



HNUB TSHIAB  
**Hmong Women**  
ACHIEVING TOGETHER

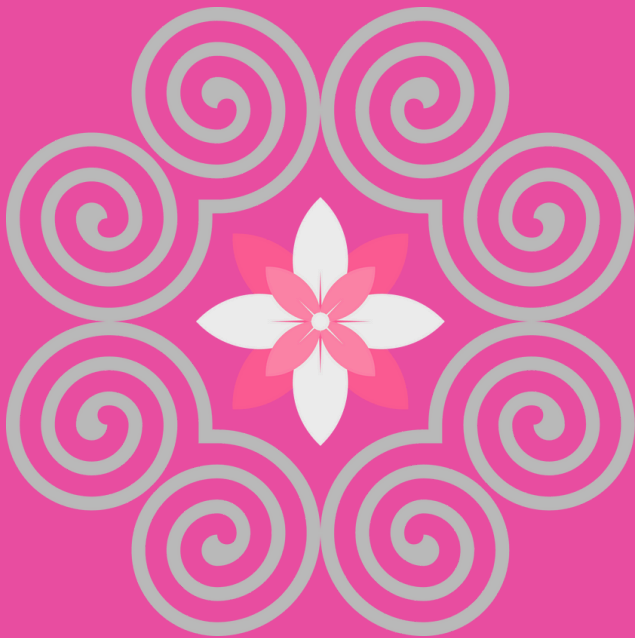
# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

*Hmong women shaping culture,  
leadership, and the future.*

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# Letter from the Board



## 2025 Board of Directors

*Top row, left to right:  
Darling Lee, Hiyana Yang, & Zer Vang*

*Bottom row, left to right:  
MayKao Hang & Mysee Chang Vang*

Dear Friends and Supporters of Hnub Tshiab,

As we reflect on 2025, we are filled with gratitude for the community that continues to support and believe in Hnub Tshiab: Hmong Women Achieving Together. A highlight of the year was our Live Our Dreams Gala, where we gathered in community and celebration. The strong turnout and generosity we experienced reaffirmed the power of coming together around shared values and collective dreams.

We proudly name 2025 as a year of celebrating Hmong women's achievements. Throughout the year, we honored inspiring leaders across our community. We recognized Hmong Museum Executive Director, Mai Vang Huizel as our Hmong Woman of the Year, awarded the Live Your Best Life Grant to Ariel Her, founder of the Hmong Womxn Thriving podcast, and celebrated the historic election of Kaohly Her as Mayor-elect of Saint Paul.

In addition to celebration, 2025 was a year of important groundwork. We assessed our programs and began updating our curricula to ensure our offerings remain relevant, responsive, and impactful as we prepare for implementation in 2026.

Above all, 2025 was a meaningful year of community gathering—a time to honor our stories, strengthen relationships, and look ahead with hope. We are deeply thankful for our donors, partners, volunteers, and supporters who make this work possible.

With gratitude,  
Darling, Hiyana, MayKao, Mysee, & Zer

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# Organization Overview

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## Vision

We envision a world where Hmong women and girls are valued and supported to achieve their highest potential in all of their roles. We see a society that honors the choices that Hmong women make and celebrates their ability to direct their own destinies.

## Mission

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## History

Hnub Tshiab: Hmong Women Achieving Together, formerly known as Hmong Women’s Action Team, was founded in 1998 as a grassroots response to violence against women in the Hmong community. After several highly public domestic violence cases, Hmong women leaders in the Twin Cities came together to address the systemic conditions affecting Hmong women and girls. A community study involving over 100 participants identified sexism as a root cause of violence, shaping the organization’s original mission to end violence against Hmong women by ending sexism.

