For someone who joined the first batch of students of AIT’s precursor, the SEATO Graduate School of Engineering in 1959, the life journey of H.E. Dr. Subin Pinkayan, Chair of the AIT Board of Trustees, has been intertwined with that of the Institute itself. Delivering the graduation address to students on December 13, 2019 as part of what President Eden Y. Woon described as the “final punctuation mark in the 60th-anniversary celebrations,” Dr. Subin narrated the story of his 85 years as he gets ready to step down from AIT’s Board Chair in January next year. Dr Woon added that there is no more fitting person than Dr Subin to be the distinguished speaker at this last graduation exercise of the 60th Anniversary.

“I am indebted to AIT, and I have always tried to give back to the Institute,” Dr. Subin said, as he recounted how AIT had provided him with a scholarship to complete his Master’s, opened the vistas of international education, helped him to travel to France and then the United States to pursue his PhD, and also gave him a teaching career. “This is not just my story but the story of 24,000 alumni spread across 100 countries,” he said. AIT is a very special place, and its internationality is unique, Dr. Subin added.

Offering lessons to graduating students, Dr. Subin asked them to dream big because “if you have no dreams, big things never happen. But dreams are useless unless they are accompanied by action.” Do not hesitate to be a pioneer, do your best, never blame yourself, and learn from the past while looking towards the future. Do not work alone but seek help from friends, and do not seek all glory for yourself, but use the win-win approach – were the mantras he offered the students.

The Board Chair concluded by stating that he is proud that as the Institute charts its future course of “Transforming AIT” under President Woon, it remains committed to the development of Asia. President Woon has taken over AIT’s presidency at
this important juncture, and he has embarked on key strategies designed to take AIT to its next level. I am proud that AIT is transforming itself under its new motto of “Social Impact with Innovation,” Dr. Subin said.

President Woon stated that the graduation exercise effectively ends AIT’s 60th-anniversary celebrations. During this year, AIT has hosted many distinguished speakers and organized many seminars, lectures, and conferences. It has seen a new leadership take over and signed numerous agreements with prestigious universities and companies. AIT has a new roadmap for transforming itself. It has established the AIT AI Center and the AIT Entrepreneurship Center and opened the Belt & Road Research Center. With 2020 upon us, the Academic Senate has approved numerous measures providing our students with more opportunities for innovative and experiential learning. “You have had a front-row seat in a very important year in AIT’s history – both from a legacy standpoint and from a future transformation standpoint,” Dr. Woon remarked.

President Woon cautioned students that they were entering an uncertain world where humanity faces numerous challenges emerging from technology, an environmental train-wreck, geopolitical conflicts and confrontations, disruption of harmonious societies by social media, and rapid changes in the new knowledge needed simply to keep up. “Just as we transform AIT, your transformation must be continuous and forward-looking,” he stressed.

Delivering the prominent alumni speech was Mr. Hong Bo Chen, COO, Tus-Holdings Co. Ltd., and Deputy Director, Tsinghua University Science Park (TusPark). Mr. Chen, who graduated from AIT in 1992, spoke about his experience of managing the world’s largest innovation park, stressing the importance and role of science parks and incubators in supporting hi-tech companies. Speaking of the role AIT played in his career, Mr. Chen said: “Every time I attend a conference, I will make a special mention of the fact that I graduated from AIT, because it was AIT that provided me with an opportunity to understand different international cultures, and it gave me self-confidence.” Stating that a key reason why China has managed to increase its per capita GDP from 300 USD in 1991 to 10,000 USD today, is the role played by hi-tech companies. No fewer than 15,000 new companies are being established daily in China, which implies that 10 companies are set up every minute. However, the success rate of hi-tech companies is only five percent, he added. He complimented AIT for establishing the Entrepreneurship Center, calling it a “far-seeing decision,” and adding that he is in talks with people in the AIT Entrepreneurship Center to commence cooperation very soon.

