

Baha'i Service in Omgoi, Chiangmai, Thailand

Experience of Maya McLean who served in Omgoi for three months: May-July 2003

Date: July 28, 2003

Subject: YOS opportunity in Omgoi, Chiang Mai

Dear XXXX,

Hi, my name is Maya, serving in Omgoi since middle of May. I'm from Vancouver, Canada, and I'm also taking a semester off from the University. However, in September I have to go back to my ordinary life in Vancouver, and I'm leaving here in two weeks.

Basically what's in Omgoi is that there is a Baha'i institute founded by Baha'i foundation in Thailand. Yai and Ginie, who are a couple and taking care of the place, are like dorm parents for 22 Karen hilltribe students. This place is like a dormitory for hilltribe students in Omgoi. Many of the hilltribe students are not able to get good education and they live far away. The purpose of this project is to develop human resources so that these educated students can go back to their villages later on, after completing education, and help develop their villages and improve their lives.

As a YOS, what I do here is I teach English everyday. Ginie and I go to three schools in a week. I teach Grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 11. I also teach one Thai Baha'i youth for thirty minutes in the evening. Then at night, I teach 5 students here at the institute.

The nature is beautiful and all the students are pure and kind. I love being here, and teach English to these students. I don't know how I can leave them behind when I leave here in two weeks. I'm gonna miss them soooooo much. I love them soooo much and I'll come back here in the near future. However, at this moment, I have to leave here to continue my education and get my degree before I can go out to really help people.

There were some times that I got really stressed out of the place, since there is nothing here, and I didn't know what to teach anymore. However, after realising that I only have two more weeks left, I'm spending my every moment with appreciation.

There will be a lady from Australia coming here in the late August, but they need one more person who can help. Moreover, I would love to meet you, a Baha'i youth from somewhere different, before I leave. If you love the nature, and real countryside, then this is the place for you to come.

With Baha'i love,

Maya McLean