

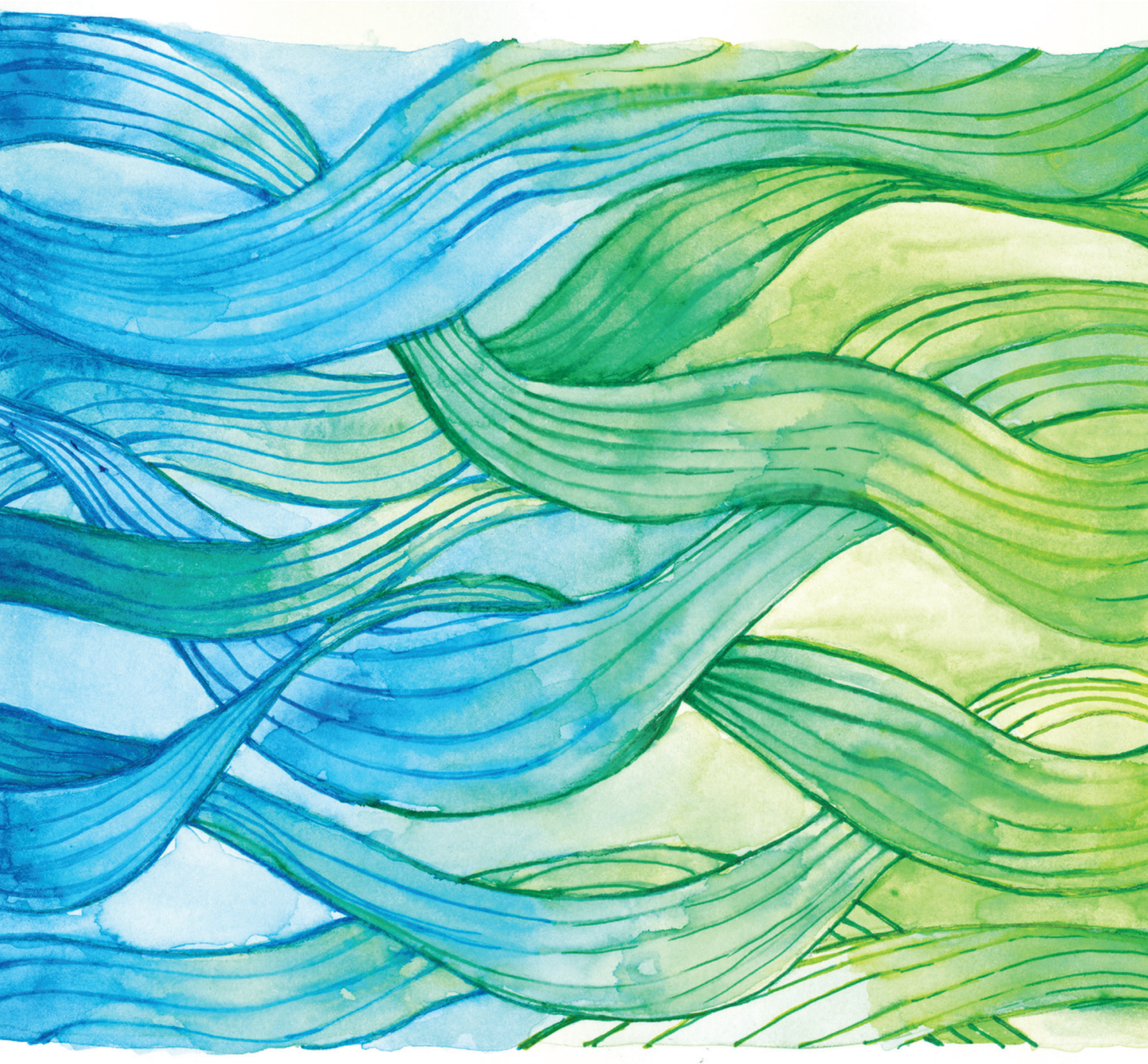
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KaleidoScope

Mahidol University International College Newsletter

April 2009



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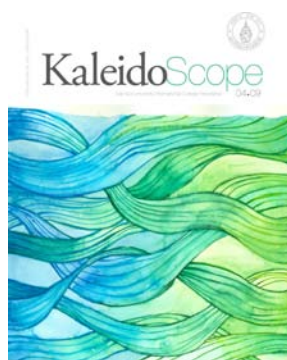
Editor's Note

We at Kaleidoscope continue to mark the changing patterns at MUIC, particularly at this juncture as we feature a transition in our leadership. By all accounts, the appointment of Dr. Rassmidara Hoonsawat does not signal a dramatic change in direction. Instead, she is expected to acknowledge the legacy of Dr. Chariya Brockelman by maintaining a sense of continuity, with subtle shifts of emphasis on the academic, social and physical landscapes at our college.

