

5th Report for GlobalGiving:

## University Scholarships for Students from Burma

Thabyay Education Network, Arohana Scholarship Fund  
3rd January 2012

## Overview

We at Thabyay Education Network's Arohana Scholarship Fund would like to extend our gratitude to all of you who have donated to our 'University Scholarships For Students From Burma' project on GlobalGiving. So far, we have raised a total of US\$ 38,970 since the 1st September 2010.

After the deduction of GlobalGiving administrative fees, we have now received a total of US\$ 33,502 in disbursements from GlobalGiving.

By October 2011, we had disbursed US\$ 31,169 to scholarship awards, leaving a remainder of approximately US\$ 2,333.

## Selection and awards

Since the last report on July 4th, the Arohana Scholarship Fund Committee has made four further awards totalling US\$ 2,330.

The total funds now raised by the 'University Scholarships for Students from Burma' project have therefore supported 33 awards enabling 31 students from marginalized communities across Burma to start or continue their Bachelor's, Master's or PhD studies at universities across Asia.

The recipients of these awards comprise 13 women and 18 men, ranging in age from 19 to 51 (average age of approximately 27), representing nine ethnic groups, studying 22 different majors at 14 different universities in five countries across Asia. The table below provides detailed information about the new awards made.

Name	Sex	Age	Ethnicity	Subject	University	Level	Type	Award (US\$)
Tun Tun Win	M	26	Kachin	Educational Administration	Ramkhamhaeng University, Thailand	MA	Top-up	450
Aung Myint	M	29	Mon	International Journalism	Hong Kong Baptist University	BA	Top-up	450
Tun Lin Aung	M	25	Arakan	Development Management	University of the Philippines, Los Banos	MA	Top-up	450
Aung Zaw	M	38	Kachin	Development Management	University of the Philippines, Los Banos	MA	Top-up	450
Shwe Tun	M	25	Arakan	Strategic Planning & Public Policy Studies	University of the Philippines, Los Banos	MA	Top-up	450
Thi Ha	M	24	Arakan	Politics Philosophy & Economics	Rangsit University, Thailand	BA	Top-up	80
TOTAL								2,330

*N.B. Names of award recipients have been changed to protect their identities.*



## Award Recipient Profiles



Name: **Tun Tun Win**  
Age: **26**  
Ethnicity: **Kachin**  
Subject of Study: **Educational Administration**  
Level of Study: **Master's**  
Institution of Study: **Ramkhamhaeng University, Thailand**  
Award amount: **US\$ 450**

### Brief overview of candidate

Tun Tun Win was raised as one of four siblings in a town in Kachin State, northern Burma. His father died when he was 10, leaving his mother to care for the family single-handedly. Due to lack of money, only Tun Tun Win and his younger sister were able to continue their education. Graduating from secondary school in 1997, he started working in the local community as a teacher for young children. By 2005, he was in charge of English and Science at an early childhood development center run by a local community organization in Kachin State. In 2006, he started working at an early childhood development center in Mandalay. Here, he had his first experiences working with children with special needs, including those affected by Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and psychological trauma. Having obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry by distance in Myanmar while working, Tun Tun Win was aware that he needed to enhance his skills in education to optimize his impact. Consequently, he came to Thailand, getting part-time work to support a Master's Educational Administration.

### In his own words:

"Many young people in Burma are not able to finish school. Many feel hopeless and fall into drug abuse. As our youth are the future of our society, I want to help them discover their potential so that they can contribute to changing our country for the better."



Name: **Aung Myint**  
Age: **29**  
Ethnicity: **Mon**  
Subject of Study: **International Journalism**  
Level of Study: **Bachelor's**  
Institution of Study: **Hong Kong Baptist University**  
Award amount: **US\$ 450**

### Brief overview of candidate

Born in lower Burma to a poor family, Aung Myint's parents could not afford schooling after he completed middle school. In order to complete his secondary education, Aung Myint joined a monastery and became a monk, where he could continue studying. He graduated from high school in 2001. After graduation, he worked as an activist in his local community. By 2004, due to political developments in Mon State, he no longer felt safe to remain and so walked for four days to the shelter of a refugee camp on the Thailand-Burma border. Here he became involved in a community radio project and was later selected to attend a journalism training course in Chiang Mai before returning to the border to work for an ethnic news organization. During the two years he spent with this organization, he learned much about journalism. However, he also became aware of the shortfalls in his skills. Therefore, in 2009, he successfully

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applied to study International Journalist at Hong Kong Baptist University, supported by various scholarships administered by Thabyay Education Network. On graduation, Aung Myint plans to return to the news organization where he was working prior to 2009 and help it to reach international journalistic standards. He also plans to help train journalists in Burma and along the Thailand-Burma border.

