

CETANA
EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION
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Cetana Educational Foundation

Developing Human Resources through Education for Myanmar (Burma)



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NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2010

From Cetana's President

Dear Friends of Cetana,

Some exciting happenings have occurred for Cetana this past year.

First, we welcomed Daw Tin Hla Kyi, Executive Director of the Myanmar Advisory Board, to Cetana's board and committee meetings in early May. Her participation was valuable as we discussed opportunities and challenges for Cetana within Myanmar/Burma.

The Cetana Advisory Council began operating in 2009. This group of 16 advisors, committed to the work of Cetana, gave of their wisdom in many ways: mentoring students, supporting and leading fundraising events, and working on strategic and development plans. Their wisdom shared was appreciated, as was their financial support and their encouragement of the scholars and the work of Cetana.

We all celebrate the graduation of 6 Cetana scholars in Spring 2010. All did well in their studies and either have or will soon return to Myanmar. Congratulations!

In Myanmar, Cetana began a new distance learning program in partnership with the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK). Twenty young Burmese students will receive an AA degree in Social Science Administration from OUHK. The program is in its first semester and gets high marks from students and others involved.

A new English Language Center is planned for in the Eastern Shan States. The center will be administered by a former Cetana scholar who recently received her MA in the teaching of English. Funding for the start up and the first year of operation has been offered by Emily Fisher, a long-time supporter of Cetana programs. This exciting new venture will take the teaching of English into a more rural area where education for young adults is scarce.

Our Journal Donation Project will interact with four core institutes in Myanmar involved

in academic journal donation. This program is in partnership with the New School of Social Research, NYC.

Finally, Cetana has a start-up Educational Consultancy Center in Yangon which offers consultation to young adults who wish to study abroad and/or enhance skills.

Board and Advisory Council members planned and carried out fundraising events across the U.S. We particularly thank Karen and Bruce Clarke for their leadership and their encouragement of other donors through their matching grant.

We thank our donors and all who have joined in making Cetana's programs possible.

We hope to continue to open more in-country programs in the future. We will be able to do this with your ongoing financial support.

Thank-you so very much.

Sincerely,
Lois Young

From the Executive Director

It is a pleasure to report that Cetana Educational Foundation (CEF) celebrates its 17th anniversary this year. Cetana scholars and alumni and the Cetana Boards in the U.S. and Myanmar/Burma have become a close-knit family, sharing the core interest of building human capital through education for the Burmese people. Cetana held several fundraising events in 2009 at various locations on the East Coast, and we invite you to join us at future events in 2010; check our website for updates (www.cetana.org).

Cetana mails an appeal letter twice each year, reaching out to dedicated individuals, foundations, and friends of Cetana for continued support. Our deserving Burmese scholars join us in thanking all donors for their extraordinary generosity and the concern shown to the people of Burma/Myanmar.

Your gifts of funds and your volunteerism make it possible for the scholars to continue to obtain undergraduate and Master's degrees, and help expand educational programs inside the country. We sincerely welcome your help and support as we continue these efforts.

Warmest Regards,
Tin May Thein

Cetana Scholars: Cetana Alumni Returned to Myanmar - 48 Total

Cetana's alumni are deeply grateful to the foundation and donors who made their scholarships possible. A total of 48 Cetana alumni have returned to Myanmar to share their learning with their fellow citizens.

2010 Graduates:

- (1) **Nyo Myin Ko** (April 2010)
Master's in Public Health, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand
- (2) **May Myat Win** (April 2010)
Master's in Clinical Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand
- (3) **May Kyi Han** (May 2010)
Bachelor's in Education/English, Suffolk University, Boston, Massachusetts
- (4) **Dr. Aye Aye Thet** (May 2010)



Master's in Public Health, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand

Dr. Aye Aye Thet on her Graduation Day

- (5) **Khin Hnin Phyu** (May 2010)
Master's in Gender & Development, Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand

"Without Cetana support, I could not achieve the post graduate degree from Thailand. The course opened my mind and showed the way to proceed in life, how to learn more, and how to apply knowledge effectively and efficiently for the community."

Cetana provided me not only financial support but also guidance and encouragement throughout the whole study period, without which I would never have been able to complete my master's degree in Gender and Development Studies. I feel extremely lucky and very proud to be a Cetana scholar."



Khin Hnin Phyu (in black) data collecting

- (6) **Cherry Myo Lwin** (May 2010)
Master's in Electrical Power System Management, Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand



Cherry Myo Lwin's graduation

"Although I was away from AIT for a 6-month Global Environmental Leader program in Japan, I managed to complete my thesis and graduate on time."

I would like to convey my deep gratitude to Cetana Educational Foundation for their financial support to my masters-level study at AIT. Without your scholarship, I could never be where I am right now."

Cetana brightens my future. Cetana stands by me whenever I face difficulties, feel sad, or feel happy. I never dreamt that I would meet the Cetana donor family, which has kind concern for the welfare of the Myanmar people. I will try my best to serve my country and contributes towards a sustainable society."

From the Secretary

As a member of Cetana's Board of Directors and its recently elected secretary, I would like to give an idea about how I came to serve on the Board, its organization, and the real, day-to-day work that its members do in order to carry out the foundation's mission.

