



Laonet chose Genevieve Siri for our April 2006 cover to represent the best in all of us: her persistence to overcome obstacles in the path to success, remembrance of her roots, dedication to public service, and her outstanding contribution to the country which adopted all of us.

A path to public service can be taken as early as age 6. Genevieve (On) Siri knows this well. As a first-grader, she was called to interpret for a Lao family enrolling their child in school. She did not realize at the time that she would link the Lao community with others many times in her adult life.

Genevieve began her professional public service career in 1990. As a high school senior, she won a competition to intern for a California State Senator and an L.A. City Councilman. Genevieve was awarded the Asian Pacific American Women’s Network Scholarship, and attended Pomona College in Claremont, California. According to *U.S. News and World Report’s* “America’s Best Colleges 2006” listing, Pomona tied with Bowdoin College as the sixth top liberal arts college in America.

At Pomona, Genevieve majored in Government. She also studied abroad at the National University of Singapore and Thammasat University in Thailand. She took classes on Thai language and politics and Southeast Asian defense policy and

history. In her senior year, Genevieve spent a semester in Washington, D.C. as an intern for the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.

In her junior year, Genevieve was selected from a national competition to participate in the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Program for Public Policy and International Affairs Summer Institute at Princeton University. She subsequently attended graduate school as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. Genevieve was an officer of the *Harvard Asian American Policy Review*, and campaigned for a Presidential candidate. In 1996, Genevieve graduated from Harvard with a Master’s Degree in Public Policy.

After graduation, Genevieve went to work for the City of Phoenix, Arizona. In 1993, Phoenix was selected as the winner of the Bertelsmann Prize for being



the best run city-government in the world along with Christchurch, New Zealand. While Genevieve was at Harvard, Phoenix recruited her to apply for its prestigious City Management Internship Program. Many top-level City executives began their career in this program including some current city managers in the U.S. The Intern program, which Genevieve now manages, is the oldest and one of the most respected city management internship programs in the country.

Genevieve's 10-year career with the City of Phoenix has enabled her to work on a variety of assignments. She has diversified her management experience by working in various City departments including the City Manager's Office, Budget and Research, Personnel, Aviation, Community and Economic Development, and Public Works Departments. Genevieve has won a City of Phoenix Excellence Award in 1998, and was the Project Manager of the development of a \$6.7 million award-winning facility. In 1997, the International City/County Management Association recognized her with its Workplace Diversity Award.

When Genevieve arrived in Phoenix, she immediately sought to help the Lao community, especially Lao youth. She joined the Arizona Lao Association, and mobilized Lao youth to unify to promote higher education and Lao culture. Genevieve coordinated the youth to organize the annual Lao youth scholarship celebration, and helped establish Lao language classes at Wat Lao Soudharam. Through a variety of activities, she helped build energy and enthusiasm among the youth to give back to the community, and inspired them to pursue higher education. She also directly assisted a newly-arrived Lao refugee family, and spent many weekends teaching English to their four children.

Genevieve also worked to build partnerships with outside organizations. One of her most significant contributions arose from her close working relationship with Arizona State University's Program for Southeast Asian Studies (ASU PSEAS). Genevieve worked hard to promote the university-level Lao language classes at ASU. With PSEAS' support, Genevieve brought together Lao youth to organize an unprecedented fundraising event which included many community leaders and a former Arizona State Representative. For her efforts, the PSEAS invited Genevieve to join the Friends of Lao Studies (FOLS) Board.

Genevieve also worked to link government resources with the community. As Project Manager of the State's largest Asian business conference for the City of Phoenix, she promoted small business opportunities for Lao people. In 2000, Genevieve voluntarily conducted Census outreach to the Lao community.

Genevieve's other professional experience includes working at the Executive Office of the President's Office of

Management and Budget (OMB) and the National Low Income Housing Coalition in Washington, D.C. At OMB, Genevieve acted as a Legislative Analyst. In this capacity, she worked with other Federal agencies to coordinate legislation and wrote statements of Presidential position.

Genevieve and her family immigrated the U.S. as refugees from Laos in 1976. For most of her youth, she grew up with very little resources. She saw how hard her mom worked at sewing garments during the weekday while operating a flea market business during the weekends. Nevertheless, through dedication and her mom's unwavering support, Genevieve and her sister were able to achieve success.

At Genevieve's Harvard graduation, students were urged to do everything in their power to contribute to solutions to public problems and go out into society to make it a better place for all. Genevieve's achievements and contributions to society truly exemplify the spirit of these words and the realization of the American Dream.



ນິຕະຍະສາສ ລາວແມັດທ໌ ເລືອກ ເອົາ ນາງອ່ອນ ສິນິ ໃສ່ໜ້າປົກ ເພາະນາງ ຮຽນເກັ່ງ (ຈົບ ປຣິນຍາໂທ ມະຫາ ວິທຍາລັຍ Harvard ປີ 1996) ມີປະສົບ ການ ເຮັດ ວຽກ ງານ ເກັ່ງ (ໄດ້ຮັບ ໃບ ຍ້ອງຍໍ City of Phoenix Excellence Award ປີ 1998) ແລະສິ່ງ ທີ່ສໍາຄັນ ທີ່ສຸດ ນາງເປັນຄົນ ທີ່ບໍ່ລົມ ເຊື້ອສາຍ ຕົນເອງແລະ ໃຊ້ເວລາ ສ່ວນຕົວ ເອົາມາຊ່ອຍ ສັງຄົມລາວ. ນາງເປັນ ສຸພາບສັຕຣິລາວ ຄົນນຶ່ງ ທີ່ພິສູດວ່າ ຄວາມ ສໍາເຣັດ ຂອງ ລູກ ບໍ່ໄດ້ຂຶ້ນ ກັບ ວ່າ ພໍ່ແມ່ ມີເງິນ ຫລາຍ ປານໃດ ແຕ່ຂຶ້ນຢູ່ກັບຄວາມໂກ້ຊິດ ຊູກຢູ່ ການຮຽນ. ແມ່ ນາງອ່ອນ ຫຍິບຜ້າ ແລະນຶ່ງຕາກແດດ ຂາຍຂອງ ຢູ່ ຕລາດ ຂາຍແຈ້ງ (flea market) ເກັບຫ້າ ເກັບສິບ ເພື່ອຊ່ອຍລ້ຽງນາງ ໃຫ້ ເຕີບໃຫຍ່ ຂຶ້ນມາ.

