

PHAGNA TOUBY LYFOUNG

**THE PHAGNA TOUBY LYFOUNG LEADERSHIP LEGACY
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
APPLICATION PACKET**



1917 – 1979

**PRESENTED BY
THE HMONG AMERICAN EDUCATION FUND**

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This scholarship was donated by the Touby Lyfoung Foundation.

Phagna Touby Lyfoung was a visionary leader who wanted his Hmong people to live prosperously, harmoniously, and with dignity in the Kingdom of Laos. He believed that education, equal opportunity, and integration were the keys to achieving this goal. His relentless efforts led to the Hmong and other ethnic minorities being granted Lao citizenship, a step toward equality in education and other socioeconomic aspects of life.

Born in 1917 in Nong-Het, Laos, Touby was the third son of Xia Foung Ly and May Lo, a daughter of Kaitong Bliayao Lo. His grandfather, Dra Po Ly, migrated from China to Laos around year 1860. His father, Xia Foung Ly, built the first classroom in 1924 and hired a Lao teacher to educate some Hmong and his children. In 1934, Touby completed his elementary education in Xiengkhouang, and in June 1939, his French Brevet d'Etudes in Vinh, Vietnam. He returned to Nong-Het to help his father with family and township administrative duties. When his father passed away in October of that year, the French administration appointed Touby as his father's successor for the position of Tasseng (Township Chief) of Kengkhuai.

A strong believer in freedom, Touby, together with his loyal and courageous Hmong people, led the resistance against the Japanese occupation and Vietminh invasion from 1944-1946. In 1946, the French and King Sisavangvong appointed him as Deputy Governor of the Xiengkhouang province and Chaomuong Hmong (Governor of the Hmong population), and granted the Hmong people the right to self-govern. As Chaomuong Hmong, he appointed five notable Hmong to the position of Naikong (Sub-District Chief). In the same year, King Sisavangvong bestowed the honorific title of "Phagna Damrong Ritthikai" on Touby. Phagna Touby Lyfoung then built the first communal schools in Hmong villages and opened the door to public education for the Hmong people in Laos. The first wave of Hmong teachers and nurses came from those schools. He recommended that the French allow a young Hmong man named Vang Pao to attend the prestigious military officer school in Dong Hene. In 1947, his staunch support for equal rights led to the Lao and French administration's appointment of his younger brother, Toulia Lyfoung, to the Lao Constituent Assembly, where he successfully argued for Lao citizenship to be granted to all ethnic minorities living in the Kingdom of Laos. Only then the Hmong people of Laos felt they had a place they could finally call home.

In 1958, Phagna Touby Lyfoung was elected Congressman of the Xiengkhouang province and Vice-President of the Lao National Assembly. From 1960 to 1963, he was appointed Secretary of State of Information, Minister of Justice, and Minister of Public Health and Social Welfare. He advocated the admission of Hmong students to the Lycee de Vientiane, which was the doorway to higher education. He implemented the daily delivery of information in both Hmong and Khamou languages through the Lao National Radio, which was a communication and cultural revolution. He recommended to Prince Boun Oum Na Champassak and General Phoumi Nosavanh to promote Colonel Vang Pao to General and replace General Khamkhong Bouthavong in Military Region II of Laos. Also during the war, Touby on many occasions asked the US Air America to airdrop food to Hmong refugees in Thavieng and in Padong, and to build a refugee centers at Thadkhaio in Vientiane, away from the theaters of military operations for the Hmong people, to accommodate refugees fleeing civil war and the resettlement area in Namhia in Sayaboury province. From 1964 to 1974, Phagna Touby Lyfoung was appointed King's Advisor by King Sisavang Vatthana and then served as the Inspector of the Administrative Affairs of Southern Laos. In April 1974, the Prime Minister Prince Souvannaphouma requested that Phagna Touby Lyfoung be part of the Government of National Reconciliation.

In the political turmoil of spring 1975, faithful to his convictions, Phagna Touby Lyfoung decided not to flee but to stay with the majority of the Hmong who remained in the country, to help them the best he could. In November 1975, the Communist Pathet Lao overthrew the Government of National Reconciliation. Touby, along with the King, the Crown Prince, and other civilian and military high ranking officials, were sent to the communist re-education camp in northern Laos near the Vietnam border from where he never returned.

