



Outgoing...and Incoming - KLDP's Natural Rhythm

As mentioned in my last newsletter, May and June are busy months for me and the Karen Leadership Development Program (KLDP). Thailand is just completing their "summer" and classes will soon begin for university students. We graduated our seniors – four lovely young women who have flown the KLDP nest and are now among our beloved alumni. The graduation was quite the celebration and hosted a record number of attendees. So many, that we had to acquire more housing for family and friends that traveled from far villages to celebrate this special moment.

(And I just got word that three of our grads are already formally employed!)

We have also welcomed our freshman – 3 men and 2 women. They are already living in the KLDP community and have started their introductory (KLDP) courses: administration (how to organize your university life and schedule), financial management (very basic – how to account for the in and out flow of daily funds – gas, food, etc.), boy – girl relationships (this culture still uses these words – boy and girl – clear through their 20's), and vision (what is it and how do I start to find mine). We also show them the best routes to find their way to and from their university via motorbike.

Nin and Tata are enrolled as music majors, Sit - Biology; Pangton, Agricultural Science and JJ, Art. (Keep reading...photos are there..)

What We Need...or Yes, I Am Asking (for a friend)...

Perhaps you don't know – the financial costs for one student at the KLDP is between **\$3,600 - \$3,800 per year**. (A bargain by U.S. standards.) The cost varies with each university (our students attend 3 different ones) and their specific major (course of study). This amount *does include* room and board (at the KLDP), transportation (to/from school), basic pocket expenses, and any activities throughout the year. *This does not cover the functioning costs of our program/foundation* – like paying our KLDP employees, government fees, etc.

Over the years, we have been blessed by several generous supporters. Some taking on the fees of one or even two students per year. This is of tremendous help for planning.

It's evident that **we will** experience a *significant shortfall in 2025* – and could really benefit with new or up-graded support for the KLDP Operations fund. It's easy to dismiss your own participation **if you can't "give big" – please, don't let that stop you**. Yes, those larger gifts are significant – but several gifts of lesser number DO add up. I absolutely dislike fundraising. However, it's easy for me to ask this. I have and do see, first-hand, the benefits of this ministry. We are amazed when we see how God has used our humble existence to produce **fruit that seems to last!** What a joy! A joy that is impossible without the magnanimity of others. If you already give – you clearly share in this joy. If you haven't or are considering it – I hope you will.

How to give...follow this link: <https://co-serve.org/giving.html>



Speaking of Fruit



My life is dotted with many missteps and stumblings. I don't know anyone that hasn't. Our students are just like you and me. Upon graduation, they leave the KLDP with a gamut of information, 4 years of living in an intentional loving community (a family that endeavors to walk the talk), a toolkit of practices, a university degree and...hope. Life begins out in the big, wide world – and it's sobering!

They tend to keep connected with one another via monthly Zoom meetings, several in person gatherings a year, and the significant camaraderie of a shared experience. I tend to keep tabs on them via Facebook, news from staff (who are also alumni), attending their gatherings...and an occasional personal visit.

I am deeply humbled when they contact me. When we meet, share a meal and just sit together – whew! It's beautiful! Even the tough stuff. I can say – I'm both blessed and instructed as I share their journeys. I see fruit. I see lives that continue to be connected to the Vine. I hear seeking and dwelling – all at once.

These last few weeks, I have had the joy of significant shared moments with two of our KLDP alumni.

Many of you know **Chai**. He has come to the States two times to share about the KLDP. Chai is adjusting well to his job as a *manager* at a local Christian NGO which has a dorm for high school tribal students. Like you and me, he continues to be challenged by his history and his desire to know and love God and others well. Here we are at lunch (his treat!). Our conversation was not only fun, but richly honest and open. He is fighting the good fight, and prevailing. The young woman is **Khem**, Chai's long-time girlfriend...she is also a KLDP alum.

Speaking of Fruit (cont.)



Our passionfruit farmer in Teekagee...

A big surprise was a visit from this guy – **Suripon** (or **Jobita**) and his family (wife, Dar, daughter (3 yr) Irene, and son (1 yr) Eric). Jobita is one of our first KLDP students. He has a uniquely inquisitive mind and a heart for agriculture. He loves quiet village life yet has a need to be exposed to thought and possibilities not found there. He loves to read and discuss life. They stayed with me for two days...and I loved it. I saw the same Jesus at work in him as I had over a decade ago when he came to us. Our conversations were meaningful. I would call them sacred.

Jobita is now on our KLDF board (the F for foundation). He continues to impact his village as a servant leader, encouraging farmers in sustainable practice and the benefits of working together. He was one of the first alumni to financially support the KLDP.

It's such a privilege to know and journey with each of our students. (Like a parent) I have known frustration, worry, heartache and disappointment over years with our "kids" – but nothing lingers like the awareness of God's goodness and grace as it transforms lives, that produces joy.

Thanks for journeying with me!
