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Vibol Hou Oral History

May 6, 2021

Length of interview: 48:39

Interviewee: Vibol Hou

Interviewer: Amira Noeuv

Transcribed and translated by: Fuwei Yang, Dephny Duan

[Generating and Reclaiming our Wisdoms: A Collection of AAPI Stories at UCSD](#)

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Time	Transcription
0:03	Amira Noeuv: Hi, my name is Amira Noeuv. Today is May 6th [2021]. And I'm interviewing Vibol through Zoom for UC San Diego, Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies Community Archival Project. Vibol, do you agree to grant the university permission to archive and publish this interview for educational purposes?
0:25	Vibol Hou: I do.
0:26	Amira Noeuv: Thank you. Okay, so the first couple of questions is just kind of basic kind of getting to know you and your affiliation with UCSD and then wanting to know a little bit more about your experience when you were here at UC San Diego. And then looking forward, getting your opinion and your story on, you know, advice for current Cambodian Student Association members and UCSD Asian American students. So I just wanted to start off with like, where you're from and where you're currently residing?
1:05	Vibol Hou: Yeah, so my family and I are originally from Cambodia, and we moved to Long Beach in the early 80s. These days, I live in Los Angeles.
	Amira Noeuv: Okay. And how did you and your family come to live in Southern California?
	Vibol Hou: Yeah, so, you know, many people know about the war that happened in Cambodia from the late 70s. My family fled the country. And we ended up in the Thai side, the border, and we stayed in Khao-i-Dang for a little bit of time. And that's where I was born.
	Amira Noeuv: Okay
1:35	Vibol Hou: And then shortly thereafter, the UN High Commission for Refugees placed us in Long Beach. And that's- that's when we got moved over here. I think we stayed in the Philippines for a period of time in between. You know, it's a little detour from that flight, but also had family that was here in California, uncle already came here for studies. So that was probably part of the reason why we ended up in California.
	Amira Noeuv: That's really interesting. Did he sponsor or did you have like, sort of an organization sponsorship, or?
	Vibol Hou: I don- I don't recall the details. But I want to say that he was likely involved.

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	Amira Noeuv: Yeah. Okay. And then, like, what's your current occupation? What are you doing now?
2:57	Vibol Hou: I'm an executive vice president and chief technology officer for Pluto TV. It's a ViacomCBS company.
	Amira Noeuv: Nice. And when did you graduate? Or when did you attend UCSD? And what year did you graduate?
3:15	Vibol Hou: I started in 1998. And then I took a couple of years off in between to go work and it was- the tech industry was doing pretty good back then. So I took some time off to try my hand at it. And then I came back to the university and finished my degree in 2005.
	Amira Noeuv: Okay. And what was your major at UCSD?
	Vibol Hou: Cognitive Science. Specialization in HCI, Human Computer Interaction.
3:47	Amira Noeuv: HCI... And what led you to your- to your decision to attend UC San Diego?
	Vibol Hou: Yeah, it's a combination of things, I think, you know, UCSD was an up and coming organization and through the press and things there was a lot of activity around the- the engineering disciplines, the science disciplines and I thought that was attractive, so... that was- that was part of the reason. The other reason was between UCI which was the other university I could have attended at the time. UCSD was much- much further away from home, but within enough distance to be able to get back in case anything happens -- my folks are older.
	Amira Noeuv: Yeah, definitely. I was gonna ask you about that whether you chose to stay in Southern California to be close, but like far enough.
	Vibol Hou: That's right. That's definitely right.
	Amira Noeuv: Awesome. What was your experience like as an Asian American or as like a Khmer individual navigating higher education?
4:56	Vibol Hou: You know, it's-it's interesting. I think college was certainly a different kind of place, right? There were fewer support elements around. I mean, one gets used to live with family after so long and so you start to learn about the things that you don't have [laughter] anymore. And so I'd say that- that part of the experience is probably more challenging for the first few months. But as in terms of UCSD itself, I thought the university would be incredibly welcoming, inclusive place, during my time I met a lot of really smart people. And early on, their programs to

