

JAN-MAR 21 Vol. 3 No. 1 ISSN: 2672-9512

Mahidol University Interna

# OUR HEROES

\*



#### EDITORIAL

From the time it accepted its first students in 1986, Mahidol University International College (initially called International Students Degree Program or ISDP ) has produced more than 10,000 alumni. Quite an impressive feat for, despite the relatively modest number, a big majority of alumni who have walked the halls of MUIC have become successful in their own respective careers. Their success reflected the academic excellence of MUIC—its international curriculum and diverse community of executives, faculty members, staff and students.

As MUIC celebrates its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, **360° Magazine** has selected at random 18 alumni from different batches, majors, and industries who are bound by a single characteristic—they were nurtured by MUIC, given opportunities to maximize their potentials and provided with a platform to launch successful careers. May their success stories inspire today's MUIC students.





#### DETERMINATION

MAHIDOL

That admirable trait of being resolute, being firm in purpose, and having the will power to reach one's goals, is an apt Mahidol University Core Value for successful MUIC alumni.

#### Adviser

Assoc. Prof. Chulathida Chomchai, MD Dean of Mahidol University International College

#### Publisher

Asst. Prof. Dr. Chanchai Phonthanukitithaworn Associate Dean for Corporate Communication and Information Technology

#### Manager

Mr. Nutthaboon Pornrattanacharoen

Editor Mr. George Amurao

#### CONTENTS



Art Directors

Mr. Pratchaya Leelapratchayanont Mr. Sakon Lumpongphan

Circulation Officer

Ms. Katvaree Phatanakaew

Photographers

Mr. Pratchaya Leelapratchayanont Mr. Sakon Lumpongphan MUIC 360° Editorial and Production Office

Room 1110, MUIC Building 1, 999 Phutthamonthon Sai 4 Road, Salaya, Nakhon Pathom Thailand 73170 Telephone: +66 (0) 700 5000 Ext. 1613 Fax: +66 (0) 2441 0629 Email: iccc@mahidol.ac.th www.muic.mahidol.ac.th

# **OUR HEROES**

A hero is someone you look up to, someone who exhibits the qualities you yourself are aspiring for. That person may not be an immortal being from the realm of legends, but his character traits and actions make him seem ten feet taller.

Heroes still walk amongst us today. Here at Mahidol University International College (MUIC), modern-day heroes emerge from its classrooms and hallways. They may not be slaying dragons like heroes of long ago, but to our eyes, MUIC alumni who have gone out into the world and conquered their initial fears and followed their dreams and who have reached the stars are heroes nonetheless. We want to be like them. We also want to reach our stars and fulfill our dreams.

In this special issue of **360° Magazine**, we celebrate MUIC's 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by turning the spotlight on our alumni. We asked 18 of them to share their stories of courage, of ambition, of determination to reach their goals in life, of their desire to give back to society. We may not have been able to talk to more than 10,000 alumni of MUIC, but these 18 alumni offer us a glimpse of what a successful MUIC graduate is. They also demonstrate how MUIC successfully nurtured them, helping them metamorphose from young and promising freshmen into admirable alumni worthy of being called modern-day heroes and heroines.

#### REWARDING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MUIC AND ALUMNI

By Assoc. Prof. Chulathida Chomchai, M.D., MUIC Dean

Education is the ultimate partnership which is based on mutual trust, respect and personal growth.

This edition of **360° Magazine** features the cover story entitled "Our Heroes" which talks about the successful endeavors of our valuable alumni in fields varying from arts to business to science and technology.

In order to attain such achievements, these individuals have worked hard and placed their trust in and respect to our faculty members. In turn, MUIC offered them the breadth of education experience beyond the textbooks and classrooms. These served as building blocks upon which their creativity and innovative spirit flourished into the tangible successes that you will read about in this issue.

And through such rewarding partnership, these alumni have helped us to live up to our aspiration to enrich lives, expand potentials and shape futures.



It is her commitment to help the underdogs of society that she considers as her greatest achievement. Actively supporting her company's campaign to help communities of people of color hardest hit by the pandemic, Ms. Alissara and her team have been able to donate \$10 million to 250 local organizations. "It was a great honor to be working in these meaningful campaigns with my amazing team."

