

Children's Sponsorship Programme

'Promoting education for a better life'



► Overview

Vision: To work with students living in great poverty, to build opportunities that develop educational potential bringing dignity to themselves and to their families and enabling them to be positive influences and active members of society.

Target group: Children and youth in families living in poverty.

Objectives:

1. To support education and develop potential of students and youth.
2. To support and develop career goals of poor families.

As reported in May 2013, 15 of our students received a Bachelor's degree and 8 students received a Pre-bachelor's degree. We are excited to announce that in May of this year we are expected to have about 20 students graduate. Six of these students will graduate from University and are featured below. We would like to congratulate these students, all of whom have worked hard in their studies. Every one of the 20 graduating students achieved a grade point average between 3.00 – 4.00.

Scholarship Students breakdown in 2013

There are 526 students in the project.

1. 322 girls and 204 boys
2. 150 villages and 151 schools

Statistical Breakdown

NO.	Name of the sponsors	Number of children	Kindergarten			Primary			Secondary			High School			Vocational			High V.			University		
			M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	G.S.O.S	29	0	1	1	3	4	7	6	8	14	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	1	1	1	2	3
2	Wards	33	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	1	4	1	4	5	0	4	4	1	2	3	7	9	16
3	Ursaline Sister	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	4	7	2	2	4	0	2	2	6	10	16
4	Obaton	55	0	0	0	5	2	7	8	17	25	1	2	3	4	6	10	2	2	4	4	2	6
5	WFA, Australia	85	5	2	7	17	24	41	7	15	22	2	4	6	2	1	3	1	1	2	1	3	4
6	GS Rosemary	66	0	0	0	14	10	24	6	16	22	0	7	7	3	2	5	0	1	1	3	4	7
7	Audrey	24	0	3	3	1	4	5	4	4	8	0	1	1	2	2	4	1	1	2	0	1	1
8	ANZGW	22	0	0	0	4	4	8	6	8	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Enfants	64	1	0	1	4	8	12	17	15	32	2	6	8	4	4	8	0	0	0	2	1	3
10	Mary's Friends	76	0	4	4	16	23	39	7	5	12	2	4	6	1	2	3	2	1	3	2	7	9
11	Belgium	41	0	1	1	1	6	7	0	2	2	1	7	8	3	7	10	0	2	2	2	9	11
	Total	526	6	11	17	65	86	151	65	92	157	12	40	52	21	32	53	7	13	20	28	48	76

► University Graduates

1. Mr. Theerapong Pimkena



Mr. Theerapong Pimkena finished his dual degrees in electronics and communications from Rajamangala University of Technology Isan Sakonnakhon Campus, in March 2014. He received an 85% grade. He is now taking a degree in teaching at Nongkhai Technical University in hope of being able to teach at the college level in the future. For now, he is job searching in Nongkhai. He has applied for a job in the government Department of Labor as well as a job with the RGB Company. He is currently waiting for a reply.

2. Mr. Sakorn Littarak

Mr. Sakorn Littarak finished his degree in English from Rajabhat University in Udon Thani in March 2014. He received a 68% grade. He is now searching for a job around Bangkok or Pattaya. This past year he took an internship in a hotel in Phuket and hopes to find a similar job.



3. Miss Aurawan Suksai



Miss Aurawan Suksai finished her degree in Sciences from Loei Rajabhat University in March 2014. She received a 90% grade. She is now looking for a teaching degree in government schools.

4. Miss Chatpawee Wongkraisorn

Miss Chatpawee Wongkraisorn finished her degree in Nursing from Asia-Pacific International University on March 2, 2014. She is now working part time at Thabo Crown Prince hospital. She applied to work full time in the hospital's NCIU. She will hear in April whether she will be employed full time. If she gets this job, she will receive a salary of 15,000 baht a month.



5. Mr. Anun Chapituk



Mr. Anun Chapituk completed his Bachelor of Civil Engineering from Rajamangala Northeast University in October 2013. He completed with a 62% score. He is currently employed as an engineer with Wongjan Company Limited. He is head of construction for the building of prisons all over Thailand. He is now working in Sumotpragon Province and receives a salary of 18,000 baht a month.

6. **Mr. Sedthayod Sukyai** Mr. Sedthayod Sukyai completed his degree in accounting from Thammasat University. He received a 90% grade upon completion. He now works as an auditor in Bangkok.



► Activities

1. Distribution of Scholarship Money:

As is custom in our yearly schedule, the Children's Sponsorship Programme distributed scholarship funds for the 2013 academic year:

1. The first scholarships were distributed on May 4, 2013 by the Sister Superior of Nongkhai, Sr. Supatra Anantachat.
2. We distributed the second semester's scholarships on October 12, 2013. Sr. Pranee Sitti, President of Friends for All Foundation, presented the scholarships on this occasion.