Change has come to Kaleidoscope as well, with new art direction and design from Ajarn Dynaya Bhutipunthu of the Communication Design Program. While our content will essentially remain the same, including the feature article and reports on academic development, student activities and our Pre-College Program, we've taken on a decidedly new look in terms of format and style.

In particular, our cover will feature both photographs and graphic designs which are meant to give artistic expression to each issue's feature article.

Cover Art



The illustration on the cover is by Ajarn Dale Konstanz who teaches in the Fine and Applied Arts Division and is involved in the development of the new Communication Design Program. His watercolor and ink illustration is based on the theme of change. The drawing incorporates elements of continuity, adaptation, and evolution.

Promoting ASEAN

Kyushu University (KU) of Japan and Mahidol University (MU), with strong support from the ASEAN Secretariat, sponsored "ASEAN in Today's World 2009," an international program for undergraduate and graduate students, from March 12 to April 2. MUIC organized the event which was conducted at the college facilities and the Salaya Pavilion Hotel.

The three-week program, consisting of ASEAN Studies courses, Asian languages and culture and field trips, was meant to instill a deeper understanding of ASEAN and ASEAN + 3 (Japan, China and South Korea), to enable students to develop their proficiency in regional languages and to explore the nuances of different cultures.

The student participants, who represented top universities in Thailand, Indonesia, Burma, Vietnam, Brunei, the Philippines, Laos, Japan and China, spent the first two days on Samet Island for a special orientation session, after which they returned to Bangkok for a traditional tour.

The program officially began on March 16 at the Salaya Pavilion Hotel with a VIP luncheon, followed by a round table discussion. Professor Pornchai Matankasombut, former President of MU, facilitated the discussion among regional university presidents and vice presidents as they explored the issue of greater collaboration by sponsoring more short and long-term programs, with a much broader base of participation, including the creation of major academic programs, such as MUIC's Southeast Asian Studies concentration.

Professor Pornchai, along with MU President, Professor Piyasakol Sakolsatayadorn, and KU President, Dr. Setsuo Arikawa, then held a press conference to articulate the objectives of "ASEAN in



Today's World" and report on the suggestions which surfaced during the round table discussion.

The official opening ceremony was held later that afternoon in the Tawee Watana Conference Room. The Presidents of KU and MU, along with Mr. Yuji Kumamaru, Japan's Envoy Extraordinary, addressed the participants and distinguished guests, after which Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Secretary General of ASEAN, delivered the keynote address.

Dr. Surin focused on the recently-ratified ASEAN Charter, characterizing it as a "living document" that required the support, cooperation and participation of

all the people in the region. He called on the younger generation in particular to take ownership of the charter's principles, become "citizens of ASEAN" and overcome the ethnic, religious and political differences that plague the region, citing "ASEAN in Today's World" as the "kind of program that goes to the very heart of our community-building efforts."

Over the ensuing weeks, the student participants were required to take two ASEAN Studies courses, including such topics as Current Affairs and ASEAN, Public Health and Global AIDS, Japanese Popular Culture and Crisis Management in terms of the environment, food supply

and natural disasters, in addition to one course in Basic Japanese, Thai, Bahasa Indonesian or Vietnamese, within the context of their respective cultures.

These classes were interspersed with a number of field trips to Ayuttaya, a village homestay in Samut Songkram, the Ampawa Night Floating Market, the Joe Louis Puppet Theatre and the Phra Pathom Chedi.

Over the course of the three weeks the participants learned about ASEAN, engaged in cross-cultural exchange and began the challenging journey of becoming citizens of both ASEAN and the world.

Students Investigate Spiritual Detox

The drug and alcohol detoxification program at Wat Thamkrabok in Saraburi province has been described in the media as a treatment so intense that it will either cure you of your addiction or kill you. We imagine that this sensationalistic saying was reverberating in the minds of 5 MUIC students and their professor as they knelt in a row in front of a long open drain at Thamkrabok on a day in February, listening to the songs and drum beats of an encouraging pajama-clad crowd

behind them and preparing themselves to ingest a viscous black herbal mixture that was guaranteed to induce projectile vomiting for the ensuing ten minutes.

Why were they doing this? According to their professor, Ajarn Iljas Baker, these students were not trying to overcome illicit addictions like the people lined up behind them. As members of the Drugs and Society class at MUIC, the 11 students on the field trip to Wat Thamkrabok (including 6 who did not participate) were there to find out for themselves what goes on at this well-known detox program. The students spoke with monks and graduates of the program, and learned that there is more to it than that notorious herbal tonic; other components include meditation and Buddhist religious services, Thai herbal steam baths and massage, and counseling.

