**HMONG KEEB KWM**

**Kay Ying Lo- Interviewee**

**Touger Vang- Catawba County Library, Interviewer**

**Kay Ying Lo- KL**

**Touger Vang- TV**

**This is an oral history recorded on February 24, 2018 at the Newton Library in Newton, North Carolina as part of Hmong Keeb Kwm, a grant project awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities in partnership between the Catawba County Library, the Historical Society of Catawba County, and North Carolina Digital Heritage Center for the purposes of collecting and preserving the history of the Hmong in Catawba County and the surrounding area.**

**Total length of interview: 26 minutes and 50 seconds**

**Available format(s): Audio recorded on Audacity® available as a .WAV file, and video available as a .MOV file in three parts**

**Transcription and translation by: Houa Yang- Catawba County Library**

**TV:** My name is Touger Vang. I work for Catawba County libraries and I’m also part of the project called Hmong Keeb Kwm. Today is Saturday, February 24. We are recording this at Newton Branch library, Newton, North Carolina. I am interviewing Kay Ying or Niam Suav Mim Lauj, right? How do you want… [to be addressed]

**KL:** Yeah, that’s fine. Yeah.

**TV:** That’s fine, ok?

**KL:** Niam Suav Mim’s good.

**TV:** Please state your first and last name. *Thov koj hais koj lub npe thiab.*

**KL:** Nyob zoo os, kuv yog Niam Suav Mim Lauj. Kuv yog ib tug ntxhais hmoob Yaj. Kuv hu ua Kab Yeeb es kuv ho los yuav tsev hmoob Lauj. Kuv tus txiv hu Suav Mim Lauj. Feem ntau lawv muab nws hu ua Suav Lauj no thiab.

*(Hello, I am Mrs. Shoua Mee Lor. My maiden surname was Yang before I married into the Lor family. Most of the time people also call my husband Shoua Lor.)*

**TV:** Today, what did you bring for us? Hnub no koj nqa dab tsi tuaj ua keeb kwm los yog tias khaws cia rau koj cov tub mi nyuam tom ntej? *(Today, what did you bring as an artifact or to preserve for the future for your children?)*

**KL:** Qhov tseem ceeb tsaj plaws ces hnub no ib qho uas kuv tuaj no ces, peb Hmoob yeej muaj ntau ntau yam tej tug tabsis ib kho kub pom tau hais tias nws tseem ceeb tsaj plaws rau peb yog, peb muaj koj los mus nrog rau lawm koom muab kho project no los mus tuaj peb cov keeb kwm. Hnub no kuv tuaj ces kuv tuaj txhawb koom zog rau qhov ntawm nawb. Txhawb koom zog hais tias, qhov nov nyob rau hauv peb lub community no, peb nyob tau hauv North Carolina no tau txhog peb, plaub ncaug xyoo no, tsis muaj leej twg pom tau hais tias peb tej keeb kwm los yog peb tej nyiag tug ua peb nqa tau tuaj teb nchaws Nplog tuaj, nws muaj nuj nqis tabsi hnub no no mas nej nqa tau qhov project no los into my home. Qhov no yog ib qho uas kuv pom tau tias nej yuav introduce peb no mus rau lub community.

*(The Hmong have many kinds of artifacts but the most important thing is that you and your team are doing this project to preserve our heritage. I’m here to support that today. I’m supporting the fact that we’ve been in this community in North Carolina for thirty or fourty years and there hasn’t been anyone to recognize our heritage or artifacts that were brought with us from Laos but now you all are bringing this project here to home. This is something that can introduce us into the community.)*

We will no longer be invisible because it’ll be digital and it’ll also be something that we can preserve for the long run. And so I hope that this video or what you’re collecting here will be something that 100 years from now, our kids will look back and say “Oh my goodness. This is something that my mother or father had valued and brought it to this community, into this particular country. And so today what I brought with me is… a lot of things! [*laughing*] I have a lot of things! But one of the most valuable things that kuv *(I)* brought is… I’m big on silver.

[*shows silver bracelets*]

And one of the biggest reasons why I’m big on silver and jewelry is my husband was a jeweler. And I also did a little research on it and the Hmong people look at silver as one of the most valuable products in Hmong history. Nyiaj ces twb tsis yog ib qho ua lawv cia li hais tias yog nyiaj no, tabsis nyiaj is everything. *(There’s not even a word for money, it’s just the same word “silver.”)* The word silver is not just silver but it’s money. One of the things I brought with me…unfortunately I couldn’t bring everything that I wanted to bring, as in jewelry, but I’ve got three bracelets that I’ve brought here.

