Celebrations, activities, resources and programs offered by Watanaseree in Chiang Rai!

Celebrating the Thai New Year is an important part of Thai culture.

Celebrating major holidays together gives parents, students and mentors a chance to build relationships, relax and have fun together.

To celebrate Songkran there was traditional intergenerational blessings, games, dancing and Thai food.

The day ended with a trip to the nearby river to swim and relax together.
Many students took advantage of extra math and tutoring classes over school break.

Additionally, extra activities like cooking classes, and conversation classes were on offer at the Pong Phrae and Chiang Rai Resource Centers.
In May we said ‘farewell’ to Tawee, our Thailand Founding Director.

After 10 years of vision and 8 years of service, Tawee is leaping into a new chapter of life in Canada.

Students, parents, guardians, staff, friends and family gathered to wish the Donchai family well in their new chapter.

The celebration involved Northern Thai food, traditional Thai dances, speeches from parents, staff, students, Rachel and Tawee.

The night ended with an emotional candle-lit song to send the family off in love.

Thank you, Tawee for your service, vision and heart for your community. We wouldn’t be where we are today without you!
Prevention and Awareness

3-3-5 is a play-based technique used to teach children to identify and report child abuse.

Students aged 6-16 attended the training, coming from six different schools. This will help spread prevention throughout different networks in the area.

The Prevention and Awareness team also ran a suicide due to depression which was attended by 22 students aged 10-25.

This program was sponsored by the National Health Security office and the speaker was a psychologist from the psychiatry department of Chiang Rai hospital.

Outreach to schools helps increase awareness of Watana Seree and the programs we offer. Thank you, Hong Kong International Christian School!

Additionally, staff and a scholarship students attended a ‘Stop Human Trafficking’ Day with 10 other local organizations in Chiang Rai to cooperate with Laos to prevent trafficking in the future.
Thank you, Alyssa!

Alyssa Hardin spent 3 months volunteering with The Freedom Story this spring.

Helping with everything from writing grants, to running activities, hosting visitors and storytelling, Alyssa was a huge asset to the team.

Good luck in your next chapter, Alyssa!

Welcome, Global Giving!

Global Giving has partnered with The Freedom Story for years to help raise funds and support for our projects.

This year, Cedric, their South East Asia Field Intern, came to visit The Freedom Story and see what work was being done.

Alyssa, Patt and Bee welcomed him and showed him around.

Thanks for stopping by, Cedric!
Working on the Organic Farm provides families with new skills and supplementary income. Work in April and May focused on preparing the fields to plant rice and also planting cocoa.

Teaching about organic sustainable agriculture is key to building resilient communities through better agricultural techniques, improving health and economic situations simultaneously.

Human Rights

15 students attended a legal training on international child rights

Teaching children about their rights gives them the knowledge to be able defend themselves against exploitation.

Patt, our Human Rights staff, also continues to follow up on citizenship applications for students who are stateless.

Sustainability

15 villagers and two students came to work and learn on the Organic Farm

Working on the Organic Farm provides families with new skills and supplementary income.

Work in April and May focused on preparing the fields to plant rice and also planting cocoa.

30 villagers attended an activity on organic vegetable farming, including 10 families of students who receive our scholarships

Teaching about organic sustainable agriculture is key to building resilient communities through better agricultural techniques, improving health and economic situations simultaneously.
Counseling

Individual counseling is an opportunity for students to process change, difficult situations and trauma in a healthy and supportive environment.

Among these students were at least 3 male students, a remarkable thing in a culture where accessing counseling services is heavily stigmatized.

In addition to providing individual counseling, Khae facilitated trips to the doctor for two students, accompanied by their mentors.

She also finished and defended her Master’s thesis at Chiang Mai University. Congratulations, Khae!

Scholarship and Mentorship

In May, the Scholarship team hosted our bi-annual parent’s meeting. These are great opportunities to check in, review policies, and meet with parents and students.

67 students and 59 parents and guardians attended this meeting.

10 home visits were conducted, supporting and checking in on students and their families.