

The Ayui Foundation is a non-religious, non-government organisation that provides a home, educational opportunities and future pathways for disadvantaged Akha hilltribe teenagers.

Ayui Foundation

NEWSLETTER



*Sumalee Milne, OAM
Director*

APRIL 2019

Chiang Rai, Thailand

FROM THE DIRECTOR

As they say - time flies when you are having fun! It is hard to believe that this is the end of the 11th school year of supporting Akha students since the Ayui Foundation opened. This year we had a record seven students graduate from Grade 9 and all seven will be going on to vocational college! One of our goals is to increase the level of education among Akha youth here, and this has gradually been happening as more of our high school graduates, each year, are choosing to continue at college with the backing of their parents and support of the Foundation. I was proud to attend three graduation ceremonies this year to show support for our students' achievements.

In early February, we made one final attempt at local fundraising but the expatriate community and tourists in Chiang Rai, once again, seem inexplicably uninterested in experiencing beautiful cultural performances and supporting local grassroots organizations. I consider it a hard lesson learned. As usual, before we start the new school year in May, I will continue to search for overseas funding to get thirty needy students through another year.

Here are some photos from our Traditional Akha Dinner and Cultural Performance Fundraiser. Thank you to all our students for rehearsing daily, for preparing the food, and helping in the effort to raise funds for the home.



The performers



Our ten boys with housefather, Wit.

Congratulations GRADUATES

On February 16th, the annual **Grade 9 graduation ceremony** was held at the Sahasart Suksa School, where most of the children attend. Six of the seven graduates will be staying on at Ayui while furthering their studies at college. Many families came down from their villages to attend this proud occasion.



(L to R) Maliya, Amer, Malisa, Anchareeya, Waraporn, Mannopha and Panakorn



On March 11th, the **Chiang Rai Vocational College** held their graduation ceremony. This year we had one graduate from Baan Ayui, Wanpen (sponsored by Winnie Cain via the Akha Women's Foundation), who graduated in Hotel and Tourism. She has the highest education than anyone in her family and wants to find work straight away to support her impoverished family. Another Hotel and Tourism graduate was Ploypailin, one of our *non-resident sponsored students*, meaning she lived in a dorm near college and had sponsors covering her education costs, via Ayui. She was able to complete her Higher Vocational College Certificate thanks to her sponsors Ajarn Chintana Sandilands and Michael Sloggett from Australia.



Ploypailin and family



Wanpen and family

Finally, on March 15th, the **Chiang Rai Technical College** held their graduation ceremony. Both Yohan and Golf graduated in Mechanics and will continue studying for another 2 more years doing their Higher Vocational College Certificate as *non-resident sponsored students* via Ayui. Golf will continue to be sponsored by Malcolm Burrows. Yohan has been living at the Ayui Foundation since he started Grade 1 in 2007, and says the Foundation is home for him. Also, after a 5-year wait, he FINALLY received **Thai citizenship** a few months ago.



Golf and Yohan



Yohan in Grade 1

VISITORS

On January 28th, we had the pleasure of catching up with Geoffrey Wood, a North Hobart Rotary Past President, who last visited the Ayui Foundation over 10 years ago. Thank you for still thinking of us and coming to see how we are getting along now.



On February 23rd, we were also pleased to see someone who first came to visit us about 5 years ago - sponsor Steve Keiley and his wife. Steve came to meet the 5 students that he has sponsored since then. It's always great when the students get to meet their sponsor in person. The students were so happy to hear that Steve has decided to sponsor them until they each graduate.



★ ★ ★ Thank You ★ ★ ★

A heartfelt thank you goes to all the sponsors of our recent graduates. Special mention goes to **Brian O’Keeffe in Australia** for sponsoring Yohan for 11 years, from Grade 1 till college graduation!

Thank you to sponsor Amanda Hudson for directing those who wished to make a donation in memory of her father - well-known Chiang Mai expat Roy Hudson – who recently passed away, to donate to the Ayui Foundation. Roy was one of our first child sponsors, back in 2007.



Thanks goes to sponsor Malcolm Burrows for purchasing a new water cooler for the Boys Home to replace the old one.

Finally, a big thank you goes to long-time sponsor Mr Tan, in Singapore, for generously providing the funds to rebuild the housefather’s bamboo house.



Before



After

If you would like to VISIT, FUNDRAISE, VOLUNTEER or DONATE please email us at Ayui.foundation@gmail.com www.ayuifoundation.org

Australian bank account:
Bendigo Bank
Acc no:133516195 BSB:633-000
Sumalee Milne-In Trust for Ayui

Thai bank account:
Siam Commercial Bank
Acc no:5072669424
Ayui Foundation

For online or tax-deductible donations in Australia see our website

www.ayuifoundation.org