

# Hmong Cultural Center History and Achievements 1992-2012



- On August 11, 1992, the Hmong Cultural Center of Minnesota registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State's office as a non-profit organization
- Over the past twenty years, the Hmong Cultural Center has served the Hmong and non-Hmong community with several important programs to promote education about Hmong culture and history and facilitate the adaptation of Hmong in American Society

# Hmong Cultural Center Mission

- “To promote the personal development of children, youth, and adults through cultural education while providing resources that enhance cross-cultural awareness between Hmong and non-Hmong.”

# **Hmong Cultural Center Achievements 1992-2012**

## **Citizenship and ESL Class Instruction**

- Hmong Cultural Center has provided Citizenship Classes to the community since the mid-1990s as a member of the Saint Paul Community Literacy Consortium
- Over the years, HCC has developed a particularly strong reputation as a provider of Medical Waiver Citizenship Classes for elderly and disabled Hmong refugees, a group whose needs are often overlooked by other service agencies
- HCC estimates it has assisted at least 2,000 Hmong refugees in navigating the naturalization process and obtaining U.S. Citizenship over this time, a very important contribution to Hmong adjustment to Minnesota

# Hmong Cultural Center Achievements 1992-2012

## Citizenship and ESL Class Instruction

- With the arrival of Hmong from Wat Tham Krabok in Thailand in 2004, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes became another important component of Hmong Cultural Center's Adult Basic Education programming
- Today, Hmong Cultural Center serves diverse populations in its Adult Basic Education classes including Vietnamese, Laotians, Oromo and Karen



# **Hmong Cultural Center Achievements 1992-2012**

## **Qeej, Dance, Funeral and Wedding Song Instruction**

- The organization's emphasis on preserving traditional Hmong folk arts is inherently connected to the social fabric and ethnic identity of Hmong Minnesotans
- Qeej, Funeral and Wedding Song Instruction classes were founding programs of Hmong Cultural Center twenty years ago and remain important parts of its mission in promoting education about Hmong culture today
- In the late 1990s, the center diversified its offerings with the addition of classes to teach Hmong and Asian dances to children and youth

# Hmong Cultural Center Achievements 1992-2012

## Qeej, Dance, Funeral and Wedding Song Instruction

- Since 1992, Hmong Cultural Center estimates that it has trained more than 500 children and youth to play the Qeej instrument in Hmong funeral ceremonies and a similar number of community members in the oral recitation of traditional Hmong funeral and wedding songs
- In a very real, tangible sense, Hmong Cultural Center has contributed to the continued survival of the Qeej instrument tradition and the ability of Hmong families in Minnesota to have proper cultural funeral and wedding ceremonies for another generation



# Hmong Cultural Center Achievements 1992-2012

## Hmong Resource Center Library

- In the late 1990s, the Hmong Cultural Center started the Hmong Resource Center Library ([www.hmonglibrary.org](http://www.hmonglibrary.org)), a unique collection of Hmong-related books, dissertations, journal and newspaper articles which has grown into the largest collection of Hmong-related scholarly research in the United States
- Hundreds of high school and college students, scholars and community members use the resource center library each year, many of these library patrons come from beyond the Twin Cities area to utilize this institution's unique collections of books, theses, dissertations and journal articles about the Hmong



# Hmong Cultural Center Achievements 1992-2012

## Multicultural Education Program Initiatives

- In 2003, Hmong Cultural Center developed a Building Bridges: Teaching about the Hmong in Our Communities (Hmong 101) curriculum which has been shared with at least 5,000 persons in community presentations and visits to the center over the past 9 years
- The center has also engaged in recent initiatives to develop resources that educate the public about Hmong traditional folk arts including:
  - ❑ [www.learnabouthmong.net](http://www.learnabouthmong.net), a multimedia website with videos and powerpoint presentations intended to teach about Hmong folk arts and history and culture
  - ❑ [www.hmongembroidery.org](http://www.hmongembroidery.org) a recently launched virtual Hmong textiles museum in partnership with the Hmong Archives intended to engage viewers in learning about Hmong culture and Hmong folk arts as practiced by Hmong Minnesotans