**TV:** Can you show it to the camera?

**KL:** These are silver bracelets. Particularly, the Hmong wore it in the old days. My parents couldn’t bring a lot of their jewelry to this country but I got these in an event that I participated in after my husband passed away. I became really ill and one of the gentlemen who has a big practice [of] preserving positive energy within you, as well as to make all the negative things go away from you, had recommended for me to get this. I got these from a temple. There’s bits of silver inside of it so when you wear it and you fall asleep, you can hear the sound. These are protectors of our body and making certain that nothing negative will come to us. I value them a lot. These are just a small piece of what I’ve got. I have a lot of things that I preserve in terms of jewelry. I’m really big on jewelry!

I also brought some of these. [*brings out item*] These are monies that were my parents’. When we came to America, my dad brought these and he was sure that we couldn’t use these monies anymore. From Laos, we got these monies which is [are] bills and dollars. I’m not sure how much they’re worth now, if they are [worth anything]. I don’t know if they’re worth a lot or not but they are very valuable because they are things that my family brought straight from Laos to Thailand. In Thailand, my dad had these dollar bills before we came to America. These are things that I collect and keep at my home so my kids [it] can hopefully one day be handed to them and they can keep them.

Another thing is also the coins. [*brings out item*] I love having these coins. These were during the French-indo China times. These are silver coins and my family has some of these. I’m sure your family also keeps some of these also. These are kept as lucky coins. They’re pure silver. And they’re probably going to be kept for the kids to look at and preserve [inaudible ].

[*brings out item*] This is another thing that I have. It’s a pocket full of herbs and some type of seed that is basically given to a sick child, or to anyone in particular that has been ill for a long time. This was given to me by an aunt and was sewn…all types of herbs and seeds are sewn in there to protect the body and to preserve the soul within the body. This was given to me years and years ago. I wanted to show or to preserve [it] as well.

**TV:** Is there anything else you want to show that you brought along? I know that you have something on the ground that you might want to share.

**KL:** Okay, sure! [*brings out items*] This is something that I have kept. My mother passed away probably twelve years ago and she has a whole bunch of Hmong clothing that she kept and when she passed away, we couldn’t give her everything. My dad said, “Only give her what she can wear.” These were some of the things that my brother thought we didn’t need anymore. These are artwork or handstitches that my mother had and these were given, according to my dad, to her when she married my dad. This is the back collar, or *lub dab tsho*.

Lub dab tsho no ces qub qub heev li lawm. Cov dab tsho no kuv muab nws khaws ntau ntau cia vim tias nws yog kuv niam cov neejtsa… thaum kuv niam tseem hluas nkauj ces kuv niam cov neejtsa mua rau kuv niam thaum kuv niam los yuav kuv txiv.

*(This collar is very old now. I kept a lot of these because these were my mom’s. They were given to my mom from relatives when she was about to marry my dad.)*

**TV:** Pij cuam los? *(Dowry gifts?)*

**KL:** Pij cuam. Cov laus peb Hmoob thaum ub no mam yog koj mus yuav txiv no ces cov laus yeej xaws sib co khaub ncaws laus. Cov txheeb txheeb, ze ze koj, lawv yeej muab ib lub dab tsho dai rau. Cov no ces yog kuv niam cov. Cov no qub qub heev. Cov no tej zaum back in the fourties or thirties los lawm. Koj muab saib ces nws yeej qub qub heev li. They’re very old. If you look at it, there are different types. Ib co yog ua paj taub tawm laug, ib co yog paj ntaub ntxiav, hos ib co ces nws yog paj ntaub uas lawv muab nws los mus ntxiav tas ces mam muab sib nrhos. Kuv twb paub tsis zoo txog thiab tab sis kuv txawj no ces yog kuv txawj paj ntaub tawm laug. Kuv niam yog ib tug neeg txawj txawj ua pajntaub heev. Ob lub no yog ob lub uas kuv niam xaws. [*shows items*]

Ob lub no yog ob lub purse. Kuv xav co tuaj rau sawvdaws saib thiab, tias over the years the fabric’s changed. The style’s also changed but tamsim no ces peb yeej pom they are back to vintage. Cov no ces, they are very original. These, you can’t find it anywhere, anymore.