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	<p>kind of get you warmed up to the environment. We visited the school before school started and things like that. So it really helped to establish relationships with people, of course, it helped to stay on campus. You get to know the people in my suite, in my dorm. And that was a- that was a little- little group that would get together and we talk about our experiences and just you know, hanging out. It was really helpful, I think, had I stayed off campus, which was another option. I think things might have been a little more difficult.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah. What college were you in?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Revelle.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Okay. Did you go home often? Or did you kind of just stayed on campus and went home for the holidays?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Yeah, I- I probably went home every month, once- once a month. It wasn't too far a trek. And that was- it was purposely done that way. So I could go back where I grew in. I didn't intentionally stay away like [unclear]¹ [laughter].</p>
<p>6:54</p>	<p>Amira Noeuv: How involved would you say you were in the in like, community organizing and like service outside of school?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Yeah, you know, community in and out of school. I was certainly involved in, right...the Cambodian students--that time was called Cambodian Student Connection. I was trying to figure out what we called it back then. They eventually got renamed, rightfully so. I think back then, other influences had led to that particular name. But I think because of that, I was certainly involved in the community. We.. we actually collaborated quite a bit with the SDSU CSA (San Diego State University Cambodian Student Association). We met with them a lot, we hung out with them. We supported their- their yearly events, they have a culture show. We kind of tried to do the same on our side, but we're a much smaller organization, you know, the- the...it was more effective for us to participate in the bigger event that was also in San Diego. Besides that, I was also involved in on the tech side. I was also involved in the Association for Computing Machinery. And we did a lot of social events, computer kind of programming, demonstration events, and things like that too. So I'd say I was pretty involved.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah, kind of backtracking a little bit. Um, can you talk a little bit more about like the Cambodian Student Association-- Cambodian Student... sorry,</p>

¹ "I was referring to something that I felt Amira and I could empathize with -- which is Cambodian parents are very strict and prefer to keep their children close/at home until they marry out -- so when given the opportunity to move out, Khmer kids have tended to stay away from their parents due to the newfound freedom." Vibol Hou, September 2024.

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	the Cambodian Student Connection and like, sort of like, the influences you mentioned on naming it that way?
8:39	<p>Vibol Hou: [laughs] Right... So I forget what year in college it was that my good friend, Poli, and I think it was like 1999 or so. It was like our second year of college. He went to UC Santa Barbara. But we decided to start a website for the Cambodian community. We called it KhmerConnection. That was probably the starting point for a lot of the networking that ended up happening. A lot of college students had access to the internet at the time. And they, I think, just like us, they were all looking for Cambodians to be connected to. And so that- that website became a popular place for people to get to know each other and, and talk about the things that are happening in the day. But for the student communities that we were able to actually all get connected. Some of it was through that others were just through the existing relationships that like the CSA SDSU had and with the CSS (Cambodian Student Society) at Cal State, Long Beach and other organizations so we eventually pulled it all together and had a much bigger meeting. I forget what it was called at the time, but I think the the latest version that I heard was the student--like Khmer Student Coalition. So yeah, it was a--It was a, you know, just a, it was community website, forum. Probably had 10,000 members.</p>
	Amira Noeuv: Oh wow. Was it-- So it was like a national thing. Like it was open to Khmer communities in the US in general?
	<p>Vibol Hou: It was international. Because it was on the internet. We opened to everyone. But a lot of students got onto that, it's because that was, at the time, as the internet was starting to develop, that's- students were the ones that had access through college accounts and libraries and things like that. So it was international because we also found people that join from like Cambodia and other countries, like France and Austria, and I was surprised to see Cambodians in Austria, that there are.</p>
11:03	Amira Noeuv: Yeah. Okay. And then, my other question about your time was, like, what motivated you to create a student organization for Khmer folks? And like, what were the earlier objectives?
	Vibol Hou: Yeah. I've met a couple of other Cambodians on campus, it's--it's kind of serendipity, you meet them without trying to find them. Right? So...
	Amira Noeuv: Yeah. How did that happen?
11:38	Vibol Hou: I couldn't recall. So long ago, yeah. But we eventually found each other. And just... I mean, just out of the desire to spend time, we just started to [hang] out a lot more. And I think that informing the organization was two parts. One was...