While at the temple, the students participated in a meditation session, viewed

the statues and artworks on the temple grounds, and enjoyed a talk by Phra Hans, a western monk who has been part of the drug treatment program at Wat Thamkrabok for the past 13 years. Phra Hans explained that Buddhist temples are ideal drug treatment centers, because the root cause of addiction is the spiritual vacuum at the center of modern life. In his view, a person's mind and spirit must undergo detoxification from drugs along with their body, and the only permanent cure for addiction is authentic spiritual awakening.

Ajarn Iljas and his students report that they gained a lot from their day at Wat Thamkrabok. In addition to learning the facts about the famous detox program, and testing out some of its methods, they were touched by the stories of the people they met.



A Special Presentation

The Travel Industry Management (TIM) Division sponsored a presentation by Ms. Vanessa Race on March 19 in the college auditorium. The topic, “Genius Plus Morality Equals Sustainable Success,” focused on the synergy between one’s intellectual growth and sense of morality in achieving success in an academic setting.

Ms. Race received her M.A. in Education from Harvard University and is the founder of the Mind, Brain and Education Company and the Ocean-Wisdom Foundation, both of which are located in Thailand.

Computer Science Labs

A Systems and Networks Lab and a Research Lab on the fourth floor of Building 1 were recently completed. Outfitted with state-of-the-art Cisco Systems hardware, Computer Science students will now be able to hone their craft in an environment identical to world-class corporate computing installations.

Director Chariya Brockelman, accompanied by the Designate-Director, Dr. Rassmidara Hoonsawat, and other members of the MUIC community, presided over a special ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 26 to mark the official opening of the two laboratories.

Business Case Competition

Ajarn Atthapong Sakunsriprasert Aran a Business Case Competition for BBA students in his Strategic Management class. The case study focused on Foamtec International, a Thai company operating in Thailand and the Asia Pacific region that provides polyurethane foam for automotive parts, electronic components and pharmaceutical products.

The student participants were required to address the following issues: Can the company double its sales over the next five years? Is it adequately equipped to further expand both regionally and internationally? What direction should the company pursue?

Twelve teams participated in the preliminary rounds of the competition during the last week of February. Three teams were chosen as finalists: Team 1, represented by Rangrong Wichitkraisorn, Pawin Thepbanchaporn, Lin Mong Hseuh, Saowaros Thanyakunakorn and Sebastian Hoenberg; Team 2, comprised of Nandini Bhatia, Sailee Saranghar and Paul Leger; and Team 3, with Patcharakak Thanasintrakul, Patamaporn Siripa vanich, Chompoo-



noot Prapothipong, Sangkarn Savaikair and Takrit PUA-Ariya.

The final round, which was judged by members of the BBA faculty, was held on March 6, in the Seminar Room. Team 3 won the competition while Teams 1 and 2 secured second and third place, respectively.

According to Ajarn Atthapong, this competition was meant to develop students’ analytical and presentational skills for future competitions. MUIC is expected to participate in the Thammasat Undergraduate Business Challenge in August, an international forum with 16 teams from around the world, in addition to the national competition, Global Leadership Challenge, in September.



Coral Reef Restoration

Ajarn Laird Allan is developing artificial rocks which can be used to restore or repair coral reefs. A simple mix of cement, broken and powdered shell, copra (coconut fiber) and a bamboo frame make a strong, non-toxic foundation on which young invertebrates can grow. It is easy to also attach broken bits of still-living coral (sometimes referred to as ‘orphans’) to accelerate the reef’s growth.

This ongoing project extends the work initiated in 2007, when Ajarn Laird and his students began cultivating young corals on a floating nursery at Koh Mak in Trat Province. Some of the artificial rocks will soon be transplanted to natural foundations.

Mushroom Sprouting at MUIC

MUIC's facilities for original science research keep improving. Dr. Edward Grand developed a mushroom growing room that is now fully operational. The facility, located between Buildings 1 and 2, is being used for growth experiments using different substrates (including discarded office paper, agricultural waste and noxious weeds) as food sources for the fungi. It is also being used to demonstrate the technology for growing different species of mushrooms during an upcoming mycology course.



New Appointment

Ajarn Nate-tra Tevabanchachai, Program Director of the TIM Division, has been appointed Acting General Manager of the Salaya Pavilion Hotel and Training Center. She also serves as the division's Human Resources Training Lecturer.

Ajarn Nate-tra recently completed a series of training sessions at Ramathibodi Hospital and a two-day workshop at Siriraj Hospital for nurses and other personnel, with a focus on the development of communication skills, particularly in terms of dealing with patients and the public.



