

Students in the class of 2015, JHP Skola. Our technical school serves poor rural youth in Cambodia. Some 40 students are enrolled in one-year courses in either tailoring or computer use/English. All graduates are placed in jobs. About half the students live at the school and the rest commute. Students volunteer for daily maintenance chores, help raise chickens and fish and work in the organic garden and kitchen. These students were interviewed in the Summer of 2015.

MAB MAI:



Background: Mab is 22, the youngest of 4 children. His oldest sister works as a hair stylist in the village and his other two siblings live and work on the family farm. They grow rice to eat and sell, along with chilly peppers and water grass. Dad also works part-time as a barber.

Why he came to JHP: Mab worked on the family farm after high school. They are barely able to make ends meet and he would not inherit enough land to support a family. He heard about the school from friends. His parents are proud that he enrolled and was accepted. They told him, "Now you can get a job."

JHP experience: "It was not hard to adjust. Now I have many friends here." Asked if he would graduate, he said, "Yes, I can do this." He said he was always drawing at home. He wants to become a (web) designer and is learning this software here, along with English. He had already learned enough to communicate without a translator. He does not have a girlfriend now, but when he has a job, "I will find a girlfriend myself, after I save some money."

Message to donors: "Thank you very much. This school teaches good skills for life. It helps students with everything, not just computers and English."

THIM BOPHARY:

Background: Thim is 21, the youngest of 7 children. Her oldest brother works as a motorcycle repairman in Phnom Penh. Most of her family lives on their farm in Kratie Province, which is in the eastern part of Cambodia, near the Vietnam border.

Why she came to JHP: With 6 siblings, she would not inherit enough land to farm. There were no jobs locally and as a girl it was hard for her to leave the family and work independently somewhere else.



Her sister and brother-in-law live near the school and they helped recruit her. She was happy to be accepted as a student and to have opportunity not available at home. She only can visit her family 4 times a year, but says, "I like this."

JHP experience: Tim graduated from last year's class. She was such a good student we hired her as an assistant teacher this year. She teaches beginning English and computers, and organizes the gardening, cooking and chores. She began to work part-time at the local medical clinic this year, and now has been hired full time. She does intake interviews for new patients, enters data in the computer and works a go-between with the medical staff and patients. "I help qualify people for treatment or refer them elsewhere." She makes \$180/mo., soon to be \$200.

Message to donors: "Thank you a lot for JHP school. I learned and I got a job. Thank you."

UK VIREAK:

Background: Uk is the 6th of 9 children. The 3 oldest are married and live elsewhere. The five younger ones help on the family farm. They have 3 hectares of land, "enough to feed our family." He worked on the family farm before and after he graduated from high school. His younger sibs have been able to manage the farm without him now. His parents encouraged him to enroll.



Why he came to JHP: The family farm is too small to be divided among all the siblings. There was little future in farming what would have been his small share of their land. The family had no money to pay for school and Uk had no skills other than farming. JHP presented an opportunity for another life.

JHP experience: Uk has been here 6 months. The most difficulty part of being here is "when I get homesick and can't study." The best part of it is "having lots of friends and having teachers to guide me." He really enjoys working in the garden. All this motivates him to study. He also wants to be a (web) designer. After studying the software, he says, "I think I can do it." Ten years from now he hopes to have saved money to be able to open his own shop to sell electronics.

Message to donors: "Akuhn (pressing his hands together). Thank you to everybody, to every donor that gives the poor students a place to come and learn."

SOPHEA CHAN: with Sophat, the principal, and his son, who is the school mascot.

Background: Sophea is the oldest of 3 children from a farm family. Her siblings are both in school. They own enough land to grow rice for the family and some extra rice they can sell, along with garden vegetables, sugar they make from palm trees.



Her mother makes small cakes to sell at the market. She says the family has a moto and 3 bicycles. Economically, and she thinks that economically, they are “in the middle.”

Why she came to JHP: She had to drop out of high school to work at home when her mother became sick. Mother is now better but Sophea missed too much school to keep up with her class and did not return. She came here to finish her education. She said, “JHP has a good reputation in my village.” She said her parents support her attendance here even though they could use her help at home.

JHP experience: She has been here 6 months. The first month was very difficult. “I was very homesick at first, but this was my job (to go to school) and I had to stay.” Now she has “a lot of friends here.” She has learned enough sewing to make some of her own clothes and she is confident that she will graduate with good skills. She wants to apprentice at a tailoring shop, then open her own shop. “I want to work for myself, like my Mom and Dad.” She hopes to eventually marry and have 4 children.

Message to donors: “This school is very good. The poor people can come to learn here.”

TEM NEAT:

Background: Tem is 19 years old and the 4th of 6 children. His family lives in Kampong Cham Province. Their large family only has ½ hectare of land, a little over an acre. “Most of the time we have enough rice, but not much else.” He worked as a laborer to help support the family, as did several siblings.



