

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

January 2020

Chiang Rai, Thailand

FROM THE DIRECTOR

It was great to see all the students back at Ayui after their semester break in October. I feel like this school year has flown by, and now there's only a few more months till graduation in March.

We were invited by the popular magazine for expats *Chiang Mai City Life* to have a stall at their annual Garden Fair on November 23rd, 2019. I went to Chiang Mai with two of our girls, who helped hand out Ayui brochures and sell some of the Akha items our girls had made. A few people stopped for a chat and praised the work of the foundation, so it was a good PR event for us even though it was tiring going there and back by bus in one day.

For the first time, we hosted a big group of volunteers, from Guam, who came and did some maintenance work and joined fun activities with the Ayui students. It was an unforgettable experience for both groups. There is more on that below...

On behalf of the Ayui students, I would like to wish all our volunteers, visitors, child sponsors and donors a HAPPY NEW YEAR for 2020!



OUR VOLUNTEERS



From 26 November to 1 December, 11 members and 2 leaders of the Lutheran Church of Guam Youth Group came to volunteer at Ayui. Otherwise known as FLOW (Future Leaders Of the World), the group of teenagers carried out several fundraisers in Guam to donate to Ayui and to help cover their travel costs. This amazing group raised a staggering US\$5,000, which covered the cost of digging a new well at the Boys Home, running costs for a month, and Term 2 sponsorships for two new boys who moved in after term break. FLOW also donated a new speaker (with wheels, Bluetooth and microphone), as well as bringing second-hand clothes for our annual clothes donation. They also covered their cost of food for the duration of their stay.



After a very informative presentation on Guam and individual introductions, the youth spent the weekdays repainting the outside of the Boys Home and repaired the bamboo fence around the perimeter. In the evenings, the children bonded over sports and games, and sang songs with the Ayui students. Over the weekend they visited an Akha village, a temple, a waterfall and the Walking Street. On their final night, we had our annual cookout at the Boys Home, serving Akha food, and the Ayui students performed traditional Akha dances to showcase their culture.





“When I arrived at the Ayui foundation, we were greeted with a warm welcome. In the middle of the night, all of the students there, said hello and gave us a glass of water. They showed us to our rooms and we called it a night. The next day, we were woken up with a wonderful breakfast. That day we finished a majority of the painting of the house. We wrapped up the day with a friendly game of soccer.”

The rest of our days would continue to follow this schedule. At the end of our stay, we finished painting the boy’s house a nice red with brown accents, and repairing parts of their fence. Then they treated us to a barbecue dinner by the campfire, a scene familiar to many of us islanders. Overall my experience was wonderful, from the friendships made, to the work we did, all of it contributed to having a wonderful time.”

-Timothy Hutapea, aged 14

“I had a great experience in Chiang Rai and it was also really fun, and as a group, the FLOW had a great experience, too. Being able to live in a different way of life than mine was very cool. I was able to learn new things and make friends with the kids. Riding in the truck was also very cool. I liked how there were seats in the back of the truck and we were able to all sit together and become closer with each other. Altogether, the trip was a great bonding experience for FLOW and the kids at the Ayui Foundation.”

I was able to learn that you can make things with the environment around you. It was cool that we were able to make a fence with bamboo, because usually it is just made out of metal. Also, like the little huts, those were really cool. While we were building the fence, I think the FLOW were able to get closer with one another because we were all working hard together. Doing all the projects and playing with the kids helped us all to build new relationships that we will never forget.”

- Kai-Li Updegrove, aged 12



ANNUAL CLOTHES DONATION

For our annual clothes donation this year, we went to Nong Pak Naam village. We were joined by French volunteer Martin Schmitt, who volunteered at the Boys Home for a week before Xmas break, and will return after the break.



★ ★ ★ Thank You ★ ★ ★

Thank you, once again, to our long-term supporter, Hal Radin, for paying for our annual rice supply – a very important contribution that enables us to feed 30 students.

Thank you to Laura MacDonald from the Chiang Mai Expats Club for her donation covering the cost of our trip to Chiang Mai.

We appreciate the \$1000 donation from John Milne, Canberra, Australia.

Thanks to the parents of Ampai Kindergarten School for donating clothes, toys and shoes. Also, thanks to Shayne Rebollos and Khun Bow in Bangkok for their clothes and toy donations.



Also, thanks to the supportive parents/guardians of the FLOW volunteers for their surprise Thanksgiving KFC dinner for all the children.

Last but not least, a big THANK YOU goes to the awesome FLOW coordinators Tara and Kevin for organizing the volunteer trip, and all the wonderful members of FLOW for their fundraising work, adaptability, sense of adventure and sense of humor.



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

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Bendigo Bank
Acc no:133516195 BSB:633-000
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**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