In 2005, community conversations revealed that while individual progress had been made, institutional, social, and cultural barriers persisted. This led to an organizational transformation and rebranding in 2006 to Hnub Tshiab, meaning “a new day.” In 2007, Hnub Tshiab incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with an expanded mission to catalyze cultural, institutional, and social change. Today, Hnub Tshiab is an organization for Hmong women, led by Hmong women, focused on elevating leadership, fostering autonomy, and advancing gender equity within the Hmong community.

## Change Framework

Hnub Tshiab’s change framework begins with the awareness and acknowledgment that gender is a powerful force shaping the lives of individuals, families, and the broader community. By deepening our understanding of ourselves, our families, our culture, and our shared history, we can begin the systemic change needed to improve the lives of Hmong women and girls. Through research, leadership development, and advocacy, Hnub Tshiab creates knowledge that supports social and cultural transformation. Guided by a shared vision of a more just and equitable future, we work to build coalitions that inspire action and expand opportunity. At the core of this framework is a belief in collective power—the understanding that lasting change is created when communities invest in and strengthen themselves.

# Program Highlights



## Girls Enterprise

The 2025 Hmong Girls Enterprise Workshop was a multi-day program designed to cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets among young Hmong women. The program served seven participants between the ages of 14 and 17, engaging them in interactive, hands-on sessions that introduced foundational business concepts and guided them through the process of developing, refining, and presenting their own venture ideas. The curriculum emphasized creativity, confidence, and community relevance, encouraging participants to explore entrepreneurship as a pathway for self-expression and economic empowerment.

Workshop activities included instruction on business strategy and market positioning, concept development rooted in personal interests and community needs, and iterative pitch refinement supported by coaching and peer feedback.

The program culminated on April 24, 2025, with a graduation ceremony and pitch showcase. Each participant presented her business concept to an audience of peers, mentors, and community members, demonstrating meaningful growth in confidence, clarity, and entrepreneurial ambition.



### *Mai Vang Huizel, 2025 Recipient*

The Hmong Woman of the Year award recognizes a Hmong women living the mission and vision of Hnub Tshiab. The nominee must demonstrate sustained impact in being a catalyst for social, cultural, and institutional change. We are proud to celebrate a Hmong woman who exemplifies the mission of Hnub Tshiab and its values of changing, celebrating, and uplifting Hmong women and girls to achieve their full potential.

Mai Vang Huizel was honored as the 2025 Hmong Woman of the Year for her visionary leadership. As the founder and executive director of the Hmong Museum, Mai has dedicated her career to preserving Hmong history, amplifying community voices, and creating spaces for intergenerational healing and cultural pride. Today, the museum stands as the first and only institution of its kind in the nation, ensuring that Hmong stories are told authentically, by the community and for the community.

Through innovative programming—including cultural arts workshops, oral storytelling initiatives, educational curricula, traveling exhibits, and digital documentation projects—Mai has strengthened cultural identity, elevated women’s voices, and created leadership pathways for Hmong women and girls. Her work intentionally bridges generations, allowing elders to pass on knowledge while empowering youth to claim pride in their heritage. More than a physical space, the Hmong Museum represents a living legacy—one that fosters healing, honors history, and inspires future generations. Mai’s leadership embodies the mission and values of Hnub Tshiab, making her a deeply deserving recipient of the Hmong Woman of the Year Award.



### *Ariel Cua Her, 2025 Recipient*

The Ilean Kao Ly Her Live Your Best Life Grant honors the legacy of Ilean Kao Ly Her, a beloved board member of Hnub Tshiab who passed away in 2021. Deeply committed to uplifting Hmong women, Ilean was actively involved in programs such as the Hmong Women’s Leadership Institute and Girls Enterprise, and she established the Live Your Best Life Grant in 2017 to support Hmong women in pursuing their goals.

Ariel Cua Her, founder of the Hmong Womxn Thriving, was selected as the 2025 recipient of the Live Your Best Life Grant for her commitment to amplifying the voices and stories of Hmong women. Inspired by the strength and resilience of the women in her family and community, Ariel created the podcast as a platform where Hmong women can share their journeys, challenges, and successes—ensuring their stories are seen, heard, and valued. Through thoughtful storytelling and community-centered conversations, her work addresses themes of identity, mental health, career growth, and cultural tradition.

