

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**Saint Paul, MN**  
**June 20, 2011**

The Hmong Cultural Center and the Hmong Archives in Saint Paul are pleased to announce that in June 2011 the organizations were jointly awarded an Access to Artistic Excellence grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to support the development of a website to teach about Hmong embroidery. The Hmong Cultural Center and the Hmong Archives will use the NEA grant to develop a comprehensive digital archive of images and narrative descriptions of various types of traditional and modern Hmong Embroidery to be available for viewing on the internet through links on both the Hmong Cultural Center and Hmong Archives websites. Photographs will be taken of a selection of the more than 3,000 combined items of embroidery artworks included in the Hmong Cultural Center and Hmong Archives collections in Saint Paul, MN. Art works for display on the website will be chosen based on the quality of artwork as well as educational value in teaching about the range of artistic styles and formats associated with Hmong embroidery and the meaning of cultural symbols commonly used in this art form. Narrative descriptions of each piece of embroidery will be compiled using the cultural knowledge of staff and volunteers at both organizations. The website will display digital photographs and narrative descriptions of numerous types of traditional and modern Hmong embroidery including but not limited to Paj Ntaub (story blankets), Clothing, Headwear, Purses, Hotpads and Baby Carriers.

Txongpao Lee, Executive Director of Hmong Cultural Center stated: “We are very excited about our partnership with the Hmong Archives to develop a website with National Endowment for the Arts support to teach Hmong and non-Hmong of various ages about the rich tradition of Hmong embroidery.” Dr. Her Vang, Board Chair of the Hmong Archives noted: “Thanks to the NEA, we can now better appreciate the profound creativity of Hmong artists, the wide-ranging beauty of Hmong embroidery, as well as the invaluable efforts of dedicated individuals at the Hmong Archives & the Hmong Cultural Center to educate communities of scholars, educators, activists, and community members about the richness of the Hmong culture and tradition.”

Hmong Cultural Center’s mission is *to promote the personal development of children, youth and adults through Hmong cultural education while enhancing cross-cultural awareness and understanding between Hmong and non-Hmong persons.* The Hmong Cultural Center, located in Saint Paul Minnesota, has since 1992 provided instruction in traditional Hmong music, dance, marriage and funeral songs to Hmong and non-Hmong. Since 2000, the Cultural Center has hosted a popular educational website related to the Hmong people and their culture - [www.hmongcc.org](http://www.hmongcc.org). The center initiated a Hmong folk arts education website in 2004 at <http://www.hmongstudies.org/LearnaboutHmongwebsite.html>

The Cultural Center also provides Hmong and English language instruction and U.S. Citizenship Classes. The Cultural Center is home to the Hmong Resource Center library, recognized worldwide for its collection of materials on the Hmong, the library likely has the most comprehensive collection of Hmong-related dissertations and scholarly articles in the United States.

Founded in 1999, it is the mission of the Hmong Archives to *research, collect, preserve, interpret and disseminate materials in all formats about or by the Hmong people*. The organization promotes an awareness of Hmong arts, literature, music, history, and culture through displays, workshops and publications. The goals of the Hmong Archives include the following: to collect, preserve and make known Hmong knowledge and artifacts worldwide, through displays at our offices, at community events, and on our website; to conduct Hmong History and culture conferences and classes and to document Hmong oral histories. In addition to an extensive collection of Hmong-related books and articles, the Saint Paul-based Hmong Archives hosts a collection of more than 100,000 Hmong artifacts and objects. The Hmong Archives website may be visited at [www.hmongarchives.org](http://www.hmongarchives.org).