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	<p>there are other organizations that have been formed at other colleges. And so why not have one here? And that's the "me too" phenomenon, I suppose. Like, just let's--let's do it, or let's do it too like everyone's got on one. And then there's also just the general desire to get--get the fact that there is some place right for other Cambodians to, to be out there on campus. So we, we set it up, we got out there and told as many people as we could, we found a few more members. There weren't that many Cambodians in--at college at the time, there's probably half a dozen of us.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: And what like, can you talk us a little to--a little bit about the process of sort of creating that student org?</p>
13:01	<p>Vibol Hou: It's tough to recall only to say that, there was certainly an application process was the first thing that we did, and we were able to get that done. The tough part was getting any funding for anything we wanted to do. Given that we're a brand new organization, there was just not a lot of appetite to fund unproven organizations. And so, we had to resort to donations from the community and friends and families and things like that.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Can you talk more about, like, the donation aspect and how you secured that from like, the community?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Like, go door to door and asking for money? [laughter]</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Wow really?</p>
13:42	<p>Vibol Hou: And the internet was quite early back then. You have to keep that in mind. So, we- I mean, most of the funding came from friends and family. You know, we would reach into our own networks and, and just ask for the donations and, and we told them, like, what we plan to use it for, in some cases we want to put on the show. Other cases we want to support another organization show like the SDSU C--CSA. And we were simply too small to do anything big at the time, but we did our best to support what we could.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah. What were like some other challenges that you faced in creating CSA?</p>
14:39	<p>Vibol Hou: I mean, I think it took us a little bit of time to figure out what we wanted to do. We had our constraints to recognize that we're low on the funding and things like that. And so we--we probably spent more of our time connecting to the other groups. I mean, of course, we we would spend time together, and I recall us eating together and things like that just community things that we would do. But I think we spent a lot of time networking. Right. All of the other schools--the-- Khmer unity</p>

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	<p>games, that universe² started. All of those events. We, I think we put a lot more time and energy into supporting them because we were so small, we couldn't really do substantial efforts on our own, like the [CSU] Long Beach CSS with all that always put on like a yearly show at the massive auditorium. That was certainly something that we could aspire to, but we simply didn't have the budget.</p>
15:44	<p>Amira Noeuv: Did you attend like a lot of the GBMs (General Body Meetings) for SDSU then, as you were sort of figuring out, creating it on UCSD?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Yeah, we—we often went to those GBMs as well. Especially when we were- get time around time to do the cultural events. We'd certainly attend more often.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: And what was the relationship like with those other CSU schools in helping you and your group develop the organization on UCSD campus?</p>
16:25	<p>Vibol Hou: Yeah, that's a great question. I mean, we certainly learned a lot from just discussions about how they did the things they do, like how they fundraise and how they organize their events. And of course, attending them and observing and participating in was also a good learning experience for us.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Okay, and then what sort of activities did you do in CSA when you first started out?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Besides the the meetings where we get together, and occasionally have dinner or lunch, depending on the time of day. We, that was--I'd say probably the bulk of it. I mean, we did try to find more people to recruit into the organization. It was, unfortunately, a little bit tough given there weren't that many Cambodians on campus, but I think, in its early days, it was much more, I'd say, intimate, right, smaller, just a smaller set of friends, right. That would be attending these meetings. And yeah, we, the most of the work was around, I'd say, supporting those around us.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah. And then in terms of like, recruitment, how did you approach that?</p>
17:52	<p>Vibol Hou: Jeez [laughs] I can't recall all the ways, although I would say that [the] Khmer Connection was certainly helpful in doing that, just because it was easy to put out a blanket kind of like, "Hey, by the way we exist, we are over here." This was before the time of Facebook, right? So there's no Facebook to do big announcements, invite a bunch of friends. Yeah, there are a few places online</p>

² "In reference to the Khmer Unity Games that we inaugurated in conjunction with the other Khmer CSAs (UCSD, SDSU, CSULB, UCI, UCLA, UCB, Fresno State, et al.)" Vibol Hou, September 2024.

