

3rd Report for GlobalGiving:

University Scholarships for Students from Burma

Thabyay Education Network, Arohana Scholarship Fund
4th July 2011

Overview

We at Thabyay Education Network would like to extend our deep gratitude to everyone (190 people so far) who has donated to our project on GlobalGiving. So far, we have raised a total of US\$35,143 since the 1st September 2010, which is a fantastic result. We were particularly heartened by the support we received on the GlobalGiving Bonus Day on the 16th March 2011, when just under US\$3,800 was donated, which was supplemented by almost US\$800 in Matching Funds from GlobalGiving.

In our previous report, dated 7th March 2011, we allocated US\$5,268 in scholarship awards to 6 individuals, leaving US\$82 remaining from funds received by that date. Since then, we have received a further US\$5,157 in two installments from GlobalGiving in May and June. Therefore, the funds available for disbursement total US\$5,239.

Selection and awards

Since March, the Arohana Scholarship Fund Committee has made two further awards totalling US\$2,250.

The total funds now raised by the 'University Scholarships for Students from Burma' project have therefore enabled 21 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 11 women and 10 men, ranging in age from 19 to 51 (average age of approximately 30), representing nine ethnic groups, studying 18 different majors at 11 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\$)
Soe Aung	M	29	Burman	Rehabilitation Science	University of the Philippines, Manila	MA	Top-up	250
Kyaw Lwin	M	32	Rakhine	Education Management	University of the Philippines, Los Banos	MA	Top-up	2,000
							TOTAL	2,250

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

Award Recipient Profiles



Name: Soe Aung
Age: 29
Ethnicity: Burman
Subject of Study: Rehabilitation Science
Level of Study: Master's
Institution of Study: University of the Philippines, Manila
Award amount: US\$250

Brief overview of candidate

Soe Aung was born in Shan State, the eldest of three siblings. His parents were poor and never had the chance to complete their high school education. Seeing how they struggled, Soe Aung vowed to complete his education and dreamed of entering the medical profession. Graduating high school among the top percentile, Soe Aung went on to study for a Bachelor's degree in Physiotherapy in Burma. On graduation, he began work with an international relief organization as a physiotherapist for visitors to their day care center for the disabled. Simultaneously, he led a community-based rehabilitation program in a group of villages in Shan State. During this period he saw how people with disabilities are often stigmatized, and how families often have no idea how to support them. Also he saw how few people were entering his profession because of the low pay. Seeing the need for good practice and leadership in this profession in Burma, Soe Aung applied for a scholarship to study for a Master's in Rehabilitation in the Philippines. In May 2011, with the help of the Arohana scholarship, Soe Aung completed his degree. He has returned to Burma and works in a center for disabled children in Yangon. He also spends a lot of his spare time supporting and mentoring other members of his fledgling profession.

In his own words:

"I have a plan to expand good practice in physiotherapy to many other parts of my country. I want to raise the standards, help to challenge stigmas, and make sure that as many needy people as possible have access to these kinds of services."



Name: Kyaw Lwin
Age: 32
Ethnicity: Rakhine
Subject of Study: Education Management
Level of Study: Master's
Institution of Study: University of the Philippines, Los Banos
Award amount: US\$2,000

Brief overview of candidate

Kyaw Lwin was born in Yangon, the youngest of five children. When he was six years old his father died. To feed the family, his mother worked shifts in a state factory by night and sold food on the street during the day. His three sisters helped their mother sell food, while his brother worked at a factory before and after school. Kyaw Lwin passed his university entrance exams with distinction in 1997. However, in response to student protests, the universities were closed down for three years. When the universities opened again in 2000, he embarked on a Bachelor's degree in Foreign Languages. Graduating in 2003, Kyaw Lwin became a journalist, working on a wide range of assignments over the next four years.

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In 2008, he became the Communications Officer for an international aid organization in Burma. Weeks after he joined, Cyclone Nargis struck Burma. Kyaw Lwin worked with the relief teams during this emergency period and was exposed to horrors and hardships of this event. It made him acutely aware of the difficulties that young people in rural Burma face to get access to quality education. This experience convinced to pursue a Master's Degree in Education Management so that he can return and work to improve their circumstances.

In his own words:

"I want to work to provide quality, affordable education to poor communities in my country. Education is the key to positive change."

Future Plans

As of 4th July 2011, remaining funds from the 'University Scholarships for Students from Burma' project total US\$2,989. The Arohana Scholarship Fund Committee will meet again to decide on the next round of 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

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.

All donations are VERY welcome, small or large. 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**