*(Yes, for dowry. In the old Hmong tradition, you were sewn traditional clothes for when you got married. Your relatives who were close to you [or fond of you] would stitch a collar onto the back. These were my mom’s. They are very old. These were probably made in the forties or thirties. If you look at them, you can tell they are very old. If you look at it, there are different types.* *Some are cross-stitched, some are cut cloth, and some are pieced together. I don’t even know about it that much, I only know a little bit of cross stitch embroidery. My mother was very good at sewing. My mom made these two.) [shows items]*

*These are purses. I wanted to show how over the years the fabric’s changed. The style has also changed but we can see now that they are back to vintage [styles]. But these, they are very original. These, you can’t find it anywhere, anymore.)*

**TV:** Nyob kev cai Hmoob, koj puas paub hais tias thaum yus puv ib puas nees nkaum xyoo es yog yus nqa yus niam cov puavpheej yus nriav tau yus niam yus txiv? *(Did you know that in Hmong tradition, when you are 120 years old, if you have your mom’s things you can find your mom and dad?)*

**KL:** Kuv paub li ntawv thiab mas. Qhov no ces yeej yog ib qho li lawv hais os, the maze, it’s like a journey. [showing the pattern design on the collar] Cov laus yeej hais tias thaum koj tuaj koj puv ib puas nees nkaum xyoo ces koj yuav tsum tau lub dab tsho laus. Lub dab tsho mas nws loj dua, ho cov nov ces nws mus tsho rau lub tsho laus xwb. [shows a larger collar, comparing it to smaller ones] Hmong mas muaj ib txwm hais tias yog koj niam koj txiv los yog neej tsa hlub koj, koj mus yuav txiv ces lawv thiaj li muab lub dab tsho zoo zoo rau koj xwb. So, cov no yog cov kuv muab kaws cia. Yog kuv niam cov teej tug es kuv muab khaws cia. Hopefully I can pass this on rau kuv cov kids. If they see any desire in keeping them when I’m not here. [laughing].

[Brings out more items.] Txoj no yog txoj belt. This is something that kuv tus niam laus wb… this is something that I found to be very unique because when we first came to America, that was in Syracuse, New York, we didn’t know how to buy the fabrics. Ces kuv niam lawv muab cov rice bag los rau wb. No yog kuv tus older sister ua ob qho nov then I made this one. Kuv niam teach wb. Kuv niam muab cov hnab txhuv rau peb tawm laug ho kuv niam muab cov fitting, ntaub pua txaj los ua xiab. My mom was a very good artist when it comes to ua paj ntaub (embroidery). Nws txawj ua paj ntaub. These are very important because right now you look back and “Oh my gosh! Ua cas yus thiaj ua tau lawm?”

*(Yes, I knew that. This is like they say, the maze, it’s like a journey. [showing the pattern design on the collar] There’s a traditional saying that when you’re 120 years old you must have a collar. The traditional collar is bigger than the regular collars. The regular collars can be put your old clothes. [shows a larger collar, comparing it to smaller ones] The Hmong always had a saying that when you got married, only your mom, dad, and relatives who loved you most would give you a beautiful collar. So, I keep these. They’re my mom’s and I cherish them. Hopefully, I can pass this on to my kids. If they see any desire in keeping them when I’m not here. [laughing].*

*[Brings out more items.] This is a belt. This is something that my older sister and I…this is something that I found to be very unique because when we first came to America, that was in Syracuse, New York, we didn’t know how to buy the fabrics. So my mom gave us rice bags to use. My older sister made these two and then I made this one. My mom taught us. My mom gave us rice bags to practice cross stitch embroider and also the fittings or bed sheets to use as the base. My mom was a very good artist when it came to embroidery. She was so great at embroidery. These are very important because right now you look back and “Oh my gosh! How could this ever be replicated again?)*

**KL:** [*Brings out more items.*] And then I have this one. I wasn’t sure if I would have it preserved but my mom made this for my first daughter, Ci Lab. Tom qab no ces, *(afterwards)* she’s no longer wearing it so kuv cov *(my)* grand kids los lawv *(they)* wear it tib si *(also).* So this is something that is passed on.