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	<p>back that you can go to. Mi--might have been like, an IRC (Internet Relay Chat) channel where we, I was pretty more connected to that stuff. So I would do outreach that way. But again, it's far, far and few in between. And we got, I want to say, referrals from people who knew people that were also going to UCSD and so we were able to connect that way as well.</p>
18:45	<p>Amira Noeuv: Okay. And then, would you say it was--like...How was being a part of CSA helpful for you as a student and navigating UC San Diego?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Yeah, that's a good question. I think I had different circles that I was involved in, right? Like the CSA was certainly one and we were able to do a lot and meet a lot of people through that. And then, I'd say through the efforts of what we're trying to do, right, like self-organize, learn, learn how to recruit, be creative, that how we do that. Learn how to fundraise, be creative with how we do that. There are a lot of things just that we did through those being a participant in the in the club, that I'd say, I think for everyone in the club, including myself, we learned quite a bit that we didn't learn in school itself, you know.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah, yeah.</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: The other organizations I was involved in was also helpful in the other circles that when I looked at, so I've got kind of like, personal ethnic community. I've also got the things that I was studying at the time- cognitive sciences, the computer sciences that just from history I'm very involved in. You know, the all of that kind of led to a place where I'd say outside of just learning things, I was driven to do things with those groups that I was involved in. When--when we say, "Hey, let's go, let's go do this" and it's like, you got to do all the other prerequisite work, whether it's fundraising, networking, or whatever it is, all of that really added up to, I think, a much more complete experience from your school.</p>
20:40	<p>Amira Noeuv: Would you sit like- I'm always fascinated with how people balance like their school commitments with all these extracurricular activities. Did you find like...how did you manage that at the time? Was, like being a part of these committees kind of like an outlet? Or like a stress reliever for like, the school commitment? Or was it--like, what was the- what was the experience like?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Right, right. Definitely a stress reliever, I think if you do too much of one thing without breaking away from it, it does get a little bit overwhelming. So too much schools, too much learning is not a good thing, especially if you're not getting like, time with other people or it's social interactions, having fun things like that. So I think being a part of CS--CSC, and the other organizations was certainly fun. Right, the social aspect helped to relieve a lot of stress. But also, it was a way to learn and collaborate on the learning as well. Right? Like, like we go to school,</p>

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	<p>we tend to learn things in class. And within cognitive science, it was, I think the program itself was built such that people would group up and interact more. So that was a good thing. But, I don't know how the other programs do that, but I can imagine that a lot of it's like individual learning. So when you have these, these groups, whether it's the CSA, CSC, or ACM (Association for Computing Machinery), there are people that you could talk to, like, "Hey, I got a problem." Right, and you'd be able to get help that way.</p>
22:26	<p>Amira Noeuv: Were you a part of other student organizations or activism on campus while you were at UCSD? I guess, like, where I'm going with that is I'm trying to figure out just the climax at the time that you were in school, and seeing if that influenced, like your involvement?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: I didn't... I wouldn't say that I did a lot of activism on campus. There weren't--there weren't that many issues back then. And to be frank, I was, I was probably much younger to be as aware, about the things that might have been going on at time. But I certainly remember that, for example, a desire to share knowledge about our people in our culture, our, the Cambodian people and culture, to others just period, end a story, right. Like, here's who we are. Here's, here's kind of our culture. And so, supporting those shows was important to us. So, to the extent that I think educating others about our cultural heritage, that's certainly one of the things that we try to do with CSC. I wasn't involved in any like--besides the Association for Computing Machinery. That was the place for computer science and engineering types to come together. And that was quite educational and social in its own ways. Yeah, just imagine a lot of computers in that room [laughters]. That kind of stuff. And there was a lot of the--there were a lot of those kinds of activities.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: This desire to share knowledge about the Khmer people like, where did that sort of stem from like, why, like, why did you feel that that was a need? You know, to address?</p>
24:39	<p>Vibol Hou: That's a good question. Yeah, I think back then, it was more around a desire to learn about my own culture. Interesting thing growing up in another country where we're exposed to the American way, right, every day -- is that the things that we, culturally, ethnically, we-- our parents grew up in, aren't that visible. And so by the, by the time we got into college I, I learned a lot more about my culture in that time that I was involved doing the CSC stuff than any other time I was growing up. I started going to the temples more learning about the different days and ceremonies in the year. The culture shows helped to expose more of our kind of heritage and historic costumes and dances and things like -- and music, and that's--so that's also a big part of it. So I think that it was, it was more</p>

