
USAID HIGHLIGHTS

High School Student Wins Youth Leadership Challenge

Phnom Penh, Cambodia
July 1, 2009



U.S. Ambassador Carol A. Rodley presents YLC winner Chhem Pe with a two-week trip to the United States.

Chhem Pe, a 19-year-old high school student from Siem Reap, won the fifth season of the Youth Leadership Challenge television show on Wednesday, July 1. Pe became the youngest winner in the competition's history when he beat Kem "Emmy" Sotheathangdy, a 22-year-old student from Battambang.

The popular television show is watched by millions and is funded by USAID.

Pe received a two-week trip to Washington, D.C., to meet with representatives of the U.S. Government and learn more about American society and democracy. U.S. Ambassador Carol A. Rodley presented him with the prize during a live broadcast on CTN.

Loosely modeled after American TV shows like *The Apprentice* and *American Idol*, the Youth Leadership Challenge tests the leadership and debating skills of promising young men and women from around the country.

The season began with 16 contestants. Each week, the contestants were divided into two teams to compete in challenges such as organizing a book drive for a library or participating in a mock trial. The judges were Seng Theary, an author and Executive Director of the Center for Social Development, and Chea Samnang, a film star and Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations Population Fund.