**TV:** Wb yuav noog txhog koj lub neej yom? Thaum koj niam qhuav tuaj nyob teb chaws Miskas, piav txog nej los nyob rau hauv lub county no zoo li cas? *(May I ask you about your life, when you first came to America and how did you come live in this county?)*

**KL:** My family, when we first got settled in this country, it was in Syracuse, New York. My family, basically, was sponsored by Catholic churches. We came, back in 1969 [correction:1979]. We were in Syracuse for a bit and then we traveled all the way-- always living up in the North-- to Wisconsin. We stayed in Wisconsin for a long period of time. Then, after I was married, my husband decided to move down to North Carolina. We first settled in Burke County, on the borderline of Burke and Catawba, but we were on our relative’s land. They had land so we bought a piece from them in Burke County. It was more of a big hit, moving down here and living in mobile homes. It was so unique! You’ve got a piece of land and you can just pull a house there! Families that were there before all had mobile homes! My husband and I came from the North and he was always saying to me “I will never die in a mobile home! We have to get out of mobile homes!” I enjoyed mobile homes but he said “We need a brick house.” From there we looked for a home and we found a home in Newton and so my family decided to settle here. But basically, we did not know about North Carolina other than our family. There are a lot of Lo [surname] families or clans that had established themselves here. So in 1994 going on to 1995 is when we moved here and decided to join our families here. It is amazing how beautiful North Carolina is.

**TV:** What are some ways you currently, or have in the past, participated in community building in Catawba county or the area where you live?

**KL:** I’ve always ventured into a lot of things but the Hmong community, it’s \_\_\_ it was established. When we moved to North Carolina, I was right about twenty-four years old so I was already taking the responsibility of being a mother and taking on the responsibility of being a daughter-in-law and the responsibility of being a wife, [and] a cousin in every way, so it was a lot of things that held me down. But one of the most important things was my cousins and their five girls and my biological family and their three brothers. My sister and I had always dreamed about eventually going to college, being in college and having the “American girl’s dream” of living in dorms and eating pizza and doing whatever you want when you’re at the dorms but as you can see, I married very young and after I was married, I took on a lot of responsibilities. Moving to Catawba County, I knew I had obligations to the Hmong community and with the Hmong community but I was also mainstreamed into the bigger community, which is Catawba County so I always had the feeling of being responsible not just for the Hmong community itself but for the larger community. That’s when I got accepted to work for Catawba County schools. Working for Catawba County schools, there are twenty-eight schools, and so working with 28 schools, I always felt like a professional in teb chaws Miskas *(America)* but I was also feeling like the small wife or the small poj niam Hmoob *(Hmong woman)* at home or when I’m in the community. I always had to balance myself at a very young age, as a wife, [and] as a mother. I always had to balance myself to be very reserved when I’m in the Hmong community and let my husband have the bigger voice. Where, in the American community, I worked as a bilingual interpreter and bilingual specialist, I was the voice of my community. So I had to balance this constantly and it was a battle at many places and many times because I knew exactly what was going on in Catawba County and my smaller side, the Hmong community knew nothing of what was going on in the community. It was like two worlds in one location, with one mind, one body.

So for me, it was always a struggle. Working with the community at large, mainstreaming, is big for me. I had connections with the library years and years ago. If you go out there [into the library], there are different pictures there, you’ll see one of my pictures there also. This has always been a long-time library for us.

As much as I have at home, I have also always been involved with the Hmong community at large, whether it’s at the New Year event, which is sponsored by an organization called Hmong Southeast Puavpheej. I’ve never held a position to be recognized as a “position” but I have always been the voice for the event, working as an MC, los mus cev rooj cev lus rau sawv daws *(welcome and greet everyone).* A lot of times, people from different states or our state, that come and participate and join us, they would say, “There’s the voice of the new year.” There have been years when I can’t make it to the event to be the MC for them and they would feel as if they’re not at the event that was held every year.

**KL:** The voice of a woman…to be able to be loud and powerful in the Hmong community, you have show \_\_\_. Yus yuav tsum yog ib tug poj niam coj ncaj ncees. Yus yuav tsum yog ib tug poj niam, tsis yog muaj peev xwm xwb, tabsis yuav tsum fwm cov txiv neej. Cov nov yog ib qho tseem nceeb. Kuv xav kom tsib caug lo dau caum xyoo los ib puas tom ntej no, kuv cov ntxais, kom lawv paub hais tias yus tsuas muaj peev xwm npaum cas, yus tsuas txawv paum cas, yus tsuas tse npaum cas los yus yuav tsum muaj qho fwm lwm tus tib neeg. Particularly, yog yus tseem yog ib tug ntxhais hmoob, yus yeej yuav tsum hlub thiab fwm yus cov txiv neej tiag tiag. Mas yus ua zoo li no mas tsis tas yuav yog koj kom nws muab koj ua ib tug coj li. Lawv yeej yuav hais tias koj coj peb thiab koj qhia peb, koj thiaj hais yog. Those are things that bounce back rau kuv los mus hais tias, tsis tas yog lwm tus hais qhia yus li, nws yog ib qho self-taught through observation and giving your time, volunteering and being passionate about what you do. That’s what I see in this community.

