

Diversity is Strength



Samorn Selim

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My family fled persecution from Laos as refugees. Growing up in a community with high school drop outs, gang members and teenage mothers, *I was determined to find a better life.*

I applied to college and was accepted at U.C., Berkeley, where I double majored in Social Welfare and Legal Studies. Through my studies, I learned about the plight my parents endured to escape death and the factors that contributed to my community's dire state.

Committed to help other youth, I returned to my high school to implement a mentorship program called Web of Encouragement.

I believe that one can affect laws and policies by having a political voice. I decided to pursue a law degree.

I graduated from U.C. Berkeley Law School this year after an internship at the Federal Trade Commission in Washington, D.C. and an externship for the first Asian American appointed as a United States Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of California, the Honorable Edward M.Chen.

I continue to mentor students from both my high school and the undergraduate classes I taught at U.C. Berkeley.

I have returned to Laos and Thailand to work on human rights issues until I start work in January 2010 at a national law firm known for their *emphasis on diversity, pro bono public interest and regulatory law.*