

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

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Chiang Rai, Thailand

FROM THE DIRECTOR



When I started the Foundation in 2007, an Akha man from Burma brought his 2 children to apply. Their mother was a drug-user and a gambler and when she gambled away the money they had saved up for their daughter to start school, he left her and took the children across the border into Chiang Rai, Thailand. We were able to accept both of them so they could stay together, as their father wanted. Both children started school and lived at Ayui until they graduated from College. I got to watch his son, Yohan (now 25), grow up from the age of 8 to 18, and we still keep in touch. In February, I was honored to attend the traditional Akha engagement ceremony and his wedding, in place of his mother.

One of the bridesmaids also migrated from Burma and used to live at Ayui. She mentioned in her speech how her and Yohan practiced reading Thai with me when they were young, and later told me she would be graduating from university next week! Another former Ayui graduate who attended told me that – after years of trying and paying village bribes for nothing - she finally received her Thai citizenship at the age of 25. She went to university (thanks to an Ayui sponsorship) only because it is now one of the conditions that make a person born here eligible for citizenship, if they can prove they have been in Thailand since Grade 1.



We are all on summer break (till mid-May), which is the best time to do major repairs and maintenance work as the children are not there. We finally got the Girls Home roof re-tiled as it was very old, dug a well for the kitchen wastewater, and when we noticed that the kitchen roof was almost falling off, we had to urgently have it fixed before the summer storms. We also received funding from the Chiang Mai Expat Club to build metal clotheslines for the girls and build 3 water tanks to store water at the Boys Home, as it was proving costly to run the water pump each time they used water.

GRADUATION

Congratulations to our Grade 9 graduates, Suchintra and Sunantra! Suchintra will leave to find work while Sunantra will stay on at Ayui and do Business Computing at Vocational College.

Congratulations to Aun for graduating with a Higher Certificate from Vocational College. The past year, she chose to go to Bangkok to do a paid internship at a restaurant chain and it was a great experience for her to live in the capital city with some fellow interns. Congratulations to Saranya for graduating from Vocational College in Sewing and Design. Both girls had been living at the Ayui Foundation for 5 years.



Suchintra and Sunantra



Aun and Saranya



CHILDREN'S DAY

Once again, our friend and supporter from Singapore, Mr Tan, came to visit and covered the cost of activities and presents for Children's Day. (January 13 in Thailand) Mr Tan also got to catch up with all of his sponsored students. This year, our housemother was responsible for the games, and 2 of our sponsored university students came to help out.



TRIP TO THE ZOO

A few days after Children's Day, it was Teacher's Day so since there was no school, we took the kids to check out the new zoo – Chang Puak Camp and Chiang Rai Mini Zoo. The kids loved it!



THANK YOU

A BIG thank you to all our child sponsors and donors for supporting us through another school year! We couldn't do it without you.

To the lovely people on the Board of the Chiang Mai Expat Club for the donation to improve both the Boy's and Girl's Homes.

To Mr Tan for the Children's Day activities, food and presents. Nice to see you again!

To the volunteer group from Apollo Bay P-12 College for the table-tennis table for the girls and boxing equipment and punching bag for boys, from leftover funds they raised.



If you would like to VISIT, FUNDRAISE OR DONATE please email us at ayui.foundation@gmail.com

Or visit www.ayuifoundation.org

See www.helpinghilltribekids.com to volunteer



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