"ASIDE FROM TRAINING ITS STUDENTS ON DIFFERENT BUSINESS SKILLS, MUIC ALSO PROMOTES CULTURAL DIVERSITY."

**BE CS**R

#### **MS. ALISSARA KULCHAIPANICH**

Senior Manager, North America E-commerce, MAC Cosmetics, Estee Lauder Companies USA Bachelor of Business Administration (Marketing) (Chinese Minor), Class of 2012

Voluntary Repatriation Center (VRC)

Information Note - August 2016

#### Center (VRC) is a facility where repatriation-related a home. The VRC will be established in each of the nine WHICH ACTIVITIES WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE VRCs?

Voluntary Repatriation Pro volument representation revealed in the second of the second seco

# Repartation assistance package A repaintation assistance package with be provided to writier indepens who which to reterin to Myanami. The package lackade a cash gain for these purposes: (P) and (P) reintegrate a cash gain for these purposes: (P) and (P) reintegrate controls (reintegrate and the monthly and (P) reintegrate controls (reintegrate) and (reintegrate) package mit be given end time end/or the assistance package mit be given end time end/or the day of departure. To prograture. The assistance package mit be given end time end/or one day of departure. To prograture the assistance of the time end/or one day of the departure. The departure for the end/or one day of departure. To program with specific needs, alternative

The VRCs can be used by the refugees at any time during the week. The hours of operation posted on the notice board in front of the VRC and at the UNHCR work station in all nine can be used by the used by the use of the VRC and at the UNHCR work station in all nine can be used by the used by the use of the UNHCR work station in all nine can be used by the used by the use of the UNHCR work station in all nine can be used by the used by the use of the UNHCR work station in all nine can be used by the used by the

m to Myanmar is an individual decisio Il services at the VRCs are free of charge

HANDICAP

UNI

UNHCR, IOM, HI and the Royal Thai Go

Mine awareness pre-departure sector. Mine Risk Education sessions on how to recognize landmines and explosive remnants of war and how to revent telated accidents will be conducted by Handicap

We information-sharing Information will be available on issues related to conditions in the areas of return, such as invelhedd opportunities, education and health services, civil documentation, etc. The VRCs will be a place where NRCS and CBOs can also provide information that will help refugees prepare for

Ms. Duang-ramon Paaptanti spent her entire career working in leading international humanitarian organizations, namely, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and Save the Children International under

As a global citizen, she said she does not "judge people based on their race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, or background, making her "more flexible, always putting myself in the other person's shoes and trying to understand different backgrounds and world views. As a global citizen, you become a forgiving person with more empathy and those are qualities the world needs the most right now."

#### **MS. DUANG-RAMON PAAPTANTI**

Assistant Liaison Officer, UNHCR Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific Bachelor of Arts (Social Science, Southeast Asian Studies concentration), Class of 2005

**A PRIVILEGE TO BE** A STUDENT AT MUIC.

various capacities.

**"IT WAS SUCH** AS A RESULT, I'VE **ALWAYS WANTED TO GIVE BACK TO** SOCIETY."

A winner of the Iron Chef Thailand competition and a noted chef in Bangkok, **Mr. Kongwuth Chaiwongkachon** established his own restaurant, Locus Native Food Lab, in Chiang Rai province in 2017, maximizing and highlighting the culinary specialties of Northern indigenous groups. Indeed, asked what his greatest career achievement is, he answered: "Being able to carry on the rich culture and history of Lanna through my cooking and making people happy at the same time."

"AS A CHEF, IF I AM ABLE TO CREATE A GOOD GASTRONOMIC SCENE, I CAN OFFER MUCH BENEFIT TO THE LOCAL AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY."

**MR. KONGWUTH CHAIWONGKACHON** Chef & Owner, Locus Native Food Lab Bachelor of Business Administration (Tourism and Hospitality Management), Class of 2010

### SERVING UP THE BEST OF LANNA

As an actor and also a businessman, **Mr. Thaweesak Thananan** knows the value of personal connection and network. For him, this is what MUIC has replace "provided" with the word given him. "MUIC provided me with knowledge and connections—the tools I needed to help others. They might be lecturers who have a vision and world-class experience who—if you were fortunate enough to cross paths—will give you sound advice. Foreign exchange students—if you choose to befriend them—can offer you a wider view of the world."