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	<p>beneficial probably for it to me. And it was to others that would attend that call friends from my circle to, to join us. Some did. Most didn't. But yeah, I mean, I think when you--when you try to connect in that way, it's meaningful in that we all try to get to know each other. And more often than not, we'll get to know each other through our work through our schoolwork and other things, but like to get to know each other's kind of heritage is--is just that next level beyond, right, just kind of like the surface interactions.</p>
26:35	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah. That's very interesting. So I guess you would say that you learned more about, like the Khmer culture and Khmer identity through these like cultural shows. Or was it also like maybe, in course, I mean, your coursework or just kind of like these extracurricular activities?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: It was all extracurricular, there was no, at least that I was aware of, there was no coursework available that taught anything about my Khmer heritage, it taught about--there are some, maybe history lessons about what happened in Cambodia during the war. But, besides that, I wouldn't say that I tried very hard to look for classes that could teach me more. I really didn't think, to go that way. Right. I thought to come to my community to learn more about my community than to go to school to learn about my community.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah, yeah. So I guess, like, at the time, like, and starting, like, since 80, there was this push to, create an Asian American and Pacific Islander studies. And, as I mentioned, like, during our previous meeting, it didn't start until last year. Was CSA or were you part of the conversation in this in trying to like, establish that minor at the time?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: I wasn't. No.</p>
28:19	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah, no, I mean, I think it's so interesting that you still were involved. And I really appreciate you saying that you were trying to learn about your community and your culture from your community and not like through school. How would you say was being a part of CSA impactful to your professional, your personal life after, after graduating?</p>
28:46	<p>Vibol Hou: I think I owe quite a bit to being involved to where I am today, I think that being involved in a community and doing things and volunteering, and organizing and planning and being challenged outside of my schoolwork, and the schoolwork is also very interesting, but it's not living life. Right? It's like booksmart kind of stuff. So, here with the organization, we struggled, and we struggled quite a bit, right? It's hard to find money, it's hard to even drive ourselves places, right, like, not having enough seats in the car, right to go. These were some real real issues, real basic issues that we have to deal with. But learning how to be creative</p>

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	<p>to work our way through that and just being really solutions oriented thinking, I mean, we just have to be right, and it kinda reminds me a lot of what we do and when I look at my career, or working at a lot of startups, it's-- startups as a struggle. I mean, the Silicon Valley startups are really nice. But, a lot more of the startups are struggles, right? we get paid less. For what we do, it's very limited funding, very limited amount of time to solve a problem and make it work. And these are the same kinds of problems that we deal with. And starting at the time of starting a CSA or starting up the Khmer Unity Games where we had to convince everyone to pitch in. Right? And then you got everyone else thinking, Okay, how are we gonna help with this? What can we do? What parts of this can we contribute to? And so, so all of that, right, learning how to negotiate, how to organize, how to convince everyone to be involved. All of those learnings went towards what I do, in my own work in life. That's basically... call it practice for getting to the real thing.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah, no, I can definitely see the connections between the skill sets. You mentioned a few times Khmer Unity. Can you explain a little bit more about what that is? And how that started?</p>
31:22	<p>Vibol Hou: Yeah, the the crux of it was, it was an excuse to get together in a big way. Right. As we started meeting everyone, and talking to the different groups on the phone, there was no Zoom, or Skype or anything back then is still quite manual. And the only way that you can really spend time together was in person. So I don't know where the genesis of the idea came from, only that we were quite committed to making it happen. And I recall having meetings at the various schools to organize right. We meet at UCLA one time, I can remember. We meet in San Diego another time. And, and then we had those ideas about rotating kind of stewardship of the games, and that that happened. And so there were different chairs throughout the years organizing it. But the idea was really like to just bring everyone together. Certainly, it was a big networking event. All the schools brought all of their student bodies to the events. And I can recall, the first one was, I think- I mean, in my mind it was quite successful as we get people from different places around the country, in one in one place. So, I think that, I mean, I've seen a couple of those happen throughout the years since. They kind of come come and go now. But I think that as a student, right, like, going back to the things that I said before, the value comes in being part of it, experiencing kind of not just the games themselves, but the work that's involved in putting it together. Like all of those things are, I think they're fun. We met a lot of great people. Made a lot of great friendships. You certainly got to know a whole lot more than we would have at UCSD with our, what, 6 members. Right. So for us, I think there was more incentive for us to, to do these big events and to be part of them, just because it expanded our our network.</p>