AIT’s 132nd graduation ceremony saw the award of PhD degrees to 26 students, Master’s to 183, Diplomas to five, and Bachelor’s to five graduates. Graduating students came from 20 countries from four continents – Asia, Europe, Oceania, and South America. Ms. Kwanhatai Thongpalad of the School of Environment, Resources, and Development (SERD) also delivered a speech on behalf of graduating students.
President's New Year 2020 Message

Welcome back after the New Year Holidays! I hope you had a good rest during the break, and that you are ready for an exciting 2020. I also welcome the almost 100 new regular and exchange students joining AIT for the January Semester 2020. We wish them luck in the pursuit of their studies at AIT!

Our 60th Anniversary Year may be over, but our work in Transforming AIT continues. To do that, we need everyone to pitch in! AIT cannot be more innovative, more global, more entrepreneurial, more relevant, and more caring without every one of the AIT Family dedicating themselves, from students to faculty to staff to this goal. This year is an important one for AIT because it’s the first full year that the new leadership team is on board, and this is the first full year that the new Roadmap implementing our I2E2S2 strategy is in effect. How successful we are in Transforming AIT depends to a large extent on what we do over the next twelve months!

Again, I hope you had a Happy New Year, and I wish to extend early greetings for the Lunar New Year coming. See you around campus!

Dr. Eden Woon
President

President Woon addresses Kathmandu University’s 25th Convocation Ceremony

AIT President Dr. Eden Woon on 20 December 2019 addressed a crowd of more than six thousand as the special speaker at Kathmandu University’s 25th Convocation Ceremony held in Kathmandu, Nepal. The ceremony included fifteen hundred graduates.

During his Convocation Speech, Dr. Woon emphasized that the world has now become much more challenging, and that such challenges will impact the younger generations, including the graduates at the ceremony. He laid out technology, environment, social issues, and geopolitics as four areas that will create more and more challenges.

His speech then focused on giving some advice to the graduates on the useful traits necessary for success in this challenging world. Dr. Woon also took the opportunity to highlight AIT’s motto of Social Impact with Innovation. He emphasized that AIT is focusing more than ever on injecting innovation and entrepreneurial experience for the benefit of its students, as such experience is vital for education of the future.

The Convocation Ceremony was chaired by Nepal’s Minister of Education, Science and Technology Mr. Giriraj Mani Pokhrel. After the Convocation Ceremony, Dr. Woon had a courtesy meeting with the Rt. Honorable Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli at the Prime Minister’s residence. Foreign Minister Mr. Pradeep Gyawali, Information and Communication Minister and Spokesperson of Government of Nepal Mr. Gokul Banskota were also present.
Celebrating 50 years of cooperation between the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and Japan, President Eden Y. Woon described the association between the two as a “relationship from the heart.” Recounting contributions from Japan, President Woon recalled how Japan provided AIT with support from its early days, and how almost 1,000 alumni from all around the world have benefitted from Japanese support.

Celebrating the occasion on December 9, 2019, the AIT President thanked Japan for its “selfless assistance to AIT.” He reminded the audience that apart from research collaboration, Japan had also seconded faculty members and researchers to AIT. Several AIT former vice presidents also came from Japan. Recently, on the occasion of AIT’s 60th-anniversary celebrations, three university presidents from Japan participated in the Presidents Forum.

Ambassador of Japan to Thailand H.E. Mr. Shiro Sadoshima stated that Japan had envisioned that AIT would play a critical role in Asian development, and this led to Japan offering support to AIT from the very start. Beside scholarships, the Government of Japan donated the AIT Conference Center in 1977 and the AIT Library in 1981. Japan has also seconded 163 faculty members to AIT. The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) continues to offer both technical and financial support to AIT in the fields of remote sensing and geographical information studies. Further, Japanese universities and the private sector helped AIT emerge out of the catastrophic 2011 flood by offering mobile water pumps as well as financial support, Ambassador Sadoshima said.

As a part of the 50th Anniversary Celebration, President Woon and Dr. Chiaki Mukai, Vice President of the Tokyo University of Science, also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the presence of H.E. the Ambassador of Japan and H.E. Dr. Subin Pinkayan, Chair of the AIT Board of Trustees.

Dr. Mukai, who has the honor of being the first female astronaut in Asia, delivered a talk on “21st Century Education: Pursuing Diversity.” Having flown in space twice (aboard NASA’s Space Shuttle Columbia in 1994 and Discovery in 1998), she mentioned how the international microgravity laboratory in space was a symbol of diversity — of nationalities, professions, and gender. “It was diversity that made the team so strong,” she remarked as she recounted her experience as a medical doctor researching in space along with engineers, aviators, and even a senior politician. She also interacted with a group of AIT students, who asked her about her experience and motivation.