**In his own words:**

“There seem to be some changes happening in Burma, which will possibly lead to the lifting of censorship laws. If that happens, and journalists can work freely, I would like to return to the country to help run a news magazine or radio station.”



Name:	Tun Lin Aung
Age:	25
Ethnicity:	Arakan
Subject of Study:	Development Management
Level of Study:	Master's
Institution of Study:	University of the Philippines, Los Banos
Award amount:	US\$ 450

**Brief overview of candidate**

Tun Lin Aung is inspired by community service. In high school, he organized his fellow pupils to collect litter, tend school gardens and clean classrooms. Then, when he attended university in Burma, he became active in a number of social causes, including helping run a student organization providing social and financial support to other students in need. He was elected President of this organization in his final year and led fundraising activities, with the money raised supporting students' medical bills, and also orphans housed at a local monastery. Having obtained his Bachelor's degree in 2006, he became a teacher but remained involved in social causes, joining a musical group performing to raise money for people in need, and founding a free tutoring program for poor children at a local monastery. He also participated in a local librarian training program, and helped to run a mobile library to encourage children in rural areas to read. In April 2010, Arakan State was struck by Cyclone Giri, which caused extensive damage. Tun Lin Aung worked with friends to organize the collection of food, clothes and money to send to the victims. In 2011, keen to improve his skills in the community development field, Tun Lin Aung successfully applied for a scholarship to study Development Management in the Philippines.

**In his own words:**

“I am happiest when I am working for the benefit of others. I hope that my university studies will help me do this as best as I can.”





Name: Aung Zaw  
Age: 38  
Ethnicity: Kachin  
Subject of Study: Development Management  
Level of Study: Master's  
Institution of Study: University of the Philippines, Los Banos  
Award amount: US\$ 450

#### Brief overview of candidate

Aung Zaw was raised in Shan State. Soon after graduating from secondary school, his father died, meaning that the family could not afford to send him to university in Burma. Fortunately, two years later, a distant relative offered to support him to study, and he graduated in 1996 with a BSc in Physics. Throughout his youth, Aung Zaw participated in social activities. After graduating from secondary school, he became a youth leader, helping to organize vocational and HIV/AIDS awareness training for young people in his region. When he left university, he joined an international organization working to help farmers in Shan State substitute the cultivation of opium poppies for food crops. He spent 13 years with this organization, rising to the position of Supervisor. He helped train farmers in organic and inorganic farming techniques, and managed micro loan programs to help them purchase agricultural materials. In 2010, Aung Zaw decided to pursue further education to improve his skills. He a university preparation course in Shan State to improve his skills. In 2011, he successful applied to study Development Management in the Philippines supported by scholarships administered by Thabyay Education Network.

#### In his own words:

“At least three quarters of the people in my community struggle for daily subsistence. I will use my education to do my part in fighting against the dire poverty among farmers in rural regions of Burma. I want to help them develop better farming techniques, improve their livelihoods, and practice sustainable agriculture.”



Name: Shwe Tun  
Age: 25  
Ethnicity: Arakan  
Subject of Study: Strategic Planning & Public Policy Studies  
Level of Study: Master's  
Institution of Study: University of the Philippines, Los Banos  
Award amount: US\$ 450

#### Brief overview of candidate

Born into a poor family in Arakan State, Shwe Tun had to walk 10 miles across mountain ranges to a neighboring village each day to attend school. Often heavy rain and winds prevented him from returning home in the evening. Graduating from secondary school in 2002, Shwe Tun managed to attend university, supported by his parents, and funds received from a local monastery. He received a degree in Marine Science and a postgraduate Diploma in Aquaculture. In 2006 he moved to Yangon and joined an ethnic youth organization, participating in various programs including the organization of relief activities following Cyclone Nargis, and setting up mobile libraries. In 2010, he became Deputy Director of the organization, administering a range of education and training activities. In 2011, he successfully applied to study a Master's degree in Strategic Planning and Public Policy in the Philippines. Through these studies

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he hopes to gain the skills to help his organization improve and expand its activities. On his return he plans to set up an education center in Arakan State for community youth, helping them to develop the skills and civic awareness to participate effectively in improving their community and wider society. In the longer term, he hopes to be able to advocate for good public policy and participate in the development of civil society in Burma.

