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**NISEI STUDENT RELOCATION
COMMEMORATIVE FUND, INC.**

19 Scenic Drive, Portland, Connecticut 06480

Fall, 2011

Dear NSRC Fund Supporters:

Saibaidee (hello in Lao) everyone. I have the distinct honor and privilege of writing this year's appeal letter. As the first and only Southeast Asian American on the NSRC board of directors, I am often in wonder and awe of my fellow board members. They are distinguished professionals in their fields - education, business, sciences - yet they all come together to dedicate their precious time to help Southeast Asian

American high school students. They practice that part of the mission statement that says, "the NSRC Fund encourages inter-ethnic collaboration."

After 35 years of the initial resettlement to the U.S., we would expect to see high rates of high school and college graduation for the Southeast Asian Americans. The "model minority myth" and the aggregate numbers of Asian Americans hide their specific struggles. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 20% of the U.S. adult population over 25 holds a bachelor degree compared to 43% of the Asian American adults. HOWEVER, for Southeast Asian adults (with the exception of the Vietnamese at 20%) it's a different story: 9% Cambodian/Khmer adults, 8% Laotian adults, and 8% Hmong adults hold college degrees.

I use my own story to highlight some of the challenges currently facing Laotian, Cambodian/Khmer, Hmong, and Vietnamese students. My parents did not speak English very well. After surviving the refugee camps, they went to work in manufacturing jobs and did not have the time to attend an ESL class, let alone school. Their primary focus was to feed their children and keep a safe roof over our heads. Both my older brothers enlisted into the military upon their high school graduations. Trying to support a family of six, our parents could not afford to send my brothers to college. When I was a senior in high school, no one in my family could assist me with the college application and financial aid process because none of them had gone to college. The difference in my life was the help I received from teachers who believed in my intellectual curiosity; a soccer coach who mentored me and provided emotional support; and scholarships to help finance my education. Today, I am proud to be the first Lao American to earn her doctorate in education from Harvard University. I join the less than 1% of Lao Americans who hold doctorates in the U.S. I write this not to toot my horn but to be a role model for Southeast Asian American youth. I want to show them what is possible!

This earnest request is to ask you to consider what - or who - made a difference in your life. You may want to consider making a gift in honor of your mother, father, or family member who went through a similar internment or refugee camp experience. You can give in honor of a favorite teacher, sports coach, or mentor who believed in you. And after 31 years, there are over 650 former NSRC scholarship recipients out there. For those of you who received an NSRC scholarship, your donation will pay it forward!

THANK YOU. Korp jai lie lie (Lao), Au goon (Khmer), Cum On (Vietnamese), Oo-wah chow (Hmong). Thank you for giving, and for making a difference in the lives of Southeast Asian Americans students. Thank you on behalf of these Southeast Asian American youths who will surely touch others in the future.

Sincerely,

Phitsamay Sychitkokhong Uy

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19 Scenic Drive, Portland, Connecticut 06480

I/we would like to "extend a helping hand." Enclosed is my/our tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____
(Please make check payable to NSRC Fund)

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Add to an existing Tribute, Legacy or Named Scholarship Fund called: _____

Send information about how to establish NSRC Fund Tribute, Legacy and Named Scholarship Funds

I would like to receive the annual NSRC Fund newsletter by email: _____
(print your email address)