# Hmong Cultural Center Achievements 1992-2012

- After an almost year-long intensive process involving the hard work of Hmong Cultural Center's staff and board of directors, HCC earned the "Meets Standards" designation from the Minnesota Charities Review Council in January 2012
- Hmong Cultural Center is one of the first Asian organizations in the state of Minnesota to successfully undergo the rigorous review of organizational accountability procedures and finances required to earn the CRC's "Meets Standards" designation



# Other Current Hmong Cultural Center Initiatives

- The Recent Relaunch of the Hmong Cultural Center’s website [www.hmongcc.org/](http://www.hmongcc.org/) with a strong emphasis on social networking (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter) , video and colorful banners to promote the various multicultural education programs of the center
- The translation of important Hmong wedding and funeral songs for a book to be available in a print edition and on HCC’s website. This project has been supported by a \$6,500 grant from the Minnesota Historical Society. This activity is funded, in part, by the arts and cultural heritage fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the Legacy Amendment vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008



# Future Hmong Cultural Center Initiatives

- The leadership and staff of Hmong Cultural Center are very excited about several initiatives planned for the next few years. These upcoming initiatives are centered upon the multicultural education focus of Hmong Cultural Center's mission and include:
  - ✓ An Upcoming Community Exhibit of Hmong Embroidery Artworks featured on [HmongEmbroidery.org](http://HmongEmbroidery.org), the new virtual museum partnership of the Hmong Cultural Center/Hmong Archives (a new \$2,500 grant from the Traveler's Diversity Committee will support this work)



[www.HmongEmbroidery.org](http://www.HmongEmbroidery.org)

# Future Hmong Cultural Center Initiatives

- The Production of Additional Videos of Hmong Folk Arts Performances for Inclusion in the Center's Expanding LearnaboutHmong Arts Education Webpage ([www.learnabouthmong.net](http://www.learnabouthmong.net)) as well as the center's YouTube page
- These new videos will including the filming of the canon of Qeej songs associated with the funeral ceremony



# Future Hmong Cultural Center Initiatives

- The Development of Expanded Enhanced Interpretative Exhibits and Displays Related to Hmong History in Minnesota as part of a combined *Hmong American History Center and Library*
- A \$7,000 grant has recently been received from the Minnesota Historical Society to support the development of narrative scripts for exhibits and wall displays as part of this project in 2013. This activity is funded, in part, by the arts and cultural heritage fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the Legacy Amendment vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.



# Future Hmong Cultural Center Initiatives

- The Expansion of the Hmong 101 (formerly Building Bridges) Multicultural Education Program to the Internet through Webinar Technology
- The new Hmong 101 webinars will serve Educators and Service Providers working with Hmong Populations in Greater Minnesota, Wisconsin, California, North Carolina, Michigan, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Alaska and other States with Emerging Hmong Populations



## **Hmong 101 Program**

# Current Hmong Cultural Center Funders

- Minnesota Historical Society. Hmong Cultural Center is a fiscal year 2012 and 2013 recipient of a Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant from the Minnesota Historical Society. This activity is funded, in part, by the arts and cultural heritage fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the Legacy Amendment vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008. At HCC, MHS Cultural Heritage Grants support the translation and publication of Hmong wedding and funeral songs in 2012 and the planning of Hmong American history exhibits in 2013.



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL &  
CULTURAL HERITAGE GRANTS

# Current Hmong Cultural Center Funders

- Minnesota State Arts Board. Hmong Cultural Center is a fiscal year 2012 and 2013 recipient of Folk Arts grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is funded, in part, by the arts and cultural heritage fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the Legacy Amendment vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008. State Arts Board grants support Qeej Instruction at HCC in 2012 and Wedding Songs Classes in 2013.





# Current Hmong Cultural Center Funders

- National Endowment for the Arts (Hmongembroidery.org in 2012)
- Otto Bremer Foundation (Medical Waiver Citizenship Classes in 2012 and 2013)
- Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (Strategic Planning in 2013)
- Minnesota Department of Revenue (Volunteer Community Tax Clinics in 2012 and 2013)
- Saint Paul Foundation Asian Pacific Endowment (HmongEmbroidery.org in 2012 and Updating the Hmong Resource Center Library Catalog System in 2013)
- Saint Paul Community Literacy Consortium (Citizenship and ESL Classes in 2012/2013)
- Travelers Diversity Committee/COMPAS (Hmongembroidery.org Exhibit in 2013)

