



SAILOR MOURNED. This undated photo released by the U.S. Navy shows Sonar Technician 3rd Class Ngoc T. Truong Huynh, age 25, from Oakville, Connecticut. Huynh was one of the seven sailors who died in a collision between the USS Fitzgerald and a container ship off Japan. (U.S. Navy via AP)

Connecticut sailor among seven killed in collision

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — The sister of a U.S. Navy sailor from Connecticut who was killed in a collision between a destroyer and a container ship off Japan said her family will remember him as “the most selfless person.”

Ngoc T. Truong Huynh, 25, was one of seven sailors killed aboard the *USS Fitzgerald*.

Lan Huynh told WVIT-TV that family members are coping as best they can.

The family moved to Connecticut when Ngoc Huynh was in the eighth grade, she said. Her brother graduated from Watertown High School and also attended Naugatuck Valley Community College before enlisting in the Navy in 2014. The family moved to Oklahoma a short time later.

Lan Huynh, 23, told *The Hartford Courant* that her brother enlisted because he wanted to give back to his mother, who raised four children on her own.

“It’s not something he always wanted to do, but he wanted to do something adventurous,” she said.

She described the harrowing hours between the collision and the identification of victims.

“We honestly, stayed up all night sitting by ourselves and crying our hearts out. We were constantly refreshing the web for any updates,” she said.

Lan Huynh said her brother was quiet, yet had the “brightest smile” and was the “sweetest human being” she knew.

“I just want everyone to know that he was the best brother ever,” she said.

Connecticut governor Dannel P. Malloy ordered flags to fly at half-staff in Ngoc Huynh’s honor.

□

There is such a thing as MSG withdrawal

Continued from page 6

This was after two minutes of waiting.

When the food arrived, there was a frantic look of desperation and anticipation on his face. He practically didn’t even need to use chopsticks. The food looked like it floated off the table and sailed into his mouth as if there was some kind of vacuum coming from his stomach.

With each mouthful of dumpling or noodle, he closed his eyes and his head tilted back, as if gripped in some kind of rapturous ecstasy. His skin tone literally darkened three

shades, from a pasty white to a more normal human hue. You could almost see the MSG coursing through his veins, bringing him back to life from three days of deprivation.

After we finished, we got back into the car and headed home — without any leftovers, by the way. He tilted the car seat and reclined with his belly engorged again and said, “I’m so full. I’m going to skip dinner.”

In the morning, I brought a cup of noodles in the car with us on the way to the airport — just in case.

Hmong-American doctor inspired by heritage

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A Hmong American who recently received his medical degree plans to return to Madison, Wisconsin to pursue research on using stem cells to treat chronic pain.

Yeng Her became interested in helping people regain function after spending much of his childhood at Hmong refugee camps in Thailand surrounded by people injured during the Vietnam War, the *Wisconsin State Journal* reported.

“I felt powerless,” he said. “That lit a fire inside of me to go into medicine and try to bridge these gaps.”

The 33-year-old received his M.D. and Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. The M.D.-Ph.D. program takes eight years to complete. It starts and ends with two years of medical school and has four years of graduate school in between.

Her and his family recently moved to Fresno, California, where he’ll spend a year at a medical internship. Then he’ll start a three-year residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Health.

He is considering opening up a clinic in Laos, where his parents grew up, and hopes to promote higher education among Hmong Americans.

“This is the reason we’re here in the United States, that we have this opportunity,” Her said. “Education is the key.”

Her hopes telling his immigrant story will inspire others.

“Opening the door for people like myself, to achieve the American dream, that’s something we should do,” he said.

Judge OKs lawsuit over once-secret immigrant-vetting program

By Gene Johnson
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — A class-action lawsuit challenging a once-secret government program that delayed immigration and citizenship applications by Muslims can move forward, a federal judge has ruled.

U.S. district judge Richard Jones in Seattle denied the Justice Department’s request to dismiss the lawsuit, which was filed in February by the American Civil Liberties Union and the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project.

The lawsuit claims the government since 2008 has used the Controlled Application Review and Resolution Program to blacklist thousands of applications for asylum, legal permanent residency, or citizenship as national security concerns.

The program imposes criteria on the applications that go far beyond what congress has authorized, including holding up some applications if the applicants donated to Muslim charities or travelled to Muslim-majority countries, the complaint alleges.

The program was not publicly discovered until 2012, when an immigration officer discussed it during testimony in a different lawsuit.

Immigrant rights advocates then filed Freedom of Information Act lawsuits to force U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to turn over more information about it, the lawsuit said.

“Congress has laid out the requirements for these programs,” Matt Adams, legal director of the Seattle-based Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, said. “The

agency doesn’t have the authority to, one, impose its own requirements, and, two, impose them in a secret program on people who aren’t even aware of them.”

In addition to challenging the program, the lawsuit seeks to block any other “extreme vetting” that President Donald Trump’s administration might impose as an updated version of it.

A spokeswoman for USCIS, Sharon Rummery, said the agency did not have any immediate comment on the ruling.

In its motion to dismiss the case, the government said the program falls within the legitimate background-check process for immigrants applying for citizenship or other benefits.

“It is a way for USCIS to investigate and verify information in certain cases, and to ensure reasoned decisions,” the Justice Department argued.

Other lawsuits around the country have challenged the program, Adams said, but they were dismissed because immigration authorities quickly ruled on the plaintiffs’ applications once the complaints were filed, erasing the legal grounds on which they sued.

The same thing happened in the Seattle case, Adams said: Five of the six named plaintiffs had their cases ruled on in the weeks after the case was filed.

One, a Somali immigrant named Abdiqafar Wagafe, had waited three-and-a-half years for a decision on his citizenship application. It was approved five days after the complaint was filed, and he was sworn in as a U.S. citizen on March 2.

But the judge said the case could go forward on behalf of others whose applications were being delayed because of the program.



INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEY. Dr. Yeng Her, a Hmong American who earned an M.D.-Ph.D., reflects on a life journey that has taken him from refugee camps in Thailand as a child to a doctoral degree in medicine from the Mayo Clinic, during an interview at his home in Madison, Wisconsin. (John Hart/Wisconsin State Journal via AP)

TALKING STORY IN ASIAN AMERICA



■ Polo

Polo’s “Talking Story” column will return soon.



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