Mr. Masahiro Imbe delivered a congratulatory message on behalf of the AIT Alumni Association (Japan Chapter). Mr. Nishimura Sohsuke, General Manager, Kurita Water Industries Ltd., Kurita Water and Environment Foundation, spoke about “Kurita Scholarships: Contribution to the Development of New Technologies of Water Conservation and Environmental Protection.”
AIT congratulates alumna Ms. May Sabe Phyu – Winner of the 2019 N-Peace Awards

Ms. May is an alumna of the Gender and Development Studies program, Department of Development and Sustainability (DDS), School of Environment, Resources and Development.

May Sabe Phyu has had a dynamic career advocating for women’s full realization of their human rights. Currently serving as Director of the Gender Equality Network, her work utilizes intersectional approaches and engages multi-sectoral stakeholders as partners in achieving gender equality. She uses various platforms to build on the gains of women in Myanmar, and continuously identifies and works to address laws, policies, as well as cultural and social norms that work against the achievement of full gender equality.

May’s work is centered around advocacy which considers gender, ethnicity, the rights of the disabled, and access to health care. She is the Co-Founder of the Kachin Peace Network, and the Kachin Women’s Peace Network, organizations that call for inter-ethnic dialogues social cohesion.

In 2015, she was the recipient of the International Women of Courage Award. In 2017, she was honoured for her role in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Myanmar through the Global Trailblazer Award.

AITAA ROC Chapter donates 1 Mil. THB for the Student Exchange Scholarship program – 200K THB towards Robert B. Banks Auditorium renovations

About 70 alumni from the AIT Alumni Association ROC Chapter attended the 60th Anniversary celebration in October 2019 and donated 1 Million Thai Baht towards the AIT Student Exchange Scholarship program. Student granted funds from this Exchange Program will be called “AITAA ROC Chapter Exchange Scholars.”

The Student Exchange Scholarship program is for AIT master’s students of any nationality taking part in academic exchanges to Chung Yuan Christian University. It is also open to master’s students from Taiwan to exchange with any university in the world with which AIT has an agreement, as well as master’s students of any nationality taking part in exchanges with any university in Taiwan.

In addition, the Chapter also donated 200,000 Thai Baht towards the renovation of the Robert B. Banks auditorium.

In recognition of this generosity, 40 chairs in the RBB auditorium will be named for the AITAA ROC Chapter. AIT President, Dr. Eden Y. Woon expressed his appreciation to the Chapter for its continued support to the Institute.

Source: Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs
RECENT NEWS / HAPPENINGS AT AIT

JANUARY 2020

www.ait.ac.th

RECENT NEWS / HAPPENINGS AT AIT

JANUARY 2020 www.ait.ac.th

Ms. Pawitra Yooto, a master’s student from Thailand in the School of Management, is the first recipient of the AITAA Thailand Chapter Student Exchange Scholarship Program. The bursary covers half of her expenses to be an exchange student at the EADA Business School in Barcelona, Spain from January to April 2020. The AIT Alumni Thailand Chapter donated 1 Million Thai Baht for a period of 5 years for master’s students from Thailand exchanging to AIT partner universities worldwide. The scholarship is to subsidize 50 percent of the student’s exchange expenses. Students from all three AIT schools are eligible. A student granted for this scholarship will be called an “AITAA Thailand Chapter Exchange Scholar.”

This exchange scholarship program will enable AIT master’s students to have the opportunity to broaden their international exposure through a one-semester academic exchange to globally recognized universities with whom AIT has partnership agreement.

Alum Mr. Rathawit Na Lamphun (SOM’15) donates 500,000 THB for upgrade of Student Village 1

Mr. Rathawit Na Lamphun, AIT School of Management alumnus (SOM’15) and Assistant Chief Executive Officer of Index International Group Company Limited, presented a donation of 500,000 Thai Baht on 13 December 2019 to AIT President Dr. Eden Y. Woon as support for the recent 60th Anniversary and towards the upgrade of Student Village 1 (SV3). In recognition of this generous donation, the building will be named after the Na Lamphun family.

