

Wisconsin Women's Council: Hmong women's story cloth exhibit in Capitol for AANHPI Heritage Month

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MADISON, WI - May is Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month, and the Women's Council together with The Hmong Institute are celebrating and recognizing the culture and heritage of Hmong women with a story cloth exhibit in the State Capitol (first floor rotunda). The exhibit is on display now and is viewable during the Capitol's open hours (8am-6pm M-F; 8am-4pm Weekends) through June 9, 2023.*



The exhibit, *Resiliency: Hmong Women's Mental Health Journeys During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, features three story cloth quilt panels that were the culmination of an ethnographic and art therapy project led by The Hmong Institute and the Wisconsin Women's Council. In spring 2022, the two organizations started a project to better understand the experiences of elder Hmong women during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The project engaged participants of an ongoing women's group, Hmong Sisterhood Support Group, at The Hmong Institute's community center to discuss and process the impacts of grief, stress, and isolation experienced during the pandemic on their mental health and well-being and capture their experiences and stories through a traditional means of documenting the Hmong experience and history by creating '[story cloths](#)'.

Through the project's discussions and story cloth creation, three themes emerged as the participant's primary sources of strength and resiliency: their Hmong families

and community, spirituality/faith, and gardening or being outdoors. The exhibit also features a poster with a QR code so viewers can watch an [online video](#) of interviews with the women who created the story cloths as they share some their experiences during the pandemic. The video development was funded in part by the [Wisconsin Humanities](#).

*The exhibit will be down temporarily on May 20 so that it can be on display at The Hmong Institute's annual [Hmong Heritage Dinner](#).

ABOUT THE WISCONSIN WOMEN'S COUNCIL

The Wisconsin Women's Council, celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 2023, is Wisconsin's statutory commission on the status of women and girls. The Council promotes initiatives that empower women, serve as a clearinghouse for information on programs and resources, conducts research, and promotes unique partnerships to address barriers and inequalities affecting Wisconsin women. The Council is guided by a 15-member board appointed by the Governor and Legislative leaders. For more information about the Wisconsin Women's Council, visit our website at: womenscouncil.wi.gov.

ABOUT THE HMONG INSTITUTE

The Hmong Institute, built from 35 years of experience serving the Hmong and refugee communities, is a resource to advance community inclusion of Hmong culture and work to preserve and promote Hmong heritage for the future. The Hmong Institute is committed sharing Hmong history, culture, and traditions through opportunities to engage and learn, as well as ensuring that Hmong voices and experiences are heard and amplified and fulfill its mission to empower community through education, health, and preservation of Hmong heritage, with the goal of being a prominent leader in these efforts. For more information about The Hmong Institute, visit our website at: thehmonginstitute.org