I first came to know Burma through Jean Dickason, Founding President of Cetana, and Lois Dickason Young, the current President. With their help and encouragement, I was able to visit Burma in the mid 1980s. This was a time when few westerners visited the country - the word "adventure" comes to mind. Jean and Lois put me in touch with their friends in Burma, and it was a delight to be a connection between them and the country and friends from whom they had been so long separated. None of the Dickasons, who were born in Yangon, had returned to the country since their father had left, and my reception was as though a member of the family had returned.

I was passed from household to household, from meal to meal, as great effort was taken that I should have a pleasant and informative - if brief - visit. I was assisted in travel throughout the country by scooter, oxcart, train, pickup truck, and boat; and these new, warm, welcoming Burmese friends assured the best possible introduction to their historically rich and presently troubled nation.

Three years ago, when the opportunity came to serve on the Cetana Board of Trustees, I was delighted to be able to work in some way to help a country that had made such a wonderful impression years before. The memory of that trip, and knowing about Cetana, which was founded in the early 1990s by the Dickason/Young families, made me sure that I was setting about on an interesting and rewarding journey.

The volunteer Board of Cetana is a varied lot: a melding of Myanmar/Burmese-born, Westerners, and even a trustee from the Middle East. Members are scattered throughout the USA; their common love of Myanmar/Burma and its peoples and their dedication to Cetana's mission of educating its young people as future leaders bring them together. The variety of thinking and feelings, together with that love and dedication, is the Board's great strength and its inspiration for the hard work that is necessary for us to fulfill our mission.

Cetana has an Executive Committee of the officers and Academic Affairs Committee Chair. Three standing committees implement ongoing and future programs, including raising funds to support programs and assuring strong governance and financial operations. Board members actively serve on these working

Board members also provide mentoring for Cetana Scholars who receive full support in their undergraduate and graduate studies at educational institutions outside of Myanmar/Burma, and who pledge to return for at least three years to share their newly gained skills with the people of their nation.

A member of one of Cetana's committees puts in many volunteer hours, and the certain reward is knowing that we are furthering a fine mission which is being effectively, efficiently and strategically fulfilled.

Chenault Spence, Secretary

*Fundraising Event in Lincoln, MA
Burmese Contemporary Art*

Great draughts of tropical color swept over Lincoln, MA, during the weekend of May 15th as Gill Pattison exhibited 20 paintings from the best Myanmar contemporary artists at a fundraiser organized by Bruce and Karen Clarke, major donors and supporters of the Cetana Educational Foundation.



Gill and Karen Clarke with "Girl with Thanaka" by PPA

The event was in two parts: on Saturday afternoon, the paintings were displayed in a public event in the historic Bemis Hall where Gill and May Kyi Han - a Cetana scholar - gave presentations on the art and culture of Myanmar. Then the paintings were transported back to the Clarke's home where 100 or so invited guests attended a fund-raising party that evening.

Since Gill opened River Gallery in Yangon in 2005, showcasing works from Myanmar's best contemporary artists, she has teamed up with Cetana for a number of fund-raising events focusing on the theme of Myanmar art and culture. The first collaboration was for a symposium on Myanmar art in Princeton in 2006; this was fol-

Fundraising Event in Lincoln, MA : Burmese Contemporary Art Cont'd.

Gill says, "I really enjoy working with the Cetana team. . . . It is a win-win situation: these events give exposure and sales for the terrific Burmese artists, and at the same time we raise money for educating high-potential young people from Burma – another cause dear to my heart." They also seem to be a win-win for buyers of the art. As very little art from Myanmar makes its way to the US, Gill Pattison's exhibitions are a rare opportunity for US residents to acquire works from the best Myanmar artists, with part of the proceeds going to support Cetana's work.

May Kyi Han, a Cetana scholar in the US (Education/English, Suffolk University, May 2010), spoke about her experience coming to the US for the first time, remembering how difficult it was to adjust to the strange American practices of hugging and making eye contact when speaking with people. Her achievements at Suffolk and the polished presentation she gave at Bemis Hall belie these early difficulties and make her a wonderful advertisement for the work Cetana is doing.

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The National Flower "Padauk" and Local Sunscreen "Tha-na-kha"

Padauk is a colorful hardwood from Myanmar/Burma that makes beautiful parquet flooring. The Padauk tree blooms with the April/May showers, during the time of the 3/4-day "Thingyan" or Water Festival celebration. The Burmese appreciate the scent of the Padauk flower. Its blossoming branches are cut to decorate stands along parade routes, and Burmese women wear Padauk blossoms in their hair.

The Burmese New Year follows one day after the end of the Water Festival, i.e., on or around April 17. So the Burmese calendar (current calendar year 1372) begins in April and ends in March.

Young girls like to use dried pollens from the Padauk tree in their daily make-up called "*Tha-na-kha*." *Tha-na-kha* comes in paste or powder form, ground from the bark of the "*Tha-na-kha*" tree. The young and the old alike use this local make-up as a sunscreen.

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We are on the web!
www.cetana.org

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