3. Rally Exhibitions: 7 bases of life skills



On Saturday October 12th, we held an educational day at the Village Vocational Training Center for our 342 students in Secondary Education and College. We invited the director and staff from Kids Development and Rehabilitation Center in Nongkhai as well as the staff of the Outreach Project to run a seminar for our students about life skills. These presenters used educational activities and stories in order to enrich our students' scope of learning. By the end of the day, our students had learned about self esteem, living intelligently, being good leaders and followers in the community, social problems and how to address them and health care.



3. Orange Ribbon Promotion; Non-Violence against women and girls



Within the Children's Sponsorship Programme, we believe that women and children should have a voice; therefore we decided to participate in the Stop Violence Against Women and Children movement. On the 25th of every month through 2013 and 2014, as well as every Thursday between October 12th and December 10th 2013, we held activities that focused on how to be an instrument of peace and create communities with harmony. These activities included advertising in communities, schools and visitor centers as well as decorating pins, wearing orange ribbons and distributing orange bags that stated, "Creating a Mindful Society: stop violence against women and children". We also educated scholarship students and their guardians about the philosophy of "Creating a Mindful Society", a way of life that promotes non violence against women and children.

4. Christmas and New Year

This year we held our annual Christmas Party and New Year's celebration on December 7th at the Village Vocational Training Center from 8a.m to 3:30 p.m.

We believe this is an important event as it builds love, unity and sharing in our programme. The day began with scholarship students and their guardians gathering to give blessings and gifts to the Good Shepherd Sisters. The day included shows from student representatives, games and sports. Scholarship students, their guardians and the Ban Fang community donated money to the project "Gratitude Reverse" during the day, as a thanksgiving offering. The Children's Sponsorship Programme distributed saving bank containers, towels and an orange bag with 'violence against women and children' printed on it, as our gift to the attendees. The families who used to receive funds from the programme, supported the event by bringing food and other important items to the party.



► Special Support

1. Kesarint Daokaew



Kesarint is 13 years old girl who presently studies in the first year of secondary education at Uksorn Adul Wittaya School. She lives with SLE disease (Lupus). She is weak and needs a blood transfusion every two months at Sri Nakarintra Hospital in Udon Thani Province. (Two and a half hours away). Kesarint lives only with her mother because her parents separated and then her father died later on. Her mother previously had no

land or house of her own. She built a temporary house on the land of her neighbor and she tried to save money from her income. In 2012, her mother bought the piece of land from her neighbour for 20,000 Baht. As she had fibroid surgery in 2012, Kesarint's mother is not well and cannot do hard work. She is presently employed with many little jobs to earn money. She collects money from delivering water, earning 1,000 – 1,200 baht a month, cleans houses three times a week for 100 baht a time and is employed by a baker for 70 baht a time.

Despite all these odd jobs, her income is not enough to for the household expenditure. The Children's Sponsorship Programme has supported the family through a scholarship and also got the Outreach Programme involved in order to support the family's health care needs.



2. Kwanruedee Nuypuang



Kwanruedee's parents died of HIV/Aids and she presently lives with her great grandparents and relatives. Her household is made of six family members: her 94 year-old great grandfather, her 86 year-old great grandmother, her great grandfather's younger brother and his two daughters, who are 15 and 12 years old. They had no toilet in the house which makes living there difficult for the older relatives and also for three girls who are now growing up. The family has to take baths outside the house. The Children's Sponsorship Programme saw this need and asked one of our benefactors to donate a fund to provide them a toilet. After receiving funds for the materials, the toilet was built by the staff of Children's Sponsorship Programme and Kwanruedee's guardians.

3. Ken Nakorn

Ken is 94 years old Laotian man. He lives at a garden in Ban Nern Hong Thong, where the owner allowed him live in exchange for taking care of the garden. He lives alone and has no right to get support from the government since his Thai wife died last year. His only income comes from collecting recyclable things to sell or receiving money from kind people. Since learning about Ken in 2012, the Children's Sponsorship Programme brings him rice and cash twice a month.



