



COLLEGE  
*of the* DESERT

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

James Meier 760.773.2589  
Interim Director,  
Community Relations

**Author and Activist Speaks at COD on March 16  
Loung Ung discusses surviving Cambodia's "Killing Fields"**

**PALM DESERT, CA**—College of the Desert (COD) is honored to welcome bestselling author and human rights activist Loung Ung for a free communitywide event at 12:30 p.m., Thursday, March 16.

Ms. Ung will share her compelling story of survival, courage and triumph during the "Killing Fields" of the brutal Khmer Rouge regime in the presentation in the Pollock Theatre on COD's Palm Desert Campus. A book signing will follow.

The event is a project of the Diversity and Equity Council and funded by Student Equity. It is free and open to the public; seating is first come, first served. Parking is free in any student lots during the event.

Ung's bestselling memoir, *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers* (HarperCollins, 2000), is a personal account of her experience during the Khmer Rouge. Loung Ung was only 5 when the Khmer Rouge soldiers stormed into her native city of Phnom Penh. Four years later, in one of the bloodiest episodes of the 20th century, some two million Cambodians – out of a population of seven million – had died at the hands of the infamous Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge regime. Among the victims were both of Ung's parents, two sisters and 20 other relatives. In 1980, Ung, her older brother Meng and his wife escaped by boat to Thailand, where they spent five months in a refugee camp before relocating to the United States in Vermont through the sponsorship of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Since 1995, Ung has made more than 30 trips back to Cambodia and has devoted herself to helping her native land heal from the traumas of war. She has worked as an activist to end violence against women, child soldiers, and the Campaign for a Landmine Free World, and served as the spokesperson for the campaign from 1997 to 2005.

Copies of *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers* are available for purchase at the COD Bookstore.

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The memoir has been made into the feature film "First They Killed My Father" produced and directed by Angelina Jolie. Filmed entirely in Cambodia with an all Cambodian cast, it's expected to be released globally through Netflix in September 2017.

Ung has also appeared on numerous television and radio programs, including CNN, "Nightline," the "Diane Rhem Show," "Talk of the Nation," NPR's "Weekend Edition," "Fresh Air with Terry Gross," and "Today." In addition, she has been the subject of hourlong documentary films for the German ARTE, Japanese NHK, and U.S. NECN, and has spoken at numerous forums, including Stanford University, Singapore American, Taipei American School, Mexico 1 Million Youth Summit, UN Conferences on Women in Beijing, UN Conference Against Racism and Discriminations in Durban, South Africa, and Child Soldiers Summit in Kathmandu, Nepal.

For more information, contact the Diversity and Equity Council at 760.773.2567.

About College of the Desert:

Established in 1958, College of the Desert (COD), located in Palm Desert, is an accredited community college serving eastern Riverside County, California. The College leads the region in providing quality, higher education, technical training and lifelong learning opportunities, in response to the dynamic needs of our diverse community. The College serves more than 14,000 credit students and 1,000 non-credit students each year and is the number one source of transfer students to California State University, San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus. For more information, visit [www.collegeofthedesert.edu](http://www.collegeofthedesert.edu).

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