Aside from successfully "becoming a reliable go-to person in the eyes of several producers and directors I have worked with," he is also keen on helping other people.

"THROUGH MY RADIO PROGRAM, I TRIED TO HELP PEOPLE COPE WITH THEIR ANXIETIES. I MIGHT BE IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY BUT I ALSO MAKE IT A POINT TO PROVIDE MORAL SUPPORT TO THOSE WHO NEED IT."

# HELPING PEOPLE IN REAL LIFE

MR. THAWEESAK THANANAN

Freelance Actor/Voice Actor COO, Montecore Snacks Co. Ltd. Bachelor of Arts (Tourism Industry Management), Class of 2011

 $(\mathbf{x})$ 

### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN A GREEN COMPANY

#### Ms. Chompoonuch Kanyapipat

has a successful career with multinational giant Coca-Cola. Among her achievements is leading the long range and annual planning processes to accelerate the company's growth agenda for Thailand. This entails ensuring a coherent plan which is aligned across the company as well as with Coca-Cola's local bottling partner.

Being a global citizen is invaluable as she executes her core duties. "From a personal and professional point-of-view, it is critical to understand the importance of diversity and inclusivity. The effective way to come up with new ideas or successfully solve problems is to bring everyone's perspective to the table."

**"BEING EDUCATED IN MUIC GAVE ME AN EDGE IN TERMS OF KNOWLEDGE, LANGUAGE, AND CONNECTION."** 

#### **MS. CHOMPOONUCH KANYAPIPAT** Strategic Planning Manager, Coca-Cola Thailand Ltd. Bachelor of Business Administration, Class of 2000

An avid participant of business case competitions when he was still a student at MUIC, **Mr. Piyawat Sangprasertkrid** eventually established with a group of friends their own start-up called Verily Vision, a tech company that, in his own words, "drives changes and facilitates digital transformation in Thai logistics and supply chain industry by providing a high quality made-in-Thailand A.I. solution."

Managing a regional company would've been very difficult if not for Piyawat's being a global citizen. He attributes this to MUIC: "The diverse nationalities, cultural background, and perspectives of MUIC's lecturers, students and staff gave me the opportunity to explore and learn much, helping me to achieve a better version of myself. With empathy filtered through the lens of diversity, one can make a positive change to society."

**"WE WERE PRIVILEGED TO STUDY AT MUIC. NOW WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP OTHER PEOPLE HAVE A BETTER LIFE."** 

### OBLIGATIONS OF THE PRIVILEGED FEW

MR. PIYAWAT SANGPRASERTKRID Chief Marketing Officer and Cofounder, Verily Vision Bachelor of Business Administration (Finance), Class of 2018

RARE

Steak & Wine

**Mr. Thanes Tientamnoon** has reason to be proud of his restaurant, Medium Rare Steak & Wine. Over the past few years since it opened, the restaurant has garnered several noteworthy awards including no. 1 steakhouse in Thailand, awarded by TripAdvisor, in its very first year, along with other recognitions by other social media websites including Wongnai (Wongnai User Choice under the Best Steakhouse Category from 2018-2021) and Restaurant Guru (2019-2020).

"Being the owner of one of the best steakhouses in Bangkok allows me to meet personally with many people from all over Thailand who are dining at my place. In my line of work, a great sense of attention to detail is required in order to make sure my customers get the best and flawless service that they come to expect."

He traces his development as a global citizen from the time he spent a year in the US during high school to when he entered MUIC. "A year in the US was giving me a lot of things, but not as much as four years in MUIC with such diverse classmates and teachers and alumni."

"WE REDUCE OUR RESTAURANT'S PLASTIC WASTE AND MAKE THEM SAFE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND FOR THE NEXT GENERATION."