New Leadership@ASC

Ms. Sumalee Visetratana, Deputy Director for Administration, has been appointed Program Director of MUIC's Academic Service Center (ASC) in Hat Yai. Ajarn Udomrat Tivasub, Assistant Deputy Director for Academic Affairs, will serve as Deputy Program Director.

Keynote Address

Dr. Ramesh Boonratana of the TIM Division, at the invitation of the organizers, delivered the a keynote address presentation on "Primate Conservation at SE Asia: Issues and Constraints" in a symposium on "Ex Situ Conservation of Orangutan" held on 10-11 March 2009 at the Bukit Merah Laketown Resort, Perak Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia. Dr. Ramesh made the presentation in his capacity as the Secretary-General of the South East Asian Primatological Association (SEAPA), and as a scientific member of the IUCN-SSC Primate Specialist Group.



New Division Chairman

Dr. Pakorn Bovonsombat, Director of the Chemistry Program, has been appointed Chairman of the Science Division. He received his Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from New York University. He served as a postdoctoral Research Associate at Rockefeller University and currently has 23 international publications to his credit.

Before Dr. Pakorn arrived at MUIC in 2003 as a full-time lecturer, he was a research scientist at the Petroleum Authority of Thailand, Research and Development Center, and General Manager of OMG (formerly Degussa) Automotive Catalysts Thailand Company, Ltd., responsible for global outreach and day-to-day operation of the company and manufacturing facility in Chonburi. Dr. Pakorn also taught part-time at the Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science, Mahidol University, prior to joining MUIC.

New MUIC Director

Mahidol University announced the appointment of Associate Professor Rassmidara Hoonsawat as the new Director of MUIC, effective April 1, 2009. She received her Ph.D. in Physics from Georgetown University, USA, and has served in several capacities at Mahidol University, including Chair of the Department of Physics, Associate Dean, Faculty of Science, and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies. Dr. Rassmidara also served as a member of the Mahidol University Council and has extensive experience in research.

Some Initial Observations

On behalf of the MUIC community, we at kaleidoscope are pleased to welcome our newly-appointed Director, Dr. Rassmidara Hoonsawat, and wish to introduce her to our readership by soliciting from her some observations about her vision for the college, her priorities and style of leadership.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Welcome to MUIC and congratulations on your appointment.

DR. RASSMIDARA: Thank you.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Have you had any prior association with MUIC?

DR. RASSMIDARA: Yes, I would occasionally teach physics on a part-time basis for the college. I was also a member of the Mahidol University Council, which reviews and approves policies and proposals submitted by MUIC, including its curriculum, new majors, postgraduate programs and physical expansion. So, yes, I'm very familiar with what has been happening at the college and am very impressed with Professor Chariya's contributions over the years.

KALEIDOSCOPE: During the selection process candidates were asked to articulate their vision for the college. What is yours?

DR. RASSMIDARA: First and foremost, I want MUIC to be a fine international college and the first choice in Asia. By "fine" I mean an institution that is firmly committed

to the liberal arts and will serve as a good model of governance for other faculties and universities.

In presenting my views, I focused on learning and teaching, research, academic services, cultural heritage preservation and, finally, management and finance.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Are you anticipating any personnel changes?

DR. RASSMIDARA: No. I'm already familiar with the present executive team and the quality of their work.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Any other changes?

DR. RASSMIDARA: MUIC already has a sound organizational structure and a strong curriculum. However, there are some areas that will require my attention. One of my first tasks will be an evaluation of the curriculum, which is something I've had experience with as Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. If we can identify and then promote our strengths, we'll be able to attract more international faculty and students and raise our international profile on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. I think our full-time international students should constitute at least 20 percent of the student population.

KALEIDOSCOPE: So you do expect more growth in student numbers.

DR. RASSMIDARA: Of course. For example, the newly-proposed Mahidol University International School on our campus, which is being supervised by Dr. Chariya, will eventually become an important source for future students. It should be operational in three years but in the meantime we can establish strong ties with high-quality high schools in the area and elsewhere. I would like to see that same kind of collaboration extended to MU faculties, other universities and public and private organizations through seminars, symposiums and conferences. I must say, I'm particularly impressed with the

success that MUIC students have had in regional and international competitions.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Are there other areas of concern?

DR. RASSMIDARA: We need to promote a stronger culture of research and increase the number of publications each year. This could be done by encouraging more team research, as opposed to individual efforts, as well as providing more attractive incentives and rewards. I would like to see a research network within Mahidol and among other universities. I'm a strong advocate of benchmarking.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Could you explain that?

DR. RASSMIDARA: The college selects a competitive partner, another international program, in order to measure its performance in research so that we know where we stand in relation to others. This needn't only apply to research; benchmarking can be used with other quantifiable issues such as student activities, the number of international students and faculty and so on.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Just another form of collaboration – what seems to emerge as one of your priorities.

