



Dear Laurence,

As the summer monsoon brings not only rain, but relief from the record-setting heat, we are settling into a new school year with 130 students.

Thanks to your support, we can continue this journey of education and service. Please read on to discover more about the Andaman Center. In this update you'll find:

- a video from the first day of school
- a glimpse into the lives of our students
- an introduction to our principal
- **appreciation for the Jan & Oscar Foundation** supporting school improvements and teacher salaries

Feeling Cool, Back to School



After 6 weeks of holiday, the students have returned, and are ready to learn. Teacher Shein, who we profiled in the last update, made a delightful video of the first day of school, and the kids were enthusiastic in cleaning up the playground and digging in to the garden!

New Student Spotlight



Meet 3rd graders Ei and Htet. As new students, Ei and Htet have recently become best friends. They met at the temple in May, and were elated when they realized they would be going to school together.

Ei and her parents recently arrived from Dawei to work on a palm oil plantation. She says she is excited to be around other kids again, as she has mostly been at home since her school in Myanmar closed last year. If she could be a super hero, she excitedly said **she would be Superwoman!**

Htet is also a new arrival to Thailand, and her favorite place at school is the garden because she “loves the beautiful flowers.” **Htet wants to be a math teacher when she grows up.** When asked “what superhero do you want to be,” she said, “a bear, because they are so powerful!”

Donor Appreciation - School Improvements

Thanks to the Jan & Oscar Foundation for their recent generous donation. With their support, we have been able to **meet our goal of accepting new students and hiring enough teachers.** We are lucky to be allied with such great partners. Please have a look at their website to learn more.

www.fondationjan-oscar.ch/

In addition to keeping the school open, the **kindness of the Jan & Oscar Foundation has allowed us to address urgent needs** - last year, we did not have enough classrooms; and only four toilet stalls for 120 students. We now have a total of 12 bathroom stalls, and the kids are delighted to not wait in line. Next month we plan to build a



new room so each grade can have their own space.

Student Outreach: Notes From the Field



In May of every year, we visit the clusters of Burmese housing to **make sure students are returning, and encourage new students to attend.** This requires spending time with their parents and alleviating their concerns. Since the Burmese are an exploited community, some parents are very protective, and reluctant to let their children leave the home.

One woman I spoke with, pictured above left, is in a heartbreaking situation – she borrowed money to treat her husband’s illness, but he passed away, and she was unable to repay the debt to the loan sharks. She fled from Myanmar to Thailand, and is eking out a living by collecting recyclables. Through a translator, she told me, “I have a hard life but **I hope my daughters have a brighter future.** They are really clever, always helping me, and they don’t complain when there is not enough rice.”



Meet Our Principal



Meet Pirompon "Kru Tah" Yale. She is the principal of the Andaman Center and our Thai language instructor. Kru Tah has been teaching with us for over 10 years, and she hails from the small Muslim village next to the center. As a local, she serves as an ambassador for the school, and can solve problems easily. Kru Tah's husband is our bus driver, and a trained engineer who oversees construction projects at the center. Kru Tah's favorite part of the school day is playing games with her students such as puzzles and 20 questions.

When asked why her work is important, Kru Tah responds, "the situation in Myanmar is only getting worse. **Without our efforts, these kids will miss the chance for an education.** It is my job to teach Thai language, so the students can integrate with this country, avoid discrimination, and help their parents to communicate."

Kru Tah also helps older students continue their education in Thai public schools and coordinates our international volunteer groups.

Thank you, Kru Tah, for your compassion and dedication!



We would like to thank you once again for your generous donation and support!

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