**In his own words:**

“With this education I can work better for community development in Burma. Education is the most important factor in overcoming social and economic problems and ethnic conflict. I want to create space for youth to develop skills and contribute significantly to community development.”



Name:	Thi Ha
Age:	24
Ethnicity:	Arakan
Subject of Study:	Politics, Philosophy & Economics
Level of Study:	Bachelor's
Institution of Study:	Rangsit University, Thailand
Award amount:	US\$ 80

**Brief overview of candidate**

Thi Ha was raised in a village in Arakan State. His parents were smallholders, struggling to make a living. Each day he had to walk for one and a half hours to a nearby village to attend school. When he was 14, his father died, leaving his mother to care for him and his four siblings. His uncle supported him financially to attend middle school, but could not afford to send him to high school. He spent two years working on the family small holding before the uncle invited him to another township to continue his education. He left home and moved to live with his uncle, graduating from high school in 2003. He moved to Yangon, ostensibly to attend university. While he was there, he met other young people from Arakan State interested in community development and social empowerment. Together they formed a youth organization. In the beginning, the group met to talk about their aspirations, but soon they started to launch education and training programs to support Arakan youth. In 2009, Thi Ha successfully applied to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics, supported by scholarships administered by Thabyay Education Network. During his time at university he has become an effective student leader. He has remained an active member of the youth organization that he helped found, and has participated in the political developments in Arakan State. When he graduates, he plans to return to Arakan State to support the development of democratic institutions.

**In his own words:**

“I have a burning desire to help others to become active citizens who take responsibility for promoting development and democratization in Burma. I want to use my education to support communities in my region to be properly represented in local and national government.”



## Future Plans

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the Arohana Scholarship Fund (ASF) raised over US\$3,000 during our Christmas campaign on GlobalGiving. On receipt of these funds, the Selection Committee will meet to agree on the next round of scholarships awards.

## Closing Statement

We hope that this report shows clearly the potential of these scholarship recipients to become catalysts for incremental social change in Burma, and that you can appreciate the direct link between quality higher education and grassroots development in communities in Burma. We also hope that it demonstrates that even the smallest contribution of US\$ 10 can make a difference in terms of keeping a Burmese scholarship student in university education.

We would like to reiterate our gratitude to all of you who have helped raise funds for this project by making donations and spreading the word. We hope that this report will inspire you to continue to support us in the future. The beneficiaries of these awards, the students, have individually expressed their gratitude to us for the support they have received. We would like to pass on their thanks to you.

If you have any questions about this report, or about our work, please do get in touch.

With our best wishes,



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## How you can help

The Arohana Scholarship Fund urgently needs your help to raise funds to support scholarships.

### 1. Donate



You can donate to Arohana's 'University Scholarships for Students from Burma' project through GlobalGiving and JustGiving.

**GlobalGiving US site (offers tax relief to US taxpayers):**  
[www.globalgiving.org/projects/university-scholarships-for-students-from-burma](http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/university-scholarships-for-students-from-burma)

**GlobalGiving UK site (offers Gift Aid to UK taxpayers):**  
[www.globalgiving.co.uk/pr/6200/proj6188a.html](http://www.globalgiving.co.uk/pr/6200/proj6188a.html)

**JustGiving UK site (offers Gift Aid to UK taxpayers):**  
[www.justgiving.com/project/1777763](http://www.justgiving.com/project/1777763)

Residents of other countries can donate through these sites, but cannot benefit from tax relief or Gift Aid. GlobalGiving accepts credit cards, Paypal and cheques. JustGiving accepts credit cards and Paypal. Funds received via GlobalGiving will be wholly used to support scholarship awards for students from Burma, excepting an administrative fee levied by GlobalGiving when funds are transferred to Thabyay.

### Quote

"When I think back about my past, it is almost unbelievable that I have come so far from the difficulties of my childhood. When I return to Burma, I want to work to make sure that other young people do not have to face the same difficulties that I did."

Htet Aung, Scholarship Recipient





## 2. Fundraise

We are keen to hear from anyone who would be interested to support us in our fundraising efforts. We need local volunteers around the world to spread the word and organize fundraising events on our behalf. If you would be interested to support us in this way, please contact us:

Email: [development@thabyay.org](mailto:development@thabyay.org)

Websites: [www.arohanascholarships.org](http://www.arohanascholarships.org)  
[www.thabyay.org](http://www.thabyay.org)

Thabyay Education Network is a registered non-profit foundation in Thailand.

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**a single  
flame  
can light  
a thousand  
candles**