The Live Your Best Life Grant supports Ariel’s vision to grow the podcast into a sustainable and impactful platform by enhancing production quality, expanding outreach, and honoring the contributions of guest storytellers. For Ariel, living her best life means showing up authentically and creating space for others to do the same. Her work reflects a ripple effect of empowerment—encouraging Hmong women to claim their voices, heal across generations, and pursue lives defined by purpose and possibility.



In partnership with the Minnesota Humanities Center, Hnub Tshiab convened community members for From Mountains to Lakes: Celebrate HERstory, an evening that marked a historic moment for Hmong women and the city of St. Paul. The event centered on the election of Kaohly Vang Her as the city’s first woman and first Hmong mayor, while creating space to reflect on the broader journey of Hmong women’s leadership, resilience, and agency. Through storytelling, cultural performances, and community reflection, participants were reminded that Hmong women are not only part of history, but authors of it.

What emerged from the gathering was a deep sense of collective pride, affirmation, and inspiration—particularly for young Hmong women across generations. Attendees reflected on the importance of seeing Hmong women in visible leadership roles and recognized the long-standing investments made by Hnub Tshiab in nurturing leadership long before it is publicly recognized. The evening reinforced the power of community gathering as both celebration and call to action, encouraging continued belief in, investment in, and support of Hmong women as leaders shaping the future.

# 2025 Operating Budget

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Previous year's balance	\$101,204.00
Endowment Distribution	\$10,000.00
Women's Foundation Grant – Girls Best	\$15,000.00
Women's Foundation Grant - Selfcare	\$10,000.00
Minnesota Center for Humanities Grant	\$5,500.00
Donations	\$20,840.83
Program fees	\$1,298.77

Total Income: \$169,299.95

General operations	\$ 10,762.47
Fundraising expenses	\$19,265.48
HWLI program	\$15,240.00
GirlsBEST Program	\$12,700.00
Live Your Best Life Program	\$1,000
Self-Care staff retreat	\$10,000.00
Transfer to savings	\$1,700.00

Total Expenses: \$70,667.95



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# Donors Thank You

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## Corporations & Foundations

American Association of University Women, St. Paul Branch  
Coalition of Asian American Leaders  
Hmong American Partnership  
Hmong Elders Center Inc  
Mortenson Family Foundation  
North Hennepin Community College  
Northwest Foundation  
Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, University of St. Thomas  
Securian Financial Foundation  
United Hmong Family Inc.  
University of Wisconsin – Madison  
Women's Foundation

## Individuals

Ah Vang-Lo	Eve Vang	Mysee Chang Vang
Anne Patel	Hilary Lor	Nancy Vang
Angela Dahlin	Hiyana Yang	Nu Vue
Ao Vang	Jay Moua	Pana Lee
Bao Moua	Jewelly Lee	Pakou Yang
Bo Thao-Urabe	Jennifer Engler	Paxoua Vang
Cecilia Thao	KaYing Yang	Robyn Duncan
Chandra Her	Kia Moua	Que Vang
Chelsie Chang	Lori Vang	Salina Renninger
Chong Hang	Luasee Hang	Seng Vang
Choua Xiong	Maikou Vu	Shouazong Hang
Chris Nam	Mao Thao	Tong Chang
Chitshia Chang	Mary Vang	Toua Chang
Crystal Lee	May Vang	Toua Lee
Daegia Vang	MayKao Fredericks	Windy Vang
Diana Vang-Her	Maypahou Ly	Ying Lee
Dr. Talee Vang	Molly Yang	Zer Vang
Dr. MayKao & Lao Lu Hang	My Lao	

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# Contact Us



## *Contact Information*

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