



Bringing the World Together

THE UP WITH PEOPLE NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2, ISS. 7

AUGUST 2007

Welcome, Casts B & C 2007!

Up with People is excited to welcome 111 participants from 25 countries who arrived in Denver on July 7. Over the course of the next six months, they will be traveling throughout North America, Europe, Thailand, and the Philippines. These two casts will be the first to travel simultaneously in seven years. Thanks to numerous donors, sponsors, recruiters, alumni and supporters who have come together along with Up with People staff and board members over the past year, these young leaders from around the world will take part in an experience that actively engages them in service, education, cross-cultural cooperation, host family living, and musical inspiration.

Throughout the month of August, cast members will learn the show as well as basic skills and concepts that will prepare them for the road. The casts will leave Denver on August 6, traveling south together to take part in the Up with People International Alumni Association Reunion in Tucson, Arizona. From there, Cast B will continue their tour along the Western Coast of the United States while Cast C will head to the Philippines. Both casts will tour Europe, and as Cast B concludes their tour in Thailand, Cast C will finish off on the East Coast of the US. Cast C's North America Tour involves a special invitation to participate in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on November 22. Please join us in welcoming our new participants, and come to a show if we are in your area!

Cast lists on pages 4 & 5



Student Spotlight



Sokhoeun joins Up with People from Cambodia – and Minnesota, and Thailand. She grew up moving among Thai refugee camps – often in the middle of the night - until her family was able to come to the United States under the sponsorship of her uncle when Sokhoeun was 12 years old. She has led an extraordinary, inspiring, and truly admirable life; she has been involved in numerous service organizations, excelled as a student at Carroll College, and been honored as one of ten US students to receive the Hitachi Yoshiyama Award for outstanding community service. She has dreamed of being in Up with People for ten years, and with great determination, she is here!

Sokhoeun Chhunn

1) How did you hear about Up with People?

In the winter of 1997, Up with People came to where I was living in Rochester, Minnesota. I saw the show with my mentor and was on the edge of my seat the entire time. I had never seen anything like it. The show gave me such an incredible feeling, I knew I wanted to be in Up with People myself.

I interviewed for Up with People right after the show and was eventually accepted to travel in the summer of 1999. I spent a year and a half waiting and preparing to be in Up with People, but when the time came for me to travel, I learned that I could not leave the United States. I had PIP status at that time, meaning I was a “public interest parolee.” In other words, if I did leave the country, I would most likely not be allowed to return due to the political relationship between the US and Cambodia.

So instead of traveling in Up with People in 1999, I decided to apply to Carroll College. I was accepted to Carroll and learned that as a university student, I would be able to travel abroad and return with less risk. I applied for Up with People again and was enrolled for the 2001 program. When Up with People closed its doors in 2000, I decided that I needed to accept the fact that this was one dream I would not be able to achieve. I thought that it just wasn't meant to be.

Three years later, WorldSmart came to Minnesota, and I was excited to learn that Up with People had opened again. However, I knew I could still not join the program because immigration policy after September 11 required that I renew all my paperwork, including my green card. I did not want to risk leaving the United States without being assured of reentry.

My paperwork was completed in 2004, and I was granted citizenship in June 2006. Just a few months later, Up with People was back in my city! I hesitated to get my hopes up again but agreed to attend the show. I was in the process of dealing with a death in the family and a custody battle over my nephew, so again, I felt that it would be too difficult to leave. Still, when I saw the show, the same feelings of excitement and anticipation came over me just as they had back in 1997. I decided then and there that I would do whatever it took to realize this 10-year dream and finally travel in Up with People. So for the next several months, I worked four jobs and did a lot of fundraising to pay for my tuition. I was absolutely convinced that this time, my dream would come through. And it has! When I saw Enrollment Manager Colleen Eastman for the first time after ten years, both of us cried. It has been a long, long wait, but I could not be happier to be here today.

Student Spotlight



Interview with Sokhoeun, Continued

2) What, specifically, kept you inspired to join Up with People?

When I first arrived in the United States in 1993 as a refugee, I had no understanding of American culture and could not speak a word of English. I was 12 years old, and I experienced a lot of racism in my first several years here. I remember my freshman year in high school was the worst. People called me names, threw things at me . . . it was terrible. I just wished that people would get to know others before judging them and stereotyping them. I was shocked to see the same blanket prejudice I had experienced in the Thai refugee camps in the United States. Back in Thailand, we would have to flee the refugee camps in the middle of the night because former Khmer Rouge soldiers would come just to kill the people living there. I had imagined the United States to be a sort of Utopia where those things wouldn't happen. Maybe it isn't exactly the same here, but people can still be so mean to others just because they don't understand them or want to get to know them.

When I was in high school, I decided that I could not put up with the racism any longer, so I joined several organizations to work against it. I am passionate about working for cultural understanding, cooperation and peace. This is what I want to do with my life, and it is what Up with People is about. I have done many things to work against racism, but Up with People has always been my ultimate dream.

3) What other activities and organizations have you been involved in?

I have been involved in several organizations. One of the first ones I joined in high school was called Affirmative Human Action. We would go around to schools and help students learn to get along with each other. We worked with police officers to build relationships between the police and the youth of our city. I was also a part of a student group called the Unity. One of the activities we did with this group was a fundraiser for the homeless. We slept in cardboard boxes in the winter in order to create awareness and raise support for the homeless shelter. In Upward Bound, I went to San Francisco and worked in a soup kitchen. I was absolutely shocked to see such homelessness in the United States. I had never imagined it was this bad here. I believe it is definitely good for us to help people in other countries, but there is a lot of work to be done at home as well.

