It is said the greatest gift you can give another person is the gift of their own history.

Over the course of three years, a California collaborative of passionate individuals created the Hmongstory 40 project. Children of refugees, these 40 volunteers assembled an exhibit honoring their parents, celebrating their culture, and preserving the Hmong experience and history.

The first-of-its-kind exhibit commemorates the stories of the people forced to flee their native Laos in 1975 and endure refugee camps in Thailand before arriving in the San Joaquin Valley — now home to the second largest Hmong population in the United States.

Supported in part by the Central Valley Community Foundation, Hmongstory 40 explores this history through 15,000 photos along with personal narratives, videos and artifacts. The traveling showcase launched at the Fresno Fairgrounds honors the generations who started over in a foreign land, and offers a vibrant picture of their heritage to younger generations of Hmong raised in America.

CVCF proudly partners with Fresno State University, United Way Fresno and Madera Counties and other generous supporters to preserve and celebrate the arts and culture of this diverse Valley we love. Their stories are part of our history, and all are the richer for it.

Central Valley Community Foundation Arts and Culture Grants

Central Valley Community Foundation Arts and Culture grants were made possible in 2015 by this family of funds: the Arts and Cultural Advancement Fund, Lulu and Herbert Gundelfinger Memorial Fund for Arts, Hearst Endowment for Art and Science Education and the Louis Gundelfinger Memorial Fund for Parks.

Photos courtesy of Yar Lang, a founder of Hmongstory 40.