Mr. Na Lamphun was accompanied by his father, Dr. Chainarong Na Lamphun, a prominent alumnus (WRD’80) and the Chief Executive Officer of Index International Group Company Limited. President Woon expressed his appreciation to Mr. Na Lamphun and the Na Lamphun family for their continued support to the Institute.

Source: Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs

Dr. Chainarong Na Lamphun, Dr. Rathawit Na Lamphun and Dr. Eden Y Woon.

Mr. Rathawit Na Lamphun (SOM’15) donates 500,000 THB for upgrade of Student Village 1

AITAA Thailand Chapter Student Exchange Scholarship Program

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Source: Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs

Ms. Pawitra Yooto with Dr. Eden Y Woon
Q&A with Prof Dieter Trau, Dean, School of Engineering and Technology, and Director, AIT Entrepreneurship Center

It has been five months since you left the National University of Singapore (NUS) and joined AIT as the Dean of the School of Engineering and Technology (SET). How has the AIT experience been so far?

Yes, that’s correct. I was at NUS for 15 years as faculty in the Biomedical Engineering Department, and I gave up my position there to come to AIT. My AIT experience for the past five months has been a great learning exercise about what AIT does and how it ticks. As a postgraduate-only school with about 1,600 students and three Schools (Engineering, Environmental Resources, and Management), AIT is obviously very different in its organization from NUS. It’s nice to see many people from different countries coming and working together in one holistic environment. With reference to AIT’s new slogan “Transforming AIT,” I made it a point to meet with a majority – if not all – of SET faculty and invited students to “Tea with the Dean” to elicit feedback and recommendations on changes they would like to see at AIT. AIT is a quite special institution in Thailand and the world, and I am still in the learning phase. I need more time to work out the best way forward for SET and to set new goals with my faculty and define our action plan. That’s all going on as a speak.

How do you see your role as Dean and the responsibility your role has towards the school and the students?

As Dean, I feel it’s important to react to the changing world of education and research to keep the School competitive and lead it towards a sustainable future. To do that, I need to keep an eye out for new and exciting opportunities as well as listen to what the SET faculty and students have to say. As I mentioned previously, I made it a point to meet with a majority of SET Faculty to elicit their feedback and learn about changes they’d like to see. I’ve been at AIT now for exactly one semester, and I introduced the semester-start and semester-end “Tea with the Dean and Faculty” for our students to learn more about their studies and living experience on the AIT campus.

What is your vision for SET?

One of the main visions for the School of Engineering is contribution to society through high quality human resources, research and education. In short, to attract the best faculty and therefore students – and vice versa – to SET! I also wish to engage our alumni more and entice them to come back to the campus. With the best people, the job is already half-done because it’s all about people. In terms of research, I want to extend SET’s existing research in the health & wellness area. Health & wellness is an important area for the region, and it has great potential for social impact. Strategically, Thailand has a huge health & wellness industry where we can apply our research and where our students can get good jobs. Moreover, in less than 5 years, several countries including Thailand will become aging societies where health and wellness are one of the most crucial demands. My long-term vision is that AIT or SET should have a unit fully dedicated to health & wellness, which could be a Department or a School or a Research Center. I’m confident SET can make a strong contribution to the development of engineering solutions to pressing health & wellness problems within the region and even globally and impact the lives of many people for the better.

How would you describe an ideal SET student?

There is no one “ideal student.” Students can be all ideal in their specific way, using their specific talents and social interactions. SET wants to attract motivated and creative students, out-of-the-box thinkers but with a sense of what the future world and in particular
the needs of the engineering profession will be like. AIT is probably the most international university in Thailand and top in the region. We want it to stay that way and to welcome students from all over the globe to join in and add to our multinational and multicultural environment. The school’s vision is to help students achieve their full potential and to be successful in their studies at AIT and in their future careers and lives.