#### MR. THANES TIENTAMNOON

Managing Director, Owner, Medium Rare Steak & Wine Bachelor of Business Administration (International Business Management), Class of 2006

### STORYTELLING FOR ART AND SOCIETY

After working as an art director and graphic designer for two creative agencies, **Mr. Natakorn Ulit** and a partner established their own art studio called Ulit House which offers design services using its signature style—Mr. Natakorn's silent comics storytelling with a touch of the surreal.

As a young artist, his ultimate goal is to connect with others through his art. "I feel grateful every time people from around the world interact and share their feelings towards my work. One of the highlights of my job is when my art pieces could touch everyone's heart, transcending any language boundaries and when their interpretation of my work gives them some meaning to life."

He is also sensitive to the plight of those in need. Last year, he joined a project called Limited Education which raised funds to help students have access to online education during the Covid-19 lockdown. "Each artist promoted this campaign in his own unique way. In my case, I used comics. Also, I made the design for the tote bags that were given to donors."

"MUIC GAVE ME THE CONFIDENCE TO SHOWCASE MY WORK AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL."

#### **MR. NATAKORN ULIT**

Comic Artist / Illustrator, Ulit House Bachelor of Arts (Animation Production), Class of 2017

# SENDING THE RIGHT MESSAGE

#### **MR. PATRADOL KITCHAROEN**

Storyboard Artist, Bento Box Entertainment, USA Bachelor of Arts (Animation Production), Class of 2014

"MAKING FILMS IS A LOT ABOUT SENDING MESSAGES LIKE DIVERSITY. AS AN ARTIST, I GET TO TAKE PART IN CREATING STORIES AND DELIVERING POSITIVE MESSAGES TO THE AUDIENCE."

#### Mr. Patradol Kitcharoen's

short animation which served as his thesis project for his Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Southern California earned him several awards including Best Music Video of the Year at Festigious International Film Festival, Best Animation at Love Your Shorts Film Festival and Best Ten Animations and Best Visual Awards at Thailand Animators Festival. These achievements helped him land his first job in the US professional animation industry

Being a global citizen definitely helped him reach these heights of success. "The perspective I gained from various MUIC professors really helped me understand how each culture views things differently in contrast to my own. This really gave me the empathy to work with my diverse colleagues in America."

### TRAINING GLOBAL CITIZENS

SOPHIA

-104

In her current job, **Ms. Pimploy Buppawong** plays a crucial role in leading her team to plan and organize successful online exchange programs and lectures in cooperation with higher institutions and government sectors in Thailand for Japanese and Thai students at high school and university levels.

Part of her success can be attributed to her being a global citizen. "Through my experiences as a student at MUIC and as an exchange student in the US, I had opportunities to meet people from different cultures and backgrounds, learn to accept and respect the differences, and become aware of social issues."

**"IT WAS AT MUIC THAT I LEARNED MUCH ABOUT DIVERSITY AND BECAME AN ADVOCATE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY."** 

#### **MS. PIMPLOY BUPPAWONG**

Programme Coordinator, Sophia Global Education and Discovery Co., Ltd. (Sophia GED) Bachelor of Arts (Intercultural Studies and Languages), Class of 2019



## **BETWEEN CULTURES**

A biological science graduate who made a successful career in the corporate world, **Ms. Xaynaly Souvannavong-Kuvanant** brings to the table her cosmopolitan upbringing and her well-rounded university education from MUIC.

"Being brought up in Paris and Bangkok equally made me understand diverse cultures, beliefs, the wider world and my place in it. This has facilitated the way I successfully interact with my dynamic and multicultural team as well as with partners that come from all over the world."

Asked how she contributed to society, she said that she had helped her stepfather, Mr. Krairoek Nana—who is an expert in rare historical materials about Siam—in translating and analyzing Frenchlanguage historical documents that pertained to events like the Franco-Siamese crisis. Luma

"BY HELPING REASSEMBLE THE DIFFERENT PIECES OF THE PUZZLE OF THE HISTORY OF THAILAND, I HOPE I HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE SOCIETY I LIVE IN."

