodia, delivered an

important message to the children, reminding them that they are the backbone of the country's future. Development. She told the children to learn about their rights and to remember the importance of their education.

The club also put on an entertaining performance that contained a clear message about children's rights. This was followed by a march around the village to raise awareness among the villagers. The event was energetic and full of joy.

Youth Star to Sign MoU with Ministry of Education

On the 8th June, Youth Star Cambodia had the great honour of meeting the the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, H.E Dr. Hang Chuon Naron. The meeting emphasised the importance of Youth Star's programme and the areas of cooperation where the two institutions can work together. A Memorandum of Understanding is to be signed to promote volunteering in Cambodia and undertake non-formal education in marginalized rural communities. It will serve to strengthen Cambodian civil society through the development of youth leadership and the raising of educational standards.

The programme will support the Royal Government of Cambodia through empowering Cambodian graduates as volunteers, thereby helping to develop them as future leaders of Cambodia in the public sector, private sector and civil society. Through undertaking community activities and being responsible for programme delivery, volunteers will develop skills and competencies that will help them to obtain future employment.

Youth Star Cambodia will work closely with Ministry staff to ensure its programmes are consistent with and complementary to the Ministry's educational programmes and objectives.

We are grateful to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport for the cooperation and support, which enable Youth Star's programme to help both our young volunteers and marginalized rural communities.



Youth Star with H.E. Dr. Hang Chuon Naron

Support Us

Donating to Youth Star Cambodia

Help us to grow Good Citizenship in Cambodia by giving young people an opportunity to serve as volunteers in underserved rural communities. Your donations will support education programs for students at risk of dropping out of school, youth led community sanitation, and youth led prevention of gender based violence activities, amongst others. At a time of global economic difficulties Youth Star relies more than ever on donations and has an urgent need to raise more funds. The cost of training, supervising and supporting one volunteer alone is \$3,000. Please see our [Get involved](#) section on our website for information on different ways to donate or contact us at Email: info@youthstarcambodia.org.

Or you can donate through:



<http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/youth-star-cambodian-graduates-help-their-community/>

Be Our Corporate Partner

Join the growing number of private sector companies who are investing in Youth Star. As the private sector in Cambodia grows, corporate social responsibility values are gaining attention. Youth Star seeks partners to help us explore solutions to help develop Cambodia and benefit all sectors, including business. Our corporate partners understand that Youth Star offers a unique opportunity to work with an organization that stands out in its professionalism and commitment to excellence.

Thank you!