4. Mr. Phit Klathangthuk

The Children's Sponsorship Program met Mr. Phit Klathangthuk after receiving a call from the Good Shepherd Sisters in Taiwan. Mr. Phit is originally Thai but when he was younger he wanted to live in Taiwan. In order to make this happen, he entered into a fake marriage with a pregnant Taiwanese woman. She had a child and named Mr. Phit the father, although the child was not biologically his. Every year the woman would help Mr. Phit receive his visa until she got involved in illegal affairs, including drugs and was arrested. Mr. Phit lost his visa and she lost her child. The son then entered an orphanage for about 10 years. During this time the boy became ready for adoption and an American family was interested in adopting him, however the child was not free because Mr. Phit was his legal father. The orphanage staff needed Mr. Phit to sign a document stating the child was free for adoption. The orphanage staff knew Mr. Phit lived in Thailand so they go in touch with the Good Shepherd Sisters in Taiwan, thinking they had connections that could help the boy. We then received Mr. Phit's story and a name and had staff begin to look for him. We finally found him after two weeks of extensive searching in Udon Thani (about an hour away from our offices, where Mr. Phit is from). We made the arrangement to meet with him three times before we could get a lawyer to witness his agreement to sign and give the child up for adoption. The lawyer had to be present to verify that Mr. Phit was really the person who signed the documents. We are happy to report that the papers were sent to Taiwan and the adoption process for this boy is underway.

► Visitation (families and communities)

An important part of work of the Children's Sponsorship Programme is visiting the people we sponsor. As a staff, we visit the sponsorship families twice a week. It is also important to us that we have a relationship with the schools, colleges, and community leaders and so, we make a point to visit them on a regular basis.

From our visits to families, communities and schools, we have learned that it is quite difficult to live in the present state of Thailand. The country is experiencing higher wages but these wages come with higher cost of living and broken families. Many children were left with their grandparents or their step fathers. Girls were sexually abused by a family member and sickness, drug use and school dropouts are high.

On a brighter note, we visit families of sponsorship students to follow and evaluate their behavior. We are satisfied by the results of those sponsorship students who concentrate on studying, as they achieved a 98% score, on average.

When we visited the schools, we asked the teachers to be involved in following the activities of our students. We found that many of the school directors were interested and willing to support our efforts. The schools were excited to be a part of our program and even gave us suggestions and ideas to better our programme. The director of Sawang Wittaya School gave us the idea to have an "English Volunteer Teacher" project, which we will begin in February 2014 with our new volunteer helper from the Good Shepherd Volunteer Programme in New York.



► Meetings

Another important part of our work is the meetings we conduct throughout the year. We hold a meeting with guardians in the programme to continue distributing sponsorship funds. This has become an event that the parents and guardians see as a priority. We give them information on the status of the programme as well and see the time spent with them as valuable in building trusting relationships.

We also make it a point to meet with our committee members three times a year. The committee members keep us informed on the day to day operations of our program and the status of the students and supplementary programess the Children's Sponsorship Programme oversees. At the meetings with the committee, we gain insight and re-evaluate the function of the programme at the present time.

Finally, we have monthly staff meetings. These are important to keep our staff functioning as a unified team.



► Savings Groups

We are proud to announce that from beginning of 2013, the members of all 4 Saving Groups began returning money that they had borrowed in the previous year for their children's education, investing in their rice farms and repairing their houses. By February 2013, all the money loaned had been returned to the groups. At this time, a meeting was held to table the financial report and listen to the needs of the savings group members. This led to new loans being granted, for the same reasons as those mentioned above. These loans come with low interest; which is in line with the objectives of this project. As of April 2013, Saving Groups have 422 members.

► Funeral Assistance Fund

924 households participate in the Funeral Assistance Fund. Throughout the year, 32 members from this project passed away. Their families received support from the fund to conduct a proper funeral for them.

► Sponsor Visits

We were happy to welcome 22 sponsors who visited the project this year. They visited the children and families, checked the project documents and helped to choose and change the method of operation. These sponsors include:

Mr. Meeze Fernand and Eline (Belgium), Mr. Johan and Mr. Sietske Razenberg (The Netherlands), Mr. Luc Lapote (Belgium), Favies and Louise-Marie (Enfant du Mekong), Miss Carly and Khun Teresa, Mr. Tahira Minoru (Japan), Mr. Brian and Mrs. Jennifer (New Zealand), Mr. Francois Ducloux (ACASEA), Mr Kjell Lorentz Vogt and Titikran (Mary's Friends), Mr. Kristof and Amourie (Belgium), Mr. John and Rachel Ward and family(Canada), Mr. Freddy (Belgium), Mr. Bertie Heenpella (Mary's Friends) , Mr. Wilfried Van Minsel (Belgium), Mr. Thebaut, Mr. Raphael and Miss Marine (Enfants), Mr. Kevin Lynch and Mrs. Nuttasorn Sirikhanth (WFA, Australia), Mr. Jean Obaton (ACASEA), Mr. Bill Taylor, Miss Constance (Enfants), Mr. Luc Bossy, and Mrs. Marleen Vercruysse (Belgium).