

Cambodia Corps Update December 2019



Greetings Friends,

CAMBODIA CORPS continues with the mission of developing an educated leadership in a rapidly changing world for the Montagnard population of Cambodia. Graduates are required to return to their home provinces for employment with NGOs and government agencies to help their people.

Why do we continue to help the Montagnards? They were America's faithful allies. After we abandoned them when South Vietnam fell, they lost their freedom and their traditional homelands in the Central Highlands. In the words of Mike Benge, former POW and human rights activist, "One-quarter of the adult Montagnard male population sacrificed their lives for America. Without that valiant effort, there would be many more names of American soldiers on the Vietnam Wall in Washington, DC."

Much of the credit for the success of our program must go to Maren, our manager. He is the one who makes the difficult trips to the boonies over muddy roads on rented motorbikes to seek and recruit poor but capable young Montagnard who will commit to improving the future of their people. Without your help, these kids would likely never attend high school let alone college. The example they make for others in their village and the gratitude they have is heartwarming. But the payoff is the fact that we are giving back to the people who gave so much for us and they, in turn, are using their education to help their own.

We have developed a relationship with an NGO called World Hope International, based in the US that seeks to bring Montagnard children into the educational process early on with pre-school and Kindergarten enrollment. Two of our recent graduates are now employed with them as Interns, which fits nicely with our goal of educating Montagnard youth.

Sol Panha, an August graduate in Community Development, was invited to join Women PeaceMakers and has participated in conferences in Viet Nam titled "International Tribes Youth Peace Building" and in Thailand titled "Indigenous Voices in Asia".

Sev Yem our middle school teacher who has been active in his community continues to work with Care International, bringing additional training to his school. He also led his staff in petitioning the Education Ministry for additional classrooms for their school and made the presentation to President Hun Sen's brother who made it happen.

May you and your family have a happy holiday season and a wonderful New Year!

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The elusive Kouprey, national animal of Cambodia and the most endangered big mammal in the world.