

PRESS RELEASE

“Phuket Has Been Good To Us” Foundation teams up with world renowned publishers – Simon and Schuster, and Harper Collins

“Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation” was launched as an educational charity little more than a year ago by long time Phuket resident, Tom McNamara. The Foundation funds and delivers a high quality, interactive English language programme in government schools. The aim is to create the opportunity for the underprivileged children of Phuket to learn English and give them greater prospects for their future. Its ultimate aim is to run the programme in all sixty-five of the island’s government-run schools. The Foundation has made remarkable progress in such a short time, having brought about a 17% increase in the children’s English scores in the first year. In May of this year, after receiving an injection of funding from donations, “Phuket Has Been Good To Us” program expanded into its second school, Rachaprachanoukhror in Kamala, which is supported by the King’s Foundation.

In February of this year Tom McNamara was visited by Ali Cabral and his brothers, who are friends that he had known from school days, who had remained in touch for 50 years. A timeless relationship was resumed. He introduced the Cabral brothers to the children and staff in the Foundation’s English programme at Kalim School, where Leonard Cabral, a world-renowned storyteller, gave an impromptu performance that captivated his young audience. Leonard fell in love with the children and was impressed by the Foundation’s educational programme. The brothers resolved that on their return home they would begin a book drive to bring US\$10,000 worth of English books to Phuket to enrich the children’s lives.

The book drive, known as “Books4Phuket” (<http://www.books4phuket.com>) began with a fund-raising event called “Songs 4 Phuket: An Afternoon of Opera, String Quartets, and Beer,” at a famous New York restaurant in May. It was followed up soon after by an alliance with Simon and Schuster publishers, who were so impressed by what the brothers were doing that they decided to donate a significant number of books to create libraries to Books4Phuket.

Simon & Schuster, Inc, founded in New York in 1924, is one of the four largest English-language publishers in the world alongside Random House, Doubleday, and Harper Collins. Along with this came the support of Activair/Sea, in the form of free shipping of the books to Phuket. Further endorsement from Simon Schuster came soon after, when they agreed to send a senior analyst from the company, Jennifer Nicholson, to Thailand to set up the libraries for the books, alongside Kate Cope, the “Phuket Has Been Good To Us” Director of Education.

Kate, clearly overwhelmed by the generosity of the people of New York, said: “I’m very excited at the book collection activities. The children in Baan Kalim School already love the few books that we have in the classroom.

The libraries will make a huge difference in Baan Kalim School and Kamala School that we have expanded into. Kamala School has 750 students. This is an opportunity of a life time for these children and with continued support from local and international donations we hope that this program will become a major addition to the Thai educational system and the future of Thailand.”

The first of the libraries was opened at the Kamala school by Vice Governor Khun Smith Palawatvichai who was delighted to see the high quality of the books in the new library. He also took a great interest in the English classroom which has a

huge array of plastic fruit and vegetables set up in a market, a supermarket, kitchen and wardrobe with clothes of all colours, which is part of the way the children learn to associate things with words.

The program is totally funded by donations from Phuket residents and major donations from around the world. Without the continued interest and financial support the expansion of the program would not be possible.

For more information on the foundation: www.phukethasbeengoodtous.org

.