

**XIA THAO**

**THE MRS. PRAYA NORAPARMORK GENERAL VANG PAO  
LEADERSHIP LEGACY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

**APPLICATION PACKET**



**April 27th, 1938 – March 5th, 2007**

**PRESENTED BY  
THE HMONG AMERICAN EDUCATION FUND**

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**This scholarship was donated by Xia Thao's children, daughter in-laws and son-inlaws in loving  
memory of Xia Thao.**

Xia Thao was born on April 27, 1938, in Xieng Khouang Province, Laos. Most people in the Hmong community know her as “Niam Loj.” Xia was the second child and oldest daughter of Xhia Shoua Thao and Mao Yang. Because Xia’s father passed away at an early age, she was forced to grow up quickly, and she helped her mother raise six brothers and one younger sister.

Xia met Vang Pao in 1952. At the time, Vang Pao was a lieutenant in the Royal Lao Army and a widower with three children. The two would marry later that year, changing their lives forever. Despite being young, Xia managed to raise the three young children, five nieces and nephews, along with eleven children of her own with Vang Pao.

Xia was always a strong supporter of education. Early in her marriage she encouraged her husband to continue his education by enrolling in the French Military Academy School in Vientiane, Laos. From there Vang Pao would eventually achieve the rank of lieutenant general in the Royal Lao Army.

During the war in Southeast Asia, Xia, along with General Vang Pao, housed hundreds of orphans and homeless children whose parents were casualties of the war. These children were placed in schools and in work areas that best suited their abilities. Such opportunities would later help many of these orphans get back on their feet economically.

Regardless of the ongoing war, education remained a top priority for Xia and General Vang Pao. Always by her husband’s side, she would continue to show a nurturing side of General Vang Pao’s policies in the war-torn region of Northeastern Laos. No matter how difficult it was, she would smile and fulfill her role and responsibilities. She supported her husband’s work to establish schools and hospitals in nearby villages, and the couple did their best to make life as normal as possible for civilians--especially for children. All these efforts eventually led to the opening of the first college in the region at Sam Thong, under Superintendent Moua Lia. Xia, with her husband, had always pushed to expand education opportunities not only for Hmong students but for all students in Northeastern Laos. With the opening of the first college this vision and dream would be a reality.

By the early 1970s, Xia Thao was happy and proud to have finally witnessed more and more Hmong students for the first time attending schools in Vientiane and moving on to study abroad in Canada, France, and the United States. General Vang Pao and Xia often played direct roles in supporting these students financially to study abroad. Xia also supported the general’s decision to send his two eldest sons from his first marriage to attend school in the West. The oldest son would study in France and the younger one would study at the United States Military Academy, in West Point, NY.

In public, Xia Thao had integrity and showed tremendous self-sacrifice for the greater good. Xia’s dream had always been for the Hmong people to be self-sufficient and able to meet their basic economic needs. To make this dream a reality she wanted all Hmong men, women, and children to have access to an education.

After a lifelong of serving her people, Xia Thao passed away on March 5, 2007, at the home of her son in Glendale, AZ, leaving behind her family and thousands of Hmong and Laotian people who saw her as a generous, kind, compassionate, and nurturing woman who loved everyone. She was put to rest in Southern California. Xia’s last words were, “You are all my children. When you are in pain and suffering, I am too. Take a good path and be happy.” Xia Thao will always be remembered for being the wife of General Vang Pao, but she was her own person who sacrificed and did so much else to improve the lives of others.

This leadership legacy memorial scholarship was made possible and donated by Xia Thao’s children, daughter in-laws, son in-laws, relatives, and friends of the family.

*(Biography & photo provided by family)*

## Instructions for the Xia Thao Scholarship

This scholarship is presented by the Hmong American Education Fund. The scholarship seeks to financially support one dedicated Hmong-American male student in the pursuit of their educational goals. The successful applicant will be awarded up to \$1,000 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](mailto: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
- A Minnesota resident
- Male, and identify himself as a person of Hmong descent
- All current college and graduate students are eligible
- Has been accepted fulltime to a 2-year or 4-year college/university or graduate school
- Has a minimum GPA of 3.0 in a 4.0 scale system

### 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](mailto: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

- Recipient 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](mailto:scholarships@thehaef.org) )



## Xia Thao Scholarship Application

(Type responses below & email back to [hmongeducationfund@gmail.com](mailto: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.		