*(The voice of a woman…to be able to be loud and powerful in the Hmong community, you have show \_\_\_. You have to be a righteous woman. You have to be a woman who not only has ability but also respects men. This is important. Fifty, sixty, or one hundred years from now, I want my daughters to know that no matter how much ambition, ability, or knowledge you have, you must respect others. Particularly, if you a Hmong woman, you must love and honor the men. If you do this, you will not have to demand to be a leader. They will want you to be a leader, to lead and teach them. Lessons like this, no one has to teach you this, but it’s just self-taught through observation and giving your time, volunteering and being passionate about what you do. That’s what I see in this community.)*

**TV:** Koj twb hais me me txog qhov culture lawm, *(you already mentioned a little about the culture)* what would you like future generations to know about Hmong culture?

**KL:** Hais txog ntawm Hmoob tom ntej no, cov tub ntxhais hluas plaub, tsib tiam, kaum tawm tiam tom ntej no, ib qho kuv xav kom lawv paub yog lawv yog leej twg. Ib tug neeg, yog nws tsis paub tias nws tsev neeg yog leeg twg ces nws tsis paub tias nws yog leej twg tiag tiag. Kuv ntseeg li ntawv. Ntawm kuv tus kheej, kuv lub neej, kuv ua los ntawm qhov ua yog koj tsis fwm koj tsev neeg, yog koj tsis fwm koj haiv Hmoob ces tsis muaj leej twg fwm koj li. Qhov nov mas tej zaum kuv tsuas yog ib tug neeg, kuv tsuas pom me me xwb kuv thiaj li hais li no tab sis mas cov tub ntxhais hluas tom ntej no lawv tseem pom deb tshaj es lawv yuav hais tias tsis yog li ntawv, yuav tsum yog individualism. Tab sis mas ntawm kuv tus kheej, koj lub solid foundation los ntawm koj paub koj yog leej twg, koj muaj ib co keeb kwm, koj muaj kev ntseeg ntawm koj cov keeb kwm. Ces nws ua rau koj paub ntau yam thiab koj fwm ntau yam, koj ntshaw ntau yam, ua ntau yam los koj ua tau tag nrho.

For generations tom ntej no, kuv xav kom lawv yuav tsum rov los kawm kom lawv paub tias yus cov keeb kwm hmoob yog dab tsi tiag tiag. Yog tsis zoo los muab pov tseg tau tab sis yam zoo, yuav tsum khaws tiag tiag. Qhov tsis zoo mam muab pov tseg los tau tab sis yam zoo yuav tsum khaws tiag tiag. Qhov tsis zoo yog qhov uas yuav thawb thiab rub neeg mus deb tshaj niaj hnub niam no ua nej niam nej txiv sawv daws. Nej pheej hais tias “tsis nyiam thiab tej yam zoo ntawv yus ruam ruam thiaj ua” tab sis mas tsis yog ruam ruam. Yog ib qho ruam ruam los ua tab sis ho ua rau koj kawm kom koj txhob ua tab sis kom koj ua tau zoo tshaj ntawv. Qhov nov yog ib qho kuv xav kom lawv preserve thiab lawv mus pom li ntawv.

*(For the Hmong in the future, 4,5, or even 10 generations from now, something I want them to know is their identify and who they are. For a person, if they don’t know who their family or people are then they don’t really know themselves. That’s what I believe. Personally, in my life my belief is that you should always honor and respect your family and your people. If you don’t then no one else will honor and respect you. I’m only human so perhaps that’s just my limited perspective and the younger generation may have more perspective and will disagree. Maybe they’ll think it’s all about individualism. However, for myself I think your solid foundation should be built on knowing your identity of who you are, your history, and holding firm to that history. This will lead to wisdom, experience, and you’ll be able to accomplish whatever you set your mind to.*

*For generations in the future, I want them to come back and really learn about the history and culture of their Hmong people. If there are bad things, you can throw it away but the good things must be kept. The bad things can push and divide the generations farther. People complain, “We don’t like it and it’s a stupid practice.” But, it’s not stupid. Even if it is stupide and you don’t practice it, at least know about it so you can do better. This is one thing I want people to see.)*

**TV:** What are your proudest moments in your life?

**KL:** Ntawm kuv tus kheej mas, kuv yeej laus laus lawm thiab, tab sis kuv yeej tsis tau laus. Yav tom ntej yus tsis paub tias yus lub neej yuav zoo li cas tabsis kuv proud of, los sis kuv zoo siab thiab kuv muaj kev cia siab rau ces, ib qho ces yog qhov hais tias, kuv tsuas yog ib tug poj niam xwb los kuv yeej tsis tshai. Yog hais tias yog ib yam lawm tus ua tau lawm ces kuv tsis tshai mus hnoog lawv thiab thov kom lawm qhia kuv. I’m willing to los mus kawm. Kuv xav kom peb los mus encourage peb cov tub hluas ntxhais hluas kom lawv muaj qho ntawv, qho ua los mus nug, los mus swm, los mus kawm.