Why he came to JHP: Tem’s cousin from Siem Reap is one of our graduates. Tem knew he would never get ahead laboring – no matter how hard he worked. He had no contacts to get a better job. His cousin helped recruit him to get an education in computers and

English. Now he can get a job that will help support his family and enable him to save some money to get married and have a family of his own.

JHP experience: School, he says, is much easier than working in the rice mill. “The hardest thing is studying.” He enjoys sports at the school and working in the garden. He says he is “in the middle” as a student. He thinks he has a “40% chance to succeed.” Based on our experience with students, we would estimate his chances as much greater. If needed, we will support him with English classes after graduation, as we have done for other highly motivated students. Providing continued support after graduation is necessary for those who are not quite ready to be on their own.

Message to donors: “Thank you. I want to give you my blessings for a long life and happy.” Clearly he will need to do a little more English class studying, but his heart is in the right place and he is quite well liked among the students.

CHHOUY TEAN (plaid shirt)

Background: Chhouy is 22 years old. She has been living with her older sister and her husband because there was not enough to go around with 3 younger siblings still at home. The reason the family is poor is because her father was wounded as a soldier. “He is disabled from the war.”

Why she came to JHP: Her sister and husband have been arguing and she cannot stay there any more, she said. She does not want to burden her parents. She was happy to be recruited because this gave her a place to live and a future. Being prematurely on her own has been hard for her emotionally.

JHP experience: Shortly after coming here, she had an upset stomach and went to her home clinic. She was diagnosed with several serious diseases (we think by a quack who wanted to sell her medicine). This so scared her that she could not think or concentrate and thought she would have to drop out. We took her to the local clinic (where our graduate Thim works). They did blood tests and found that she had no physical illnesses. The doctor gave her medicine for upset stomach and told her the biggest problem was that she worries too much. She agrees; “I have always worried too much. Worry is the hardest thing. The classes are very good and the teachers are clear. I can learn it.” We assigned her another student as a big sister and she has made friends with the other students.



Message to the donors; “I am very happy you support me and our school. I wish the donors to have a good life.”

SOCHEAT MAO

Background: Socheat is the 4th of 5 boys in a farm family. They are poor, he says.



The land they have is shared with many relatives, leaving less than a hectare for their immediate family. One of his older brothers works in town. His wages help support the family. His mother cannot work because she has cancer. She is being cared for at home by his younger brother.

Why he came to JHP: Socheat's uncle Ren is a tuk-tuk driver whom we met some years ago, liked and often use to transport guests to the school. Ren recommended JHP to Socheat, who was working for low construction wages. It was clear to him that construction would never pay enough to have the life he wants. He is extremely happy to be here.

JHP experience: Socheat is most pleased at being able to learn English. He is good at this and seems to have a talent for languages. He wants to take Spanish after he learns English. He is pleased with his progress at JHP and hopeful about his future. "When I am 33, I will have a good job and I can get married." He plans to start by selling souvenirs, speaking English to tourists and learning it better. Once his language skills are better, he will become a tour guide and, in the future, open his own business (like his uncle who recommended JHP). He has a friendly and cheerful personality. We think his plans are realistic and within his reach.

Message to donors: "Thank you for helping me learn. JHP is a very good school. It teaches computer and language, and also how to be a good person."

NARONG HENH

BACKGROUND: Narong is 25, the 5th of 7 children. Her family owns less than half a hectare (about 1 acre) of land and so cannot grow enough rice for their own consumption. Her oldest sister works as a teacher in town and her salary helps support the family. Her father can no longer work; "He is too old." Narong says she wants to be able to help support her family as her sister does.

Why she came to JHP: Her oldest sister and her husband live here in Puok and recruited her. There was no chance of a job in her village. She would like to be a receptionist and is pleased with her new English skills.

JHP experience: Narong is friendly and approachable and has made many friends here. As far as classes go, she says, “School is very hard, very focused and fast paced. It is much harder than the government English class. At first I got behind but now I am caught up with the other students.” As for her future, “I will be able to get a job, I think. They pay is not so important at first, I just want to find a job.”

Message to donors: “Could we have more computers (we added six more this year), more volunteers, more students, more English? Please Roger, continue the class here. The school is very, very helpful. Please don’t stop”



HEANG HOU

Background: Heang is 20 years old, the third of 6 children. She describes her family as “poor.” They had to sell their land some years ago then her grandmother was ill and they needed medicine. Her father died a long time ago, and the only place her mother can find work is near the border with Thailand – she comes home to visit her family 2 or 3 times a year. Grandmother cares for the younger children.

Why she came to JHP: Heang heard about JHP from a friend who recommended it to her. There were no job opportunities in her home village in Battambang Province. She wants a job as a receptionist so she can perfect her English by talking with customers. She also hopes to improve her English by taking private classes after graduation. We will help pay for these lessons after she graduates.

JHP experience: Heang says, “There is nothing bad about this school. I have lots of friends here and I like to study. School is fun!” Here in Siem Reap, we can easily place computer/English graduates like her in a job. With her sunny personality, we think Heang will be a natural at working in the tourism industry.

Message to donors: “Thank you for helping support the poor students so they can get a job and support their family.”