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	Amira Noeuv: Yeah. So was it--was it nationally? Or was most of the schools from California or...?
	Vibol Hou: We tried to get more schools involved over time. And I, I want to say that we eventually got more involved. But certainly all of- I think all of the CSAs in California were involved.
	Amira Noeuv: Oh, wow. And it was a annual thing?
	Vibol Hou: Yeah, yeah.
	Amira Noeuv: And so basically... was it like, over a weekend or?
	Vibol Hou: Yeah, it was, I think it was over a weekend. We pick a school to host it. And then all the organization happen over the phone. And I think we had a couple of sessions where we tried to- we met in person to organize, and it was just difficult for some of the schools that were like...you know, Fresno, Berkeley and others to make the trip for the organization amusement. They certainly made the trip for the actual games.
34:54	Amira Noeuv: Yeah. Can you like--so did UCSD host any, like while you were there? Or--Or did you just go to like the other schools?
	Vibol Hou: No, I, I want to say at the time, we were probably too small. So I can't recall. I think we had 2... we--we organized the first one and the second one. Oh, I say we, but we as the entire organizing committee between all the schools organized.
	Amira Noeuv: Okay, and what sort of games did like...? Was it like a retreat kind of thing?
	Vibol Hou: Yeah, that--that one, I can't recall very clearly at all. In fact, I probably avoided playing the game myself [laughs]. I was always the one that would be talking to everyone, [laughs] networking behind the scenes.
	Amira Noeuv: Yeah. Well, that sounds like a fun retreat. I think they still do it here and there. I've heard about it. So--but I wasn't sure what it was.
	Vibol Hou: Yeah yeah.
	Amira Noeuv: Do you keep up with CSA activities presently?
	Vibol Hou: I can answer to that yes, because I just added the Facebook page. [laughter] But to be frank, I haven't been able to, and you haven't neither put in the

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	<p>effort myself, because I've been so busy. But I've lost touch, right like that one point the student body was able to, or the leadership was able to reach out to me, and I think we just lost that connectivity. But every now and then I get an outreach from like, leadership to help them with things, and to the extent that I can, and I think a lot of the alumni these days, are very capable of supporting just that we either don't know, they need the support but lost touch, we've lost touch. And I'd like to work on fixing that.</p>
37:08	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah, definitely. Kind of going off in a little bit of a tangent. We talked about like the AAPI program being started at UCSD in the fall last year, 2020. If you were a part of the program, what would you like to experience? And what do you hope to be included in the AAPI studies program in general?</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Wow, that's, that's a great question. I mean, we tend to be responsive to the things that are happening around us now. Right. So I wouldn't say that it's what am I interested in within the program. It's-- I think, rather I want to--I would want to know and would want to suggest what can the program offer to those that don't take it as a minor? So when I think about what I went through in Revelle College, all of our kind of general education requirements, there's humanities, social sciences and a few other things. That's one thing is I would hope that Revelle expands their social science requirements include the AAPI courses matter of fulfilling those requirements. And certainly that should be an easy thing to do. But it's a tough problem. I think that the thing that everyone wants to solve right now is just knowledge, recognition, appreciation, respect. Everyone wants it, no one-- I mean, a lot of people are giving it, but there are those few that aren't and they are expressing their feelings in very violent ways. And that's just a very frustrating challenge.</p>
	<p>Amira Noeuv: Yeah, I think that's a really good point, I really liked that, making it more accessible outside of- you know, maybe as a STEM major, you don't have the ability or the bandwidth to take on as an extra minor, but still want to be involved in the issues.</p>
	<p>Vibol Hou: Yeah. And I think it starts earlier than college as well. Right, like, being very knowledgeable in the AAPI in college is far down the set of opportunities to--I think get people to know about these important issues. So I don't know what the- I know that at UCSD, there's Preuss School. Right. So there, there are other opportunities that as those in the AAPI program, I think can work toward towards interacting quite a bit more with the community. And in just working to create more exposure earlier on. And to what point, I think that the point is just to know about each other. To not be part of, to know is helps to do away with, to be afraid of,</p>