*(Well, I’m old but still not too old. You don’t know what the future will be like but one thing I am proud and hold on to, is the fact that I am not afraid [of doing things]. If it’s something that someone else can do, I am not afraid of asking them to teach me. I am willing to learn. I want us to encourage our young men and women to ask questions, practice, and learn.)*

**KL:** Qhov uas yog kuv proudest moment yog hais tias kuv yog ib tug poj niam Hmoob. Kuv pom tias kuv yog ib tug poj niam hmoob es txawm kuv tus txiv twb tso kuv tseg tau kaum plaub, kaum tsib xyoos lawm los kuv yog ib tug single mom nyob rau hauv lub Hmoob community nws nyuaj heev. Kuv yog ib tug ua [yog] thawj thawj tug ua los mus pioneer, as a single mom, muaj tsib tug minyuam and your community, nws lub acceptance of who you are. Peb hmoob mas lawv yeej hais tias yuav tsum muaj tus txiv xwb thiaj ua tau ib lub cuab lub yig, yuav tsum muaj tus txiv luag thiaj saib taus yus, yuav tsum muaj tus txiv yus thiaj ua tau teb yam no. Tabsis mas ntawm kuv tus kheej ces yog yus muaj tus txiv ces yuav tsum muaj nws nyob rau ntawv tabsis kuv tsis muaj tus txiv ces yus yuav tsum yog ib tug neeg khov kho es nyob tau tus yees.

*(My proudest moment is being a Hmong woman. I’m a woman in the Hmong community whose husband has passed away for fourteen or fifteen years now and it’s been very hard. I’m one of the first women to pioneer being a single mom with five kids in the Hmong community, trying to gain acceptance of who you are. As Hmong, it’s tradition that you must have a husband in order to have a family, you must have a husband in order to be respected, you must have a husband if you want to do anything. If I had a husband, yeah he would be right there but I don’t, so I had to be strong and live confidently.)*

**KL:** But the proudest moment yog kuv yog ib tug niam uas tsis muaj txiv tab sim no los, I’m proud to be who I am. *(The proudest moment is just being a woman despite not having a husband.)* I’m proud to be a single, widowed woman at this moment because that was not accepted in our culture. Back in the days, you must have a man right beside you, a man is what fulfills you to be a family, to be a woman, to be a powerful woman, but I have lived the last 14-15 years being a widow. It’s not the easiest thing to be a widow in the Hmong community but I’m living it to where the Hmong community can see it and accept it, that living in America, we can do and are capable of doing a lot of things. Even raising 5 kids as a widow, I’m proud to be here.

**TV:** Wrapping up, the last question: Is there anything we didn’t talk about that you would like to add?

**KL:** I have a lot of things I would love to share and I don’t have all of them here because I have them boxed away but in another event, I was hoping I could come again. [*laughing]* But to add, one of the things I want the many generations to see in the future is, don’t forget the language, the Hmong language. A lot of people think that just learning one language, which is just English, you can survive in this country but when you already have one language which is the Hmong language, lus Hmoob, yog koj txawj lus Askiv, koj txawj lus Mev ntxiv, koj txawj lwm cov lus ntxiv, nws haj yam pab rau koj. *(If you know English and Spanish and other languages, it helps you even more.)* It’ll make you more powerful and stronger than just one language. I’ve lived that life.

Kuv txoj hauj lwm, Hmoob ces kuv yeej hais lus Hmoob, tabsis mas Miskas ces kuv yeej hais lus Miskas tau. *(In my career, I can speak Hmong but I can also speak English.)* Qhov nov yog ib qho greatest benefit. *(This is a great benefit.)* Koj tsis paub *(you don’t know),* you don’t know unless you are in that position so you must keep your language. Those are my last words. The culture is extremely important but along with that culture, you must devote your time to learning the Hmong language.

**TV:** Thank you. Ua tsaug nawb.

[End Recording]