My senior year in high school, I was honored to receive the Hitachi Yoshiyama award, which is given to ten US high school students per year in recognition for their community service. I was also included in a book called the *The Hero's Trail*, which talks about how ordinary people can do extraordinary things in their lives.

Despite everything I have done and the honors I have been given, Up with People has always been my dream. I have waited 10 years to be in Up with People. I tried again and again to get here, and I even nearly gave up. But I am here now, and I am so excited to see what the next six months have in store for me!

Welcome, Casts B & C 2007!

Name	Country	Name	Country	Name	Country
Andrea Alabado	USA	Lesley Loaiza	USA	Tiffnie Vo	USA
Katie Allen	USA	Laurel Long	USA	Jeremiah Webb	USA
Erica Anderson	Canada	Nicole Loschke	USA	Raine Weiterman	Canada
Adam Arno	USA	Suzanne Maas	The Netherlands	Stefan Wirtz	Germany
Lucas Barthel	Belgium	Marita Mecke	Germany	Yuri Yamaguchi	Japan
Sarah Brulport	USA	Amelia Morales	USA	Ljuan Zeqiri	Macedonia
Rafael Cardoso	Brazil	Sayuri Morimoto	Japan	Yue Zhang	China
Benjamine Christiaens	Belgium	Julianna Mukasa	Uganda		
Mallory Dewees	USA	Alexandra Neagu	Romania		
Lysan Drabon	Germany	Johan Nilsson	Sweden		
Matthew Erley	USA	Tyrell Norwood	USA		
Maria Fahlin	Sweden	Linn Oregren	Sweden		
Hanna Fernando	Philippines	Christine Profanter	Austria		
Amanda Ferry	USA	Aimée Reintjens	The Netherlands		
Zach Foxx	USA	Kellys Rodríguez	Venezuela		
Vanessa Gagnon-Gauley	Canada	Jessica Rojas	USA		
Grant Gephart	USA	Whitney Ross	USA		
Vanessa Graves	USA	Blaine Scheideman	USA		
Gina Herrera	USA	Cassidy Shelsta	USA		
Carolin Hohenegger	Germany	Jennie Shepherd	USA		
Megan Jansen	USA	Joshua Stevenson	USA		
Johanna Carlsson	Sweden	Rasmus Struve	Denmark		
Elke Lippens	Belgium	Lauren Todd	USA		
Tianshu Liu	China	Clara Valles Gomez	Mexico		

CAST B TOUR SCHEDULE

North America: Aug 6—Sept 30

Europe: Oct 1—Nov 11

Philippines: Nov 12—Dec 10

Full schedule online at:

http://www.upwithpeople.org/program_schedule.htm

ATTENTION, ALUMNI

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO THE UWPIAA

The Up with People International Alumni Association is Celebrating their 20th Anniversary this month! The Up With People International Alumni Association (UWPIAA) keeps Up with People alumni around the world connected.

Its goals include: serving alumni worldwide with quality programs and services; creating a personal and professional network among Up with People alumni; and supporting and strengthening the goals of Up with People. For more information, visit www.uwpiaa.org.



CASTS B & C 2007 AT THE REUNION!

Both casts B and C will be at the alumni reunion in Tucson, Arizona. They will be performing a **joint show** on **Friday, August 10 at 7:30pm** at Centennial Hall.

To reserve a ticket, please call:

Centennial Hall Box Office
 (520) 621-3341
 Adults: \$26.00
 Children 12 and under: \$15.00

Welcome, Casts B & C 2007!

Name	Country	Name	Country	Name	Country
Folajimi Akinyemi	USA	Jaakko Lampela	Finland	Luis Valle	Panamá
Callie Amweg	USA	Aimee Larson	USA	Johan Willem Verbeek	The Netherlands
Amy Ang	Malaysia	Zhongyun Li	China	Emily Versteeg	The Netherlands
Željka Baniček	Croatia	Vanessa Lopez	USA	Kristien Voorspoels	Belgium
Veronica Barragan	USA	Iliana López	USA	Faith Walls	USA
Kady Eileen Brown	Canada	Lena Lowe	USA		
Sara Castro	USA	Jeremy Loween	USA		
Jin A Cheong	Republic of Korea	Danielle Mc Knight	USA		
Sokhoeun Chhunn	Cambodia	Michael Meissner	Germany		
Jonathan Cygnaeus	Sweden	Emelie Möllerström	Sweden		
Aubrii Deignan	USA	Gilda Morlet Méndez	Mexico		
Scott Erickson	USA	Keitaro Nakai	Japan		
Liu Fan	China	Guido Nebuloni	Italy		
Libby Freeborn	USA	David Penny	USA		
Maria Froom	Sweden	Sophia Pötter	Germany		
Jalee Fuselier	USA	Justin Ray	USA		
Jordan Hagen	USA	Alex Reagle	USA		
Kim Hegelau	Germany	Manuel Rivas Muñoz	Mexico		
Abigail Held	USA	John Rodriguez	USA		
Andrew Jansen	USA	Shannon Rzucidlo	USA		
Renetta Kalis	USA	Alexandra Schneider	Germany		
Brodie Kinder	USA	Andrea Schuster	USA		
Ivanka Kisova	Bulgaria	Emerald Simmons	USA		
Wiebke Krüger	Germany	Nanako Taguchi	Japan		

CAST C TOUR SCHEDULE

North America: Aug 6—Aug 13
and Oct 15—Dec 10

Thailand: Aug 13—Sept 2

Europe: Sept 3—Oct 14

http://www.upwithpeople.org/program_schedule.htm