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	right. Knowledge is power, as they say, but it's also a- to know more about something and actually understand it also helps to alleviate a lot of fear.
40:42	Amira Noeuv: Yeah. And a lot of this is like, kind of looking at things in retrospect, right? So, reflecting on that, what is something that you wish the institution, or UCSD did for you, while you were a student at UCSD?
	<p>Vibol Hou: Yeah, that's a great question. I mean, to the extent that I knew what was possible, I thought that the school, did--did really well, for me. I was able to participate in a lot of activities, I wasn't excluded from anything that I wanted to be in. And so with respect to that, I thought it was very good environment. So what we're talking about is, what more can the university do to I suppose-- when you only can do as much as you know, but this is kind of like outreach and just perhaps improving the knowledge about what's possible, what programs exist, what opportunities exist to, for the students to be engaged in. It's not that the school doesn't do that right. They are--you go to school for the first day, and then the first few weeks, there's a whole bunch of activities, right, things you could be doing. So, so that was that was good. But the other thing that we struggled with just--just as a student organization, I mentioned budgets. That's sort of been solved by now, given the CSA has been around for a while. So hopefully, they had a pretty steady budget coming in. But also a lot of the smaller organizations don't have a lot structure. There isn't like a framework that we can adopt to help us do a better job of organizing ourselves. We had to figure it all out. You saw--you kind of go put in your application, put a few names in, right and that's--back then. That's all we got. Okay. You got the staff, you can go organize now. Great. Now what? And I think when you're talking about last kind of activity, right? Like the generations of leaders in the CSA, you're going from one hand to another, they're handing it off, but there's knowledge that's lost. And so when I think framers kind of related things I think about today, organizational design like onboarding, like making sure that people are coming onto the teams know what to do and how to be effective. It's kind of related, right? The next set of leaders that come on board, like what's important. I know that, for example, that I see it, CSCL, BCSS, they have a historian, right, that keeps things moving forward and keeps track of the histories as handed off from person to person, we probably should have, like, invested the time to have that as well, for CSA. And, but it's like, the--the frame of how to run an effective organization that can stand the test of time, certainly wasn't something that was in their vocabulary back then. And I'm willing to say that it's not in most students' vocabularies. So things like that, right? Like, I don't know if that's part of kind of just general education requirements, right? Like how--how to how to run a business. But those those skills would be very helpful. I didn't learn how to do the leadership side of what I do, from what I learned in college classes. And what I did with the CSC, with I did with ACM. Right, but you know, if there's one thing, I</p>

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	guess the school could do better to prepare us better. Maybe it's in taking a look at those GE requirements and saying like, hey, you know, by the way, we want our students to be capable of leading, in general, and perhaps making that part of the GE requirements.
	Amira Noeuv: Yeah, no, I really like that. And you touched on this next question already a little bit, but what other advice would you give to students who are interested in forming a student based organization like the Cambodian Student Association?
45:25	Vibol Hou: Find all the alumni that you can. And keep passing that knowledge down. As you don't have to start over every time that you take over, there's a lot of knowledge that predates, a lot of mistakes we've made, every leader has made that you can avoid, right.
	Amira Noeuv: And like for you, it was reaching out to other schools, right, that already had an organization up and running.
	Vibol Hou: Yeah, we learned a whole lot from all of our peers.
	Amira Noeuv: As a co-founder of the organization, what is something you would like to convey to the current CSA members?
	Vibol Hou: Call me [laughter]. I'll be around for a little bit longer. But yeah, like myself and other alumni and former leaders of the organization, I think, I don't want to speak for them. But you know, reach out. And let's get connected. And I'd love to learn about all the things you're trying to do. And also, I want to learn how I can help.
	Amira Noeuv: Yeah. Do you keep in touch with a lot of the other alumni and the other co-founders?
	Vibol Hou: Occasionally, yeah, yeah, we've, we all contact each other once in a while?
	Amira Noeuv: Well, I, like I said, I know, there's definitely events in which they want to connect alums and current members. So hopefully, they'll start something. And we can share your contact information. So yeah, I mean, that pretty much concludes the oral history, as there's something else you want to share that we haven't covered?
	Vibol Hou: No, I don't think so. I mean, thank you for doing this, I think that it's a good step in the right direction with respect to--because I looked, I went back and I looked up, what I can find online, right about everything that's happened. And

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	you'll often miss a lot of the details. You only see the announcements, the invites and stuff like that, but you don't see any of the documentation that the work that's gone on, underneath the hood. It's helpful. And I appreciate you taking the time to speak with me on this and, you know, very much enjoyed the conversation.
	Amira Noeuv: Yeah, I'm very excited that we were able to connect and that we found you. And I'm just really excited to sort of put like, all the initiatives that you and all the other members have done throughout the years. And telling like the story within like the larger program, and I definitely want to keep in contact with you and, and like, hopefully we can still be involved as things progress.
	Vibol Hou: Perfect, likewise.
	Amira Noeuv: Thank you so much. I'm going to pause the recording here but yeah.