

6th Report for GlobalGiving:

University Scholarships for Students from Burma

Thabyay Education Network, Arohana Scholarship Fund
17th April 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\$ 39,837 since the 1st September 2010.

After the deduction of GlobalGiving administrative fees, we have now received a total of approximately US\$ 36,922 in disbursements from GlobalGiving (funds are received over time in Thai Baht at different exchange rates, so USD figres can only be approximately calculated).

By the 3rd January 2012, we had disbursed approximately US\$ 34,854 to scholarship awards, leaving a remainder of approximately US\$2,068.

Selection and awards

Since the last report on 5th January 2012, the Arohana Scholarship Fund Committee has made four further awards totalling approximately US\$ 2,000.

The total funds now raised by the 'University Scholarships for Students from Burma' project have therefore supported 37 awards enabling 32 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 14 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\$)
Aung Khine*	M	22	Rakhine	International Studies	Mahidol University, Thailand	BA	Partial	600
Kaythi*	F	26	Burman	Social Science	Chiang Mai University, Thailand	BA	Partial	400
Naing Lin*	M	22	Shan	Social Science	Chiang Mai University, Thailand	BA	Partial	400
Theingi Aye	F	31	Kachin	Government and International Studies	Hong Kong Baptist University	BA	Partial	600
TOTAL								2,000

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

**Recipients of previous awards from the Arohana Scholarship Fund.*

Award Recipient Profiles



Name: Aung Khine
Age: 22
Ethnicity: Rakhine
Subject of Study: International Studies
Level of Study: Bachelor's
Institution of Study: Mahidol University, Thailand
Award amount: US\$ 600

Brief overview of candidate

Aung Khine was born in an area of Rakhine State. Burma marked by deep poverty and often plagued with food scarcity and malnutrition. Despite hardships, Aung Khine completed high school and then moved to Yangon in search of better educational opportunities. He completed a computer course and later a conversational English course, graduating at the top of the class in both. He joined a youth education and networking group where he learned about issues relevant to contemporary Burma including environmental protection, civic participation and HIV/AIDS. Inspired by this experience, Aung Khine applied for a scholarship to study International Studies in Thailand. Through his studies, he is seeking to learn more about the different ways in which countries achieve fair, transparent and representative government. His ambition is to use what he learns to contribute to incremental positive change in Burma.

In his own words:

"I have often asked myself 'What can I do for my people?' Now I know. I can use my education to drive positive change in my homeland. Burma needs skilled and active people to introduce new ideas to improve governance at every level of society. When I graduate, I can be one of those people."



Name: Kaythi
Age: 26
Ethnicity: Burman
Subject of Study: Social Science
Level of Study: Bachelor's
Institution of Study: Chiang Mai University, Thailand
Award amount: US\$ 400

Brief overview of candidate

Kaythi grew up in Magwe Division. Her parents were smallholders, scraping a living from a small plot of land. Despite economic hardships, they ensured that Kaythi was able to complete high school. After graduation, she was offered a scholarship to attend a further education program in Thailand for young Burmese people. She graduated in 2010 with an international high school diploma and then returned to Burma to work with an international NGO, helping communities devastated by Cyclone Nargis in 2008. Her work was focused on the very poor, the elderly and the disabled, helping to improve their access to better livelihoods. This experience gave her a greater insight into community needs, and fuelled her ambition to become a skilled community worker.

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She then received another scholarship to attend a one-year university preparation course in Yangon before successfully applying for a scholarship to study Social Science at Chiang Mai University. When she graduates, Kaythi has ambitions to work in community development. She is particularly keen to conduct research into how social problems are contributing to the destruction of the environment in Burma, and to promote sustainable development.

In her own words:

“I believe that the promotion of social justice at the community level will significantly contribute to sustainability and environmental protection in Burma. I want to work with communities across the country to help those who have been left behind and build a more sustainable future.”



Name:	Naing Lin
Age:	21
Ethnicity:	Shan
Subject of Study:	Social Science
Level of Study:	Bachelor's
Institution of Study:	Chiang Mai University, Thailand
Award amount:	US\$ 400

Brief overview of candidate

Growing up in a village in southern Shan State, Naing Lin saw many of his friends drop out from school. Their parents were unable to afford to send them, so they had to start work. When they were a bit older, many left the village to cross the border into Thailand and seek work. After graduating from secondary school, Naing Lin joined an education program run by a local community organization where he learned about the many challenges facing people in his region. He realized that the lack of opportunities for young people was destroying communities, as so many were leaving to find work abroad. He understood that this ‘missing generation’ will have serious consequences for these communities in the future.

Through his university studies, Naing Lin wants to develop his skills so that he can return to provide more education opportunities to young people in his region. He is committed to developing their awareness of the positive contribution they can make to community development, supporting them to gain skills, and motivating them to take action.

In his own words:

“If people understand the root causes of the problems they face, they can begin to tackle them. I want to help people in my region build stable and peaceful communities through cooperation and awareness.”



Name:

Age:

Ethnicity:

Subject of Study:

Level of Study:

Institution of Study:

Award amount:

Theingi Aye

31

Kachin

Government & International Studies

Bachelor's

Hong Kong Baptist University

US\$ 600

Brief overview of candidate

Theingi Aye was born one of seven siblings in Kachin State in northern Burma. The village in which she was raised was situated in a conflict zone where the Burma Army often fought with Kachin independence fighters. Their village was often caught in the crossfire. The family often fled to China to escape the fighting, but were pushed back by the Chinese authorities. Often they faced hardships, insufficient food, and it was frequently impossible to attend school. Due to these difficulties, Theingi Aye's parents sent her to a nearby town so that she could attend school in a safer environment. She completed high school in 1999 and, as a bright student, was accepted onto a two-year post-secondary course in the region. Having graduated in 2001, Theingi Aye came to Thailand to work with organization's focused on gender issues women's empowerment and human rights. She also worked for an umbrella group for Burmese women's organizations and oversaw a range of programs. In 2007 she was elected Joint General Secretary of this organization. In this role she has advocated for women's rights in Burma to the United Nations and to government officials of many countries.

In 2009, Theingi Aye received a scholarship to study for a Bachelor's degree in Government and International Studies at Hong Kong Baptist University. She will graduate in 2013. Her course covers many relevant topics including peace and conflict, democratic transition, and development.

In her own words:

"I wanted to learn about the political systems of different countries and their international diplomatic stances, particularly their individual policies towards Burma. By understanding these issues, I can be acquainted with policy making and better understand which branches of government, departments and officials to approach for effective lobbying. After graduating, I will apply and share my knowledge and skills, both at grassroots level through training and community mobilization, and at the international level, extending networks and advocacy work."



Future Plans

The significant and positive changes that have occurred in Burma in the last 12 months represent an unprecedented opportunity for communities and civil society throughout the country. While change is nascent and unpredictable, it has undeniably created increased space for community organizations to consolidate and push forward with reconciliation and development, and build a better future. The Arohana Scholarship fund remains committed to helping key community actors gain access to appropriate higher education to optimize their positive impact in Burma in key sectors including health care, education, community development, rights and media.

The Arohana Scholarship Fund is currently waiting for further funds to be received from GlobalGiving before the Selection Committee meets to decide on further scholarship 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 fundraising, 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, frequently express to us their gratitude 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,



Quentin Hewitt

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www.arohanascholarships.org

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

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

JustGiving UK site (offers Gift Aid to UK taxpayers):
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

Websites: www.arohanascholarships.org
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**