DR. RASSMIDARA: Exactly. Another priority will most likely be the promotion of Thai arts and culture, along with an appreciation of other cultures and beliefs, a perfect fit for any liberal arts curriculum – and a core value of Mahidol University.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Finally, could you briefly comment on your leadership style?

DR. RASSMIDARA: From my perspective, three qualities are necessary for effective leadership: first of all, strategic thinking and a clear plan of action, secondly, team formation and relationship building, that is, a vertical as well as horizontal dynamic, and finally, inspiring trust and a willingness to take on challenges.



A Lasting Legacy

In February Mahidol University officially announced that Professor Chariya Brockelman would complete her term as Director of MUIC on March 31, 2009, 12 years and two months after having assumed that position. Her departure, much like her arrival, constitutes a defining moment, of that there is no doubt.

In a previous issue of our college newsletter we characterized Dr. Chariya's arrival in 1997 as a turning point, a milestone. And so it was. Looking back, it is remarkable to see to what an extent MUIC has grown and prospered, all under the stewardship of one far-sighted woman.

Apart from introducing a new managerial style, a more transparent system of fiscal accountability and policies that conformed to the highest international standards, Dr. Chariya created a wide range of programs and initiatives, academic and otherwise:

- The Office of Student Affairs, catering to the social needs of MUIC students, and the formation of the MUIC Student Association.
- A system of awarding scholarships for academic excellence, student activities and community outreach.
- The Office of International Relations (OIR) and its inbound and outbound Study Abroad Program. MUIC currently enjoys exchange agreements with 44

universities from North America, Europe, Australia and Asia. In addition, IRO's Special Projects Department offers short-term exchange workshops and seminars for groups of international students.

- The Office of Public Relations, which not only promotes the college via the media and its annual Open House but also assists the Admissions Office in recruiting prospective candidates.
- The Office of Human Resources which provides personal and professional development for an ever-expanding faculty and staff.
- The Academic Activity Department which provides training sessions in communication, teamwork and leadership skills for groups in both the public and private sectors.
- Establishing the Provident Fund, a savings mechanism for faculty and staff as well as the Education Fund whereby faculty and staff members can borrow funds interest free for educational purposes.
- The Office of Planning, Research and Development, promoting research projects among faculty and staff.
- The formation of a divisional system (Business, Travel Industry Management, Humanities and Language, Social Science and Science), including the new Fine and Applied Arts Division.
- The creation of 12 new majors, the most recent of which are Communication Design and Computer Engineering, along with 29 minors.

- Two graduate programs, Masters in Business Modeling and Analysis (MBA) and Master of Management in Tourism and Hospitality Management (MM-THM).
- The establishment of three on-campus internship programs: the Salaya Pavilion Hotel and Training Center, Cup-pa Coffee House and the Food Science and Technology laboratory which helps to serve the Princess Café.
- The Pre-College Program which provides a foundation for those students who need to improve their English skills to the required level for entrance to the college.
- The Academic Service Center in HatYai, where students submit documents, take the entrance exam, sit for an interview and have an opportunity to study in the Center's English Intensive Program.
- The MUIC Alumni Association which aims to maintain both personal and professional contacts with our college graduates.

Over the past decade these initiatives, coupled with an ever-increasing enrollment of students, necessitated a corresponding physical expansion. The college's facilities in late 1997 consisted of the nearly-completed six-storey complex (Building 1) and the college's very first structure (Building 2). Under Dr. Chariya's leadership, a number of other facilities have all become a part of the



Dr. Chariya '08



Building 8



Building 3

college's physical landscape.

- Building 3: the new 8-storey extension, which includes additional facilities for the Salaya Pavilion Hotel and Training Center.
- Building 4: the old MU Science Faculty Building, the site for the Food Science and Technology Program offices and laboratory.
- Building 5: the Salaya Center which accommodates the Humanities and Language Division
- Building 6: the MU Institute of Language and Culture for Rural Development Building whose fourth floor serves as headquarters for the Pre-College Program.
- Building 7: the MU Environment and Resources Studies Building. Its third floor houses the Fine and Applied Arts Division (Entertainment Media and Communication Design Programs).
- Building 8: Sathorn City Tower in Bangkok, 12th floor, accommodating the Master in Business Modeling and Analysis Program.

In addition, the college provides two housing facilities for its international students: Chaiyapruk Village and Green Park Home, both in close proximity to the Salaya campus.

This impressive list of achievements over the past decade constitutes Dr. Chariya's enduring legacy.

Some Final Thoughts

In the forward to the 2008 Annual Report, Dr. Chariya provided an overview of the past year's highlights and concluded with the following.

“After having been at the helm of MUIC for 12 years, I have to contemplate my long-term goals. MUIC is now strong in all categories as required by Mahidol University. It is enriched by a faculty and staff who are strongly committed; its student body of over 2,000 is diverse, talented and strong.

The College has a healthy endowment and cash flow that will make any incoming director feel comfortable. It's time for me to “move on.” I would like to sincerely thank all of you. It is you who have built MUIC as we have envisioned it together. I'll leave it in your hands to nurture and take good care of it.”

We at kaleidoscope thought it would be fitting to interview Dr. Chariya for the last time in order to chronicle some of her parting thoughts not only about the past 12 years but also about her future plans.



GUNI-AP Symposium

Chheng Mai '06



Dr. Chariya '08



KALEIDOSCOPE: When you arrived at MUIC, expectations were high. You did not disappoint, given the impressive list of accomplishments over the past 12 years.

DR. CHARIYA: Thank you. I was fortunate to become director at the right time. The new building (Building 1) was near completion and the college was ready for an influx of more students. All of that required an effective organizational structure and an eventual expansion of our curriculum.

KALEIDOSCOPE: What has been your most satisfying achievement?

DR. CHARIYA: The liberal arts education that MUIC is currently offering. This has always been one of my top priorities. Most parents now recognize that their children should be exposed to the arts and sciences, including communication skills and languages, before they concentrate on their professional subjects. Many parents now let our students make their own decision as to what major or minor they want to take and we continue to offer them more and more choices.

KALEIDOSCOPE:
Any disappointments?

DR. CHARIYA: In 2006, when land around the Salaya area was still available at a reasonable price, I proposed establishing a housing project for MUIC faculty and staff, an area that would have been tastefully designed and environmentally friendly. I think good living is an essential part in encouraging our employees to work well and have a sense of belonging. Foreign faculty members who cannot own real estate according to Thai law could have bought ownership rights from the college and, if they decided to leave MUIC, could have sold that ownership to other foreign ajarns. Can you imagine an academic community just a few kilometers from MUIC where faculty and staff, along with their children, could learn to be comfortable with each other's culture? Unfortunately, that project never materialized.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Are there any projects left undone?

DR. CHARIYA: Yes. First of all, to make the Salaya Pavilion Hotel self-supporting. I had hoped that we would achieve that goal in 2009 but the hotel still depends on the financial support of MUIC. Hopefully, the new director will find a capable general manager who can achieve that goal.

Secondly, we need sports facilities for our students.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Doesn't the college have access to the university's sports facilities?

DR. CHARIYA: Yes it does, but scheduling certain sports activities is often problematic. We've begun construction on an outdoor basketball court near the northwest corner of Building 3. At least that's a beginning. I'm always sad to find out that we've admitted star high school athletes who are disappointed later on because we don't have the facilities for them to practice and excel in their sport.

Finally, we've set up a space in the second-floor foyer for a "Hall of Fame," a center where we can showcase the trophies, plaques, citations and awards of our students and alumni. I hope this project will be completed soon.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Do you have any plans for the future?

DR. CHARIYA: Yes, I'll be dividing my time on several upcoming projects. I've been appointed by Mahidol University to establish an international high school on the Salaya campus within the next three years. I'll also serve as a



part-time consultant for our family business, the Siam Chemicals Public Company, Ltd., which deals with the tank farm service industry. I'll be focusing on loss control.

KALEIDOSCOPE: Which is what?

DR. CHARIYA: It entails a wide range of issues: people, property, process, profits and public relations. Our company has land in both the north and south of Thailand, where we've developed orchards and cultivate other crops. One thing I'd like to do is research why so many Thai farmers are poor and how education can help them to properly manage the land in this tropical climate and at the same time become more environmentally aware. I'm also considering the possibility of establishing a middle school on one of our properties in Nakhon Si Thammarat.

KALEIDOSCOPE: That's quite an ambitious agenda.

DR. CHARIYA: Well, at least I'll have control over my own hours, which wasn't always the case at MUIC. I'll have time for more reading and even some writing. Besides, as long as I have the energy and resources, I'll continue to make a contribution.

Farewell Reception

In order to express its appreciation for her productive years of service, the college hosted a special reception, "Bonds of Friendship and Collegiality," at the Centara Grand Hotel and Bangkok Convention Center at Central World on the evening of February 17, attended by MUIC executives, faculty, designated staff members and special guest of honor Professor Warren Brockelman.

Dr. Chariya received a special book containing messages of appreciation from MUIC faculty and staff, a framed portrait of herself, rendered by the celebrated national artist, Dr. Suchart Wongthong, and, towards the end of the evening, a rose from each of the guests.

Associate Professor Peter Smith, Ajarn Chompunuch Pongjit and Mr. Sitta Kutsang, all of whom are long-standing members of the MUIC community, gave speeches citing Dr. Chariya's achievements and paid tribute to her efforts in developing the college. She, in turn, expressed her gratitude not only for the evening but also for the support of her colleagues over the years.





CREATIVITY ON DISPLAY

On February 24, the Music, Art, and Photo Clubs co-organized an event celebrating MUIC students' creative talents. Called the Fun Fair Against Drugs, the event was part art exhibition, part band competition, and part rock concert. Student photographs and paintings were on display on the ground floor of Building 1, and a crowd gathered around the stage to watch bands from MUIC and Smallroom Records perform. The three MUIC bands were finalists in the last round of a College-wide competition to find the best student band; in the end, the five members of Story were victorious. Smallroom Records brought the bands Tattoo Color, Slur, Rich Man Toy, Super Baker, Lemon Soup, and Leisure Songs, all of whom were well-received by the audience.



VOLUNTEER CLUB FOLLOW-UP TRIP

Forty-three members of the Volunteer Club returned to the Ban Nong Harg School in Suphanburi Province on March 8th. The purpose of the visit was to follow-up with the children at the school where the club spent ten days volunteering and building a playground in December. Volunteer Club President Jarasporn Nimkititkul reports that she and the other club members have been very moved by the experience of getting to know the children at this school; some of them are very poor and must spend long hours working alongside their parents, with little free time to play. On this visit, they found the playground in full use for volleyball, badminton, and Takro, as well as for daily morning assemblies.





SA REUNION

The MUIC Student Association held a Reunion Dinner on February 28 to bring together its past and present members. 33 alumni and 24 students who are currently active in SA attended the reunion, which was held at the Salaya Pavilion Hotel Banquet Room. After dinner and a speech by Ajarn Michael Naglis, Assistant Deputy Director for Student Affairs, everyone divided into small group discussions so that alumni could give the current students advice and guidance about organizing activities.

DEBATE TOURNAMENT

MUIC hosted a debate tournament on January 29-31 to contribute to the ongoing celebration of the 175th anniversary of Thai-American diplomatic relations. Twenty-nine teams from fourteen Thai colleges and universities competed in the tournament, and one team of debaters traveled from the University of Vermont in the United States.

Despite being undefeated in the preliminary rounds, MUIC ultimately placed third behind Assumption University and Thammasat University. Even though the team did not win, MUIC's debaters dominated the standings for the best individual speakers, placing four in the top ten. First, second, and third places went to Micheal Mergy Krause, Mohammed Mabrouq Azzez, and Wen-yu Wendy Weng, while Tanawat Phavibul placed eighth. The tournament was attended by the United States Ambassador to Thailand, Eric G. John, who presided over a friendly Thai-U.S. debate and presented the awards.

MULTICULTURAL CLUB PARTICIPATES IN CONFERENCES

Nine students in the Multicultural Club attended a pair of development-themed academic conferences this trimester. An international NGO called the Tomorrow People Organization arranged the conferences, entitled "Education and Development" and "Poverty and Social Protection," which were held in Bangkok on March 5-7 and 11-13 respectively. The Multicultural Club members had a great time meeting conference participants from around the world and learning about important social issues from different points of view.

MULTICULTURAL CLUB TRIP

The Multicultural Club arranged a trip to the Ancient City park in Samut Prakran on March 8. The trip was led by advisor Ruchi Agarwal and attended by 19 students, who were eager to learn about ancient Thai culture and architecture. Ancient City is an outdoor historical park and museum that contains replicas of Thai monuments and temples, and presents information about Thai history. The group's tour guide unfortunately spoke only Thai, but even the foreign students on the trip enjoyed seeing the sights and were impressed by the park's classical Thai dance performers. The students also liked the Ancient City selection of old-fashioned foods and sweets.



SIFE Community Outreach Projects

The MUIC chapter of Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), a global non-profit organization that mobilizes university students to create economic opportunities for others, held a special meeting in the Seminar Room on March 4, in an effort to raise its profile as well as broaden and diversify its membership.

The SIFE members presented a review of its ongoing project, Banglen Banara, in which women from Nakhon Pathom Province are taught to make creative products from banana sheaths and learn about finance, marketing and entrepreneurship, all within the context of business ethics and environmental sustainability.

Given the success of this project, the SIFE chapter announced the implementation of the same model with two additional target groups, the first of which consists of deaf students at Mahidol University's Rajasuda College who are currently being taught ceramic production. SIFE is currently helping these talented people to diversify their range of products and teaching them the same set of skills from the Banara project.

The second target group will be elementary and high school students who will also be taught how to make products from banana sheaths and, with a game developed by SIFE members, learn how to become ethical entrepreneurs. This project, Eco Child, will also emphasize environmental awareness in decision making.

SIFE has also launched a new project, Parachute Rice Plantation (PRP), targeting farmers in Ayutthaya and Prathum Thani Provinces. PRP entails the process of using special trays to grow rice sprouts which in turn prevents the loss of seeds and produces high-quality rice at a lower cost. This project will reduce the difficulties in farming, increase production and raise the farmers' standard of living.

SIFE's recruitment efforts and the promotion of its aforementioned projects have already boosted its membership. Any other students interest in joining the enterprise can contact the chapter's president, Mr. Amornthep Sachamuneeuwse at sanju1289@gmail.com or at 086-545-6508.



DEBATE TEAM MEMBER IN JAPAN

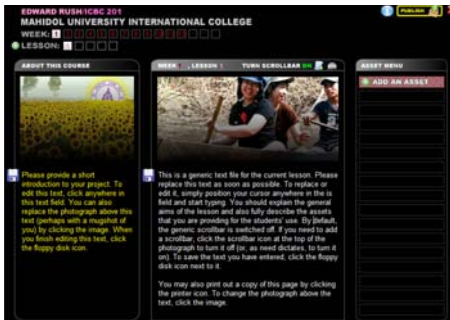
Second-year Debate Club member Piva Saengrattanachai won a full scholarship to attend a prestigious debate event in Japan on March 9th – 14th. Held at Kyushu University, the International Bio-Ethics Debate Workshop and Tournament was a chance for students from around Japan and Asia to learn the American Policy Debate style from experts and champion debaters flown in by Kyushu.

The event began with five days of workshops covering speech training, research methods, argumentation theories and rebuttal theories, along with tutorials in American Policy Debate. Piva formed a team for the tournament with another scholarship winner from Beijing Language and Culture University. They were the top ranked team after the preliminary mock rounds, but then lost on a split decision to the American team before the final round. Piva's team placed 3rd overall in the tournament, and he received the award for the 3rd best speaker of the tournament behind debaters from the United States and India.



Pre-College News

Information technology has been driving development at the Pre-College lately. Thanks to a 160,000 baht seed grant from MUIC, work is underway on three separate IT applications.



The first and most interesting project is a scalable self access application based on the theory of knowledge construction, which suggests that people learn best when they are given the resources to control their own learning. Its design is therefore loose and open-ended, with modules full of videos, information, links, and quizzes that students can explore and work on at their own pace. Instructors can design their own modules for the application, which means that its content will grow organically with time. This kind of program has been employed with great success by the Australian Vocational Education and Training sector, and the development team intends to publish research on its outcome within the local context.

The next application is a programmed template which makes it easy for teachers to add a variety of multimedia resources



to lessons, which can then be distributed and used by students. Use of the application has spread from Pre-College to College courses (ICBC201 and ICTM 500) and has also been used in a visiting short course for Kyung Hee University.

Finally, an electronic resource sharing application was developed and has been in use at the Pre-College for the past year. Teachers use this application to share text and multimedia files through a graphical user interface that is hosted on the local network.

Profile

Diversity is coming to the field of English language teaching in Thailand. More and more English teachers in local classrooms come from countries where English is not the primary language. At Pre-College, we consider ourselves fortunate to have four such teachers who can draw on their own experiences in learning English to help guide their students towards fluency.

Our newest faculty member, Ajarn Zuzanna Ceranowicz, from Poland, epitomizes the values of our non-English speaking background (NESB) contingent. Ajarn Zuzanna has a master's degree and a solid ESL teaching background. Despite her experience and training, however, she has found that it can still be tough for NESB teachers to gain acceptance from Asian students and education providers, who often insist on having native-speaking English teachers.



But Ajarn Zuzanna is confident that the old beliefs about who should be teaching English are fading quickly. She believes that her Polish heritage and her experience of learning and mastering a foreign language have only made her better-equipped to work in her chosen field.

“I really like to study languages as I believe it gives you some insight into other cultures and other ways of life. In teaching English and living abroad, I see the opportunity to observe and apply in real life the theories I learned in the course of my studies,”

Ajarn Zuzanna is teaching and developing Listening and Speaking and Reading courses, and plans to start a Ph.D in the near future.

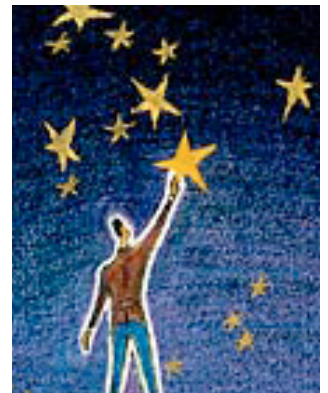
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