#### MS. XAYNALY SOUVANNAVONG-KUVANANT

Sales Manager, Luma Care Co. Ltd. Bachelor of Science (Biological Science, Biomedical Sciences concentration), Class of 2013

## EDUCATION FOR A BETTER FUTURE

A fresh graduate, **Ms. Methisamash Sutanthianan** nonetheless claimed that she has found her dream job working in the field of education, a serendipitous decision made possible by her participation in MUIC extra-curricular activities: "In MUIC I joined an activity which taught English to students of a nearby school every week. Our goal was to let them know that English is fun to learn. As a result, I decided on making a career in the field of education because I believe that a better education leads to a better society."

In her current job in the school's student affairs office, Ms. Methisamash is capably honing her skills at solving unexpected challenges every day. "As part of the front office staff, customer service skills are required of me. Every day, I have to deal with many parents and children who have complaints. I've learned how to stay calm as I try to offer them ways to resolve the problem. At the end of the day, I feel good knowing that I've put the situation under control."

#### "MUIC IS BOTH AN INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY AND A FAMILY. EVERYBODY IS TREATED EQUALLY NO MATTER WHERE YOU CAME FROM."

#### MS. METHISAMASH SUTANTHIANAN

Student Affairs Officer, Anglo-Singapore International School Bachelor of Arts (Intercultural Studies and Languages), Class of 2019

A career diplomat, **Ms. Chirakan Pornsopit** has been serving in the foreign service for almost two decades now, starting with a desk job in the home office and now a prestigious posting in Rome, Italy, with foreign assignments under her belt in between. Asked what her greatest career achievement so far has been, she said that it is making her own contribution to "strengthening diplomatic relations between Thailand and the world."

Being a global citizen, of course, is prerequisite to being a successful diplomat. And she traces its roots to her days in the university: "MUIC is a global learning place with its core values: Excellence, empathy, integrity, and interculturalism. The college provides a great opportunity to learn and understand the diversity of culture and people. It shapes an individual to become a global citizen."

**"MUIC EMPOWERED ME TO REALIZE MY POTENTIAL. ONCE YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR POTENTIAL, YOU CAN FULFILL YOUR LIFE GOALS."** 

MS. CHIRAKAN PORNSOPIT

Counsellor, Royal Thai Embassy, Rome Bachelor of Arts (Social Science, International Studies concentration), Class of 2006

A fourth-generation member of a family with extensive business interests in Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai provinces, **Ms. Sutasinee Jitsakul** was groomed to take over her family's companies even at an early age. After graduating from MUIC and working for Toyota Thailand, she was given responsibility for one of her family's Toyota dealerships. Later on, she was put in charge of their hotel, the first and oldest in Chiang Rai. In both cases, she was successful.

"My family let me manage it all by myself. It was very challenging at first for a new graduate to run an entire company—with the added pressure of people watching if the new blood will perform well. I've been successful. I have even won many awards from Toyota in the past 10 years.

"I have also successfully rebranded and renovated our old hotel."

Currently under her direct management are three Toyota dealerships and five hotels.

**"THROUGH OUR COMPANIES"** QUARTERLY CSR PROJECTS, WE HAVE PERFORMED VOLUNTEER WORK AND EVEN BUILT A SCHOOL, A LIBRARY, AND A BOARDING HOUSE IN PHAYAO AND MAE HONG SON PROVINCES."

**MS. SUTASINEE JITSAKUL** Deputy Managing Director, Toyota Chiang Rai CEO, Suknirund Hotel Bachelor of Business Administration (Marketing), Class of 2009

### TAKING ON THE FAMILY BUSINESS

### SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

111

#### **MS. CHOMPLOY LEERAPHANTE**

Chief Operating Officer at Mallika Interfood Co., Ltd. Bachelor of Science (Food Science and Technology), First Class Honor, Class of 2007

> Mallika Interfood Co., Ltd., established in 1994 by the parents of **Ms. Chomploy Leeraphante**, operates a restaurant chain serving authentic, Thai recipes. After assuming the COO position, she counts as among her achievements improved food production efficiency for the company's central kitchen, expanded revenue via delivery, a franchise deal for Yentafo Kruengsonge by A. Mallika, along with the development of new products.