Phagna Touby Lyfoung had a lifelong passion for literature. He enjoyed reading books and composing his own poems. His memoirs were later published by his son, Dr. Touxa Lyfoung: *"Tub Npis Lisfoom, Tej Lus Tseg Cia"* or *"Touby Lyfoung, An Authentic Account of the Life of a Hmong Man in the Troubled Land of Laos."*

The first Hmong to gain national prominence in Laos and one of the most honored Hmong men in Hmong history, Phagna Touby Lyfoung received the French and Lao highest honor medals for his extraordinary services to his country: Knight and then Officer of the French National Order of the Legion of Honor (1947 and 1953), French Cross of War of Theatres of Operations External with Palm (1953), French War Cross 1939-1945 with Bronze Star and Silver-Gilt Palm (1946), Lao Grand Officer of the Order of the Million Elephants and the White Parasol (1958), and Lao Medal of the Order of the Reign of King Sisavangvong.

Phagna Touby Lyfoung is survived by 16 children and 87 grandchildren. His three wives are deceased.

(Biography and photo provided by the family)

Instructions for the Phagna Touby Lyfoung Leadership Legacy Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is presented by the Hmong American Education Fund. The scholarship seeks to financially support two dedicated Hmong-American students (one male, one female) in the pursuit of their higher educational goals. The successful applicant will be awarded up to \$1,000 each to the choice of their college or university. Download this application packet and fill out the form below. **All application materials are due by April 30.** Late applications and materials will not be considered. Any hand-written application will be disqualified. All application materials must be emailed to hmongeducationfund@gmail.com. You will be notified of your application status via email by or after June 1.

Applicants Must Meet All Criteria Listed

- A U.S. citizen or legal resident alien
- Any state resident
- Any person of Hmong descent
- Any high school senior, high school or GED graduate or current college student is eligible
- Has been accepted fulltime to a 2-year or 4-year college/university or graduate school
- Has a minimum GPA of 3.4 in a 4.0 scale system
- Students or parents are from the lower middle class families

Scholarship Application Packet, Checklist

- A completed application
- Essay (1500 words or less)
- Copy of unofficial transcript
- One letter of recommendation
- **Submit all required application documents in PDF format to hmongeducationfund@gmail.com**

A Successful applicant must demonstrate the following

- Pursue an education to better themselves and others
- A commitment to excellent academic achievement
- A show of strong leadership qualities
- A commitment to helping your community
- Demonstrated financial needs, or need based on hardships

Essay: In one essay, 1500 words or less, please answer the following questions

- Tell us about your commitment to education
- Tell us about your leadership qualities
- Tell us some of the things you have done to help your community
- Tell us your needs and how this scholarship can help you

Additional Requirements

- If the recipient is from Minnesota, he/she is expected to attend the Scholarship Awards Banquet on the first Saturday of August
- If selected, recipients are expected to submit the documents requested for the Scholarship Awards Banquet (ex. photo, bio, thank you letter to donors)

Successful applicants are encouraged to attend two general academic coaching and mentoring sessions with HAEF. These sessions can be done via phone, E-mail or face to face.

(If you have any questions, please email: scholarships@thehaef.org)



Touby Lyfoung Scholarship Application

(Type responses below & email back to hmongeducationfund@gmail.com along with all other required documents in PDF)

Last Name:	First Name:	Middle:
Home Phone:	Cell Phone:	E-Mail:
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy):	Race/Ethnicity:
Current Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Permanent Address (if different from above):		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Check one of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> U.S Citizen <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Alien Resident of U.S. <input type="checkbox"/> None	Are you a first generation student? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Marital Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed
Number of parent(s):	Family size:	Number of dependents (if applicable):
Are you currently in high school or pursuing your GED? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Name of your current School:		Current GPA:
School Address:		
Name of College/University you have been accepted to and/or will be attending:		
Major/Program:		
Degree you are seeking: <input type="checkbox"/> Associate <input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD/Doctorate <input type="checkbox"/> Other:		
What year of schooling are you in: <input type="checkbox"/> First Year <input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore <input type="checkbox"/> Junior <input type="checkbox"/> Senior		
Will you be a Fulltime Student: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Have you been awarded other scholarships or financial assistance? (If yes, please list them):		
Print Name:	Signature:	Date:
Disclaimer: By signing this application I understand that the information provided is true to the best of my knowledge. HAEF reserve the right to verify information submitted on the successful candidate's application. In addition, the views and opinions expressed by individuals and/or businesses featured in our scholarships do not necessary represent the views of the Hmong American Education Fund.		