How do you plan to make SET more attractive globally to young engineers?
First of all, SET must have attractive and "cool" offerings in terms of research and educational programs. SET’s work on drones, artificial intelligence, robotics, and smart cities is already pretty "cool." However, that’s not enough; we must also communicate this development through all types of media. I want SET to be visible in all media platforms for us to build our brand and identity and make it known to the world. By reaching students in all social platforms, SET aims to establish and maintain a personal connection with them. Consequently, when people hear about AIT’s School of Engineering and Technology, they’ll know right away who we are. Word of mouth is also a very powerful tool. People these days really listen to and value the recommendations of others, especially those close to them in terms of age. Ideally, every SET student and graduate becomes our Global Ambassador. We will also offer a "Minor in Entrepreneurship" from August 2020 onwards.

How important is it for students to be encouraged? How would you encourage SET students?
It’s very important for students to not only be encouraged but also feel encouraged. It’s difficult enough for students, especially our international students, who make up about 70% of the total, to be living in a new place all alone. That’s why I think students need to be and feel encouraged. AIT does have its Career Center, but I believe students should also be getting encouragement from their respective faculty, and especially myself, the Dean.

There are several ways in which SET students can be encouraged. One of them is to talk to them and to get to know them. That's what we do in the newly-introduced “Tea with the Dean and Faculty” sessions by believing in students' ability to carry out great research projects, motivating them throughout, and finally rewarding them for their achievements. We also introduce new and highly attractive opportunities for students, such as internships and exchange scholarships, founding a startup via our Entrepreneurship Center, joining student exchange programs with well-known universities worldwide, participating internships with local and overseas enterprises, and volunteering in service learning programs with social responsibility organizations in Thailand.

The AIT campus offers very beautiful, green surroundings. But having this alone does not make a good campus; there must be several other factors. What do you think makes a good campus?
What makes an educational campus good is to allow everyone in it – students, staff, and faculty – to be united and to feel that everyone can work well together. This can be achieved if everyone contributes to nurturing the atmosphere we have on campus by focusing on communicating effectively with others, being adaptable to a rapidly-changing society and world, and uniting and connecting students with each other and with others around them, including faculty and staff. After all, we are all one big AIT Family.

The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (or SDGs) are becoming a focus in many universities for their research. Is your school also active in this area?
AIT has long been known for its excellent research, including areas related to the Sustainable Development Goals. In fact, AIT was already working on sustainable development goals even before they were defined by the United Nations. Historically, AIT has been very strong in water, environmental, energy, and safe and affordable housing. AIT was founded for capacity development in those areas, which were as important at AITs foundation 60 years ago as they are today. Here are a few examples of recent research contributing to SDG 3 – Ensuring Healthy Lives and Promoting Well-being for All at All Ages:

Dr. Attaphongse Taparugssanagorn’s research on Medical, Health Care, and Sport Information and Communication Technologies, which aims to prevent serious injuries in sports and to increase individual independence, mobility, safety, and social contact through better communication, inclusion, and participation using available technologies.

Prof. Manukid Parnichkun’s research projects aim to help the mobility of disabled and elderly people. These include the Development of a Leg-Exoskeleton
Robot for a Walking Rehabilitation Project and the Development of an Autonomous Mobile Robotic Chair with Ability for Staircase Climbing for Disabled and Elderly People.

Prof. Matthew Dailey and Dr. Mongkol Ekpanyapong’s Smart Campus project contributes to SDG 11 – Making Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient, and Sustainable. The Smart Campus project prototypes the city-scale, AI-based tracking of vehicles to facilitate various applications such as locating someone in case of an emergency, logistics, location-based services, traffic analysis, and more. The project is now at the testing stage.

Those are just some examples on how my School contributes to the SDGs. Together with our colleagues from the other Schools, we at AIT also contribute to SDGs related to food sustainability, climate change, and poverty reduction. AIT’s slogan is “Social Impact with Innovation.” For me, this is a short form for contributing to the 17 sustainable development goals by achieving Social Impact, and that’s what SET and AIT do.

You are the founding director of the new AIT Entrepreneurship Center. How do you visualize the role of entrepreneurship within the AIT ecosystem?

As you know, AIT celebrated its 60th Anniversary just two months ago, and our 60th Anniversary motto is "Transforming AIT." Part of this transformation consists of injecting greater innovation and entrepreneurship into AIT. This is precisely what the new AIT Entrepreneurship Center does. It will be a cornerstone for our students and faculty as they seek to translate their ideas and projects into tangible outcomes such as prototