



Sep-Dec 2015

KaleidoScope

Mahidol University International Center



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ECO
FOR
UNIVERSITY

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Environmental standards for
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EDITORIAL

Not Just Another Slogan

Academic excellence goes hand in hand with a deep concern for the environment. This is one of the major reasons why Mahidol University has set as one of its immediate goals the transformation of the university as an ecological-friendly academic community. Achieving “Eco University” status is not just another milestone that must be reached but rather an affirmation that each executive, faculty, staff and student have developed a keen desire to conserve energy and save the environment. The cover story for this issue traces the steps taken by Mahidol University International College in 2015 to make this possible. You will also read in the following pages stories about our students’ achievements, study trips and social outreach.



This Issue's Cover

An exchange student plants a seedling in a park near MUIC. The College inculcates the value of caring for the environment through this kind of activity.

TEACHER, TRADER, SOCIAL WORKER

Dr. Thadthong Bhrammanee, a member of the Class of 1995, is very much active in three sectors these days—in the academe, business and social outreach. She said part of the reason for her success is due to what she learned at the International Students Degree Program (the forerunner of Mahidol University International College or MUIC), where she finished a bachelor's degree in Business Administration.

Dr. Thadthong went on to obtain a Master's degree in Information System at the University of Toledo in the US, and a Ph.D. in Information Management at the Asian Institute of Technology.

She is now the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Assistant to the President for IT Strategy at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University.

She is also deeply involved with her family business—real estate and a newspaper / magazine wholesaler and distribution company, the latter being the oldest in their home province of Phetchaburi.

As for social responsibility, she and her family manage “Thonghathai Farm” which serves as a model for farmers on the benefits of applying His Majesty's “Self-sufficiency Economy.”



According to Dr. Thadthong, “Thonghathai Farm focuses on the micro level comprising small-holder or family farming.” She added that their model farm teaches farmers about land and water management for a sustainable agriculture. Aside from this, Thonghathai Farm also “promotes the maintenance of the ecosystem, and preserves Thai ways like warm family ties, merit-making, and sharing of resources.”

Last year, she was chosen as one of the five recipients of MUIC’s Most Outstanding Alumni Awards in recognition of her achievements.

Back in the early 90s when MUIC was still known as ISDP, what made Dr. Thadthong enroll there? “It was Thailand’s first international bachelor’s degree program in a public university,” she said. “ISDP (MUIC) is a good place to start a lifelong journey.”

She can still recall vividly the mentors who influenced her during those days. At the top of her list is Dr. Serene Piboonniyom, the then-ISDP Director. “I’m a follower of her leadership principles. I still observe the guidelines she taught us—from the time I joined a youth exchange program during my sophomore year, when I served as President of the Thai Students Association during my studies in the US, and even now that I’m working in the academe.”

Another professor was Dr. Charles Freeland. “He guided me on my textbook reading tasks. This made me enjoy reading academic books and articles during my graduate studies and beyond,” she said. She also gave credit to visiting professors from other educational institutions.

Looking back, Dr. Thadthong said that one of the advantages of studying in an international college was acquiring self-confidence and developing better interpersonal skills.

She also counts two important life lessons she had learned from ISDP (and now MUIC): First is having a strong sense of social responsibility. Second is positive thinking. “Whenever we face limitations, we should always take a look at the positive side and turn it into a valuable opportunity,” she said.



MUIC'S GLOBAL CITIZENS HELP CREATE ECO UNIVERSITY

The steadfast commitment of Mahidol University International College (MUIC) in supporting the initiative of Mahidol University (MU) to achieve Eco University status dovetails with MUIC's major goal of producing global citizens.

One of the hallmarks of a global citizen is a genuine concern for taking care of the environment. For the past few years, MU has been setting benchmarks for achieving the distinction of being an Eco University. And the MUIC community has a big role to play in achieving this through its current activities.

According to MU's strategy for 2016-2019, the university aims to have 25% of its colleges and departments to pass green university standards. In the first phase of the initiative, MUIC is among the 15 faculties and colleges tapped to undergo evaluation. The criteria includes a minimum of 60% passing rate in areas comprising material, energy, water, waste, building, and greenhouse gases.

In December 2015, Assoc. Prof. Phitaya Charupoonphol, MUIC Dean, vowed to support the university initiative during the visit of Assoc. Prof. Kitikorn Charmondusit, MU Vice President for Environment and Sustainable Development. The occasion was part of the Eco University Roadshow.

LEARNING AND TAKING ACTION

The College's Energy Saving Committee carried on with its ongoing projects to utilize energy wisely in the campus and at the same time educate the MUIC community on how best to conserve water and energy and to recycle trash.

More important is the fact that MUIC in 2015 sent its personnel to seminars and field trips related to energy conservation and also started to reach out and network with outside organizations in its pursuit to support MU's bid for Eco University status.

Dean Phitaya and Mrs. Somluck Lunsuchep, Chairperson of the Energy Saving Committee and Associate Dean for Administration and Academic Support, led 35 committee officers, along with faculty and staff members, in visiting the Sirindhorn International Environment Park in Phetchaburi Province July 24-25, 2015.

They attended lectures on energy and community development and also the mangrove rehabilitation project of His Majesty the King. Afterwards, they participated in a mangrove-planting activity which

highlighted the need for a collective contribution to sustainable development.

On July 27th, two Saving Energy Committee officers visited the School for Renewable Energy Technology (SRET) at Naresuan University. They viewed various exhibits that featured devices which can transform natural resources into renewable energy such as Solar Cell, Bio Energy, Gasifier System, among others.

The following day, July 28th, committee officers attended a seminar entitled "Higher Education in 21st Century: ASEAN Community University Towards 2015" in Naresuan University, Phitsanulok Province. University chancellors from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand participated in the seminar to work together on an ASEAN Community Development Plan in order to reinforce environmental, social and economic sustainability in ASEAN. Another purpose was to enhance the international standards of ASEAN universities in terms of quality of teaching and research.



CYCLING FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION

To increase public awareness, mobilize support for energy conservation and promote better health, MUIC conducted a successful cycling event on September 27th. Dubbed as “Social Cycling: Eco Town Salaya,” the activity attracted close to 2,000 cyclists from both MUIC and MU and local communities in Nakhon Pathom province. The cyclists covered the route from Prince Mahidol Hall in the Salaya campus to Central Salaya and back.

Clinical Prof. Udom Kachintorn, MU President, together with Dean Phitaya Charupoonphol, and Mr. Chatchai Utaipan, the Governor of Nakhon Pathom province presided over the event.

The cycling event’s highlights included the special trophies of H.R.H. Princess Adiyadhornkitikhun, the Governor of Nakhon Pathom Province, and President of Mahidol University.



NETWORKING AND DOING JOINT PROJECTS



MUIC also signified its commitment to join other concerned organizations to promote green energy by signing various agreements.

On June 30, 2015, Mrs. Somluck Lunsuchep, together with Energy Saving Committee officers joined the “Carbon Footprint Agreement” signing ceremony between Mahidol University and Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organization (TGO) at Siriruckhachati Botanical Garden inside MU’s Salaya campus.

Meanwhile, MUIC signed recently a Memorandum of Agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding with several organizations as part of supporting the Sustainable Bangkok Campaign, a project of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

Dean Phitaya signed the two documents—binding MUIC with the Faculty of Environment and Resource Studies of Mahidol University, the Thailand Youth Media Network, and Asia-Pacific Peace and Development Service Alliance—on November 11, 2015 in Bangkok to “create and develop a better and more sustainable society and

environment” through the Sustainable Bangkok Campaign, a multi-sectoral undertaking that will promote a “cleaner, greener, and safer city environment through creative activities by youth volunteer and media presence.”

Aside from MUIC faculty and staff members some 24 MUIC students, meanwhile, underwent training for this campaign.

In his speech, Dean Phitaya noted that “Mahidol University, as an organization, recognizes a duty to create awareness and participation of the public to all sectors to prevent and address environmental matters including creating channels for the public to participate in environmental management. We send our students to participate in this project so that they can pass on their experiences to friends, family and their community.”

In fact, both regular and exchange students participate in tree-planting events during the school year as part of their contribution to nature conservation.

And shortly before the end of the year, MUIC joined the Sustainable University Network of Thailand (SUN Thailand), binding it with 15 other universities in Thailand in exchanging knowledge and implementing policies towards their attainment of environmentally sustainable university status.





UNDP'S SOCIAL GOOD SUMMIT *in* MUIC

A diverse group of resource persons shared information and insight on the topic of “What Type of World Do I Want to Live In by the Year 2010?” during the United Nations Development Program’s (UNDP) “The Social Good Summit” held on September 28, 2015.

Major cities in the world held their own Social Good Summit, with each summit electronically linked with each other so that participants from different cities, for instance, Bangkok and Singapore, can interact with each other during the event. The theme for this year was #2030 NOW.

For the Bangkok summit, held at MUIC, the main panelists included Mr. Nicholas Rosellini, the UNDP Deputy Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific and Director of Bangkok Regional Hub; Dr. Ramesh Boonratana, Program Director, Natural Sciences, MUIC; and Mr. Nirmal Ghosh, Senior Correspondent and Indochina Bureau Chief for The Straits Times.

Mr. Rosellini observed that this generation is “the last to end poverty and the first to prevent the effects of global warming.” He added, “Involvement of youth is very important.”

On the other hand, Dr. Boonratana encouraged the youth to “use technology and media (including new media) for the greater good.”

Mr. Ghosh, noting that “social media can bring both great justice and great injustice,” reminded the audience to “be there and let your voice be heard.”

Other guest speakers included Dr. Randy Kolstad of the US Agency for International Development (USAID); and Ms. Aliza Napatvaumnuayor, a social entrepreneur. There were also two other resource persons: Mr. Saul Mercado, Deputy Educational and Cultural Officer from the Embassy of the United States in Bangkok; and Ms. Jessica Duran-Gomez of Project Everyone in Singapore who participated through a live video link.

The Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics (PC) was the College’s lead unit for the event. Several PC and MUIC students attended the event.

OPEN HOUSE 2015

More than 1,000 high school students who were interested in learning more about Mahidol University International College (MUIC) attended the open house held on November 6-7, 2015.

Though smaller in scale compared to previous open houses held by the College, “MUIC Eco Open House 2015” still satisfied the curiosity of senior high school students who were seriously considering where to enroll for their college education.

Each academic division put up exhibitions highlighting the strength of their respective programs. Representatives of the Student Association and the various student clubs manned booths to entertain questions and also gave performances. There was also a guided tour of the campus and the college facilities.



ENGLISH LESSONS *for* TEMPLE SCHOOL PUPILS

One of the outreach projects of Mahidol University International College (MUIC) is teaching basic English skills to schools in its vicinity. One of the recipients of this projects recently was Wat Thai Yawas School, a Buddhist temple school located in Nakhon Chaisri District in Nakhon Pathom Province.

More than 60 volunteers, both Thai and exchange students, from MUIC spent two hours a day for six days teaching basic English skills to 138 pupils of the Buddhist temple school under MUIC’s “Temple School Relations for Wisdom of Community” project. The project is part of MUIC’s university social responsibility (USR) activities designed to help neighboring communities and develop a sense of responsibility among MUIC students.

The student club Rakkaew Mahidol University also collaborated by performing renovation work in the school library and donating bicycles under its “We Connect” project, co-sponsored by Mahidol University’s Faculty of Engineering.



STUDENT DANCERS PERFORM for PRINCESS

In a rare opportunity, five students from Mahidol University International College (MUIC) performed at the Thai Music and Performing Arts Festival which had been held recently to celebrate the 60th Birthday of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

The MUIC students, along with two others from Mahidol University (MU), presented "Rum-King-Mai-Ngern-Thong," a Thai traditional dance usually performed in ceremonies to welcome state officials.

The dancers were Ms. Chanokchon Suvannachive, Ms. Sudarat Buppha, Ms. Supeeraya Rianrakwong, Ms. Nattira Sukbbon, and Ms. Sutasana Chinotaikul.

Ms. Sutasana, who is also the Vice President of MUIC's Thai Music and the Dramatic Arts Club, said, "This event was so special because all of the universities in Thailand had sent representatives who performed at Chulalongkorn University to celebrate HRH Princess Sirindhorn's 60th birthday anniversary. We are very fortunate to have the privilege to represent MU during this festival. However, my most memorable moment was watching HRH the Princess perform. I will never forget it for the rest of my life."



SINGAPOREAN STUDENTS LEARN MORE ABOUT THAILAND

Mahidol University International College (MUIC) recently played host to an executive of Singapore's Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and 18 of its students who

underwent a 14-day "Business Management Program."

Meant to introduce Singaporean students to Thai business and culture, the program offered 30 hours of class time in "Business Management," six hours of "Social Sciences" and three hours of "Introduction to Thailand, Culture and Language."

These were supplemented by field trips to tourist areas in Thailand including Sampran Riverside, Klong Khone Mangrove Area, Amphawa Floating Market and the ancient Siamese capital, Ayutthaya. There were workshops in Thai dance, kickboxing and cuisine. Volunteer students from MUIC also accompanied the NTU students during the program which had been held from December 7 to 20, 2015.



UNE EXPÉRIENCE À NICE

The Summer Study Trip program offered us a unique opportunity to go beyond the classroom and enjoy France firsthand. For one month, we stayed in the city of Nice situated on the fabulous Mediterranean coastline: the Côte d'Azur.

Personally, this experience has changed me for the better. I have learned to be more independent, and I am not afraid to speak up anymore. During my time in Nice, I have discovered many opportunities to combine classroom study of French

language with experiences of day-to-day life in France, and enjoy the richness of cultural diversity. I really enjoyed exploring Nice and meeting new people. My classes were outstanding. I particularly like the French songs and the French culture classes. The university lecturers were great and the courses were insightful and engaging.

Outdoor activities such as swimming, parasailing, paddle-boarding were available. I discovered as well cultural places such as the Museum of Archeology, the Museum of Modern Art, the Musée Matisse and the park Phoenix. Each Saturday, the University of Nice offered unforgettable trips that allowed students to experience the Côte d'Azur, from medieval villages like Eze and St. Paul, to bustling famous places such as Cannes, Monaco and Milan. Famous the world over as a cosmopolitan center of art, culture, cuisine, Nice is the perfect setting for a unique learning experience.



By Pornnatcha "Will" Malsukum
(International Business)



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Bachelor of Communication Arts (B.Com.Arts.)

- Media and Communication

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- Environmental Science
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- Computer Engineering

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in International Hospitality Management
- Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)
in Business Modeling and Development



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