



Thabyay  
Education  
Network

Building civil society in Myanmar through higher education

  
Arohana

SCHOLARSHIPS SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

4th Report for GlobalGiving:

## University Scholarships for Students from Burma

Thabyay Education Network, Arohana Scholarship Fund  
28th September 2011

## Overview

We at Thabyay Education Network's Arohana Scholarship Fund would like to extend our deep gratitude to everyone (194 people so far) who has donated to our project on GlobalGiving. So far, we have raised a total of US\$ 35,223 since the 1st September 2010.

After the deduction of GlobalGiving administrative fees and intermediary bank charges, we have now received a total of US\$ 32,524 in disbursements from GlobalGiving.

By July 2011, we had disbursed US\$ 29,568 to scholarship awards, leaving a remainder of US\$ 2,956. However, one of our scholarship recipients received a scholarship donation from another private source, meaning that he was able to pay back US\$ 1,596 of his original grant of US\$ 2,000 to the Arohana Scholarship Fund. This meant that the Arohana Scholarship Fund Committee had US\$ 4,552 to allocate to new scholarship awards from 4th July 2011 (US\$ 2,956 + US\$ 1,596).

## Selection and awards

Since the last report on July 4th, the Arohana Scholarship Fund Committee has made four further awards totalling US\$ 4,552.

The total funds now raised by the 'University Scholarships for Students from Burma' project have therefore supported 28 awards enabling 25 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 12 men, ranging in age from 19 to 51 (average age of approximately 27), representing nine ethnic groups, studying 19 different majors at 12 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\$)
Kaythi	F	25	Burman	Social Science	Chiang Mai University, Thailand	BA	Partial Scholarship	1,100
Naing Lin	M	21	Shan	Social Science	Chiang Mai University, Thailand	BA	Partial Scholarship	1,114
Shwe Zin	F	22	Shan	International Relations & Development	Rangsit University, Thailand	BA	Top-up	338
Ye Aung	M	26	Kachin	Policy Studies & Administration	City University, Hong Kong	BA	Partial Scholarship	2,000
							<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,552</b>

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



## Award Recipient Profiles



Name: Kaythi  
Age: 25  
Ethnicity: Burman  
Subject of Study: Social Science  
Level of Study: Bachelor's  
Institution of Study: Chiang Mai University, Thailand  
Award amount: US\$ 1,100

### 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. 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\$ 1,114

### 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.

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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: Shwe Zin  
Age: 22  
Ethnicity: Shan  
Subject of Study: International Relations & Development  
Level of Study: Bachelor's  
Institution of Study: Rangsit University, Thailand  
Award amount: US\$ 338

**Brief overview of candidate**

Shwe Zin was born in Eastern Shan State. Growing up, she saw the poverty and insecurity, often caused by conflict, that plagued her region. She saw how many people struggled to find enough food and couldn't afford to send their children to school. When she was a bit older, she was sent to live with relatives in Yangon in order to attend school. Here she experienced frequent taunts and humiliation from classmates due to her Shan ethnic minority status. The teachers did not intervene and Shwe Zin felt as though they tacitly approved of the discrimination to which she was subjected. Having experienced such treatment many times in her life, she realized that ethnic divisions were being manipulated and exploited in her country for the benefit of the powerful. Shwe Zin feels that the foundation of a better future for Burma must be quality education. People must have the opportunity to grow beyond the conflicts that have divided society for decades. On graduating, she plans to return to her region to work with young people and help them make a positive impact on their communities and the wider society.

**In her own words:**

“I want to let the rain of freedom fall all over my country. I believe in the power of education, and the power of people, to achieve this.”



Name: Ye Aung  
Age: 26  
Ethnicity: Kachin  
Subject of Study: Policy Studies & Administration  
Level of Study: Bachelor's  
Institution of Study: City University, Hong Kong  
Award amount: US\$ 2,000

**Brief overview of candidate**

Ye Aung was born in northern Kachin State in 1985. When he was four, the family moved to the state capital, Myitkyina, so that the children could attend better schools. The following year, Ye Aung's mother was paralyzed by a serious illness. His father had to leave home for long periods of time due to work. Ye Aung spent much of his time looking after his mother until her death in 1999.

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When he was 14, he started working in the surrounding forests during the summer months to earn money to pay for schooling. However, bouts of malaria made him frequently sick and unable to study. He managed to complete his secondary education and received a scholarship to attend a local college in Kachin State where he studied computing and English, graduating top of his class. On graduating, he started working for a local community organization working on HIV/AIDS prevention, environment and drug abuse issues. In 2010, he left the organization so that he would have more time to prepare for pursuing further studies. During this period he also worked as a volunteer teacher. In 2011, he successfully applied for a scholarship to study Policy Studies and Administration in Hong Kong. When he graduates, he wants to use his skills to bring communities in Burma together, and promote gradual democratization and greater respect for human rights.

**In his own words:**

“If democracy is to succeed in Burma, various political groups need to be reconciled and unified with a shared purpose. Also, as a nation, we need better education so that we can find fair solutions to the problems we face. I want to work to foster understanding and reconciliation, and improve education opportunities.”

## **Future Plans**

Currently, the Arohana Scholarship Fund (ASF) has disbursed all funds so far received from GlobalGiving. On receipt of a new tranche of funds, the ASF Committee will meet to decide on further 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,



Quentin Hewitt  
Development Director

Thabyay Education Network

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