> > As a global citizen, she said that she trains her employees to be socially responsible and sustainable. "We reduce the use of plastic as much as possible and replace them with biodegradable materials. We reduce the use of chemicals and replace them with our own natural cleaning solution called EM Water for washing vegetables, cleaning dishes, cleaning tables and bathrooms, and as a natural insecticide. We reuse our plastic drinking water bottles for other purposes. We recycle all packaging materials."

"MUIC INSPIRED ME TO USE WHAT I HAVE TO HELP CREATE JOBS TO SUPPORT MY FAMILY AND MY STAFF."

Ms. Natrada Sribuathong is truly on the global stage, helping to bridge the language gap between different nationalities by providing simultaneous translation during major events. She considers as feathers in her cap her having interpreted for world-class speakers such as Tony Robbins, Brian Tracy, Michael Bolduc along with the Thai prime minister, vice prime minister, other government officials and many more.

As a global citizen, she said her job is to connect all these people around the world together via language communication, resulting in a productive collaboration.

She attributes part of her success to her education at MUIC. "The diversity in MUIC allowed me to understand many accents and feel accustomed to work with anyone. MUIC is the place where ideas grow. All the communication skills as well as background knowledge that MUIC provides will assist all the graduates when they enter the real world."

> "AS AN INTERPRETER, I AM THE VOICE OF THE SPEAKER, THE CARRIER OF THE MESSAGE."

## CONNECTING THROUGH Groutered LANGUAGE (1

#### **MS. NATRADA SRIBUATHONG**

Simultaneous Interpreter and Interpreter Coach, Interpreter Mastermind Bachelor of Business Administration (International Hospitality Management), First Class Honor, Class of 2015

### PREPARING STUDENTS FOR DENTISTRY SCHOOL

Through an agreement between MUIC and Mahidol University's Faculty of Dentistry, qualified MUIC graduates from its Science Division can enter during Year 2 of the dentistry program. **Ms. Trisawan Limmaneevichitr**, who will graduate this year, describes the rigorous training she underwent: Academic studies and laboratory work during Year 2 and Year 3 followed by clinical work from Year 4 to Year 6. Clinical work entails three hours of performing dental work on patients every day, whether it was filling, extraction, impacted tooth removal and others.

She is thankful to MUIC, however, for providing her a strong academic background to tackle dentistry school. These range from useful skills in the English language including reading, listening, speaking and writing, giving presentations, conducting research and writing research papers, to the development of intangible traits like critical thinking, independence, selfconfidence and others.

In dentistry school, they have a corporate social responsibility component in which they regularly conduct community outreach by providing free dental treatments to patients from lower economic groups. They also go once a year to provinces like Korat or Lampang for several weeks' immersion in local communities. "I LEARNED SO MUCH FROM MUIC. ITS FACULTY MEMBERS TREAT STUDENTS AS MATURE PERSONS, THUS INSPIRING ME TO PASS ON TO OTHERS THESE VIRTUES THAT I LEARNED FROM THEM."

#### **MS. TRISAWAN LIMMANEEVICHITR**

Student, Mahidol University Faculty of Dentistry Bachelor of Science (Biological Science, Biomedical Sciences concentration), Class of 2016

# **BIG HELP TO SMALL BIZ**

Parlaying valuable work experience he gained from Agoda and Airbnb among others, **Mr. Phuwarat Norchoovech** co-founded Credit OK, a fintech startup that seeks to extend working capital to the supply chain and micro entrepreneurs in Southeast Asia.

His company's assistance to micro entrepreneurs from various industries to gain access to working capital and micro business insurance is one of his contributions to society. "We want to help small businesses who are the drivers of the Thai economy to be able to grow.

They are heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and are underserved by the financial institutions. Credit OK wants to be one of the options that will help these businesses to grow through financial inclusion and technology."

"MUIC GAVE ME A SOLID ACADEMIC BACKGROUND AND ALSO SHAPED MY SENSE OF EMPATHY FOR OTHER PEOPLE."

#### **MR. PHUWARAT NORCHOOVECH**

Chief Product and Data Officer, Credit OK Bachelor of Science (Computer Science), Class of 2008



Our alumni have shown that through talent, intelligence, determination and hard work, they were able to reach their goals. In doing so, they have become heroes in our eyes.

YOU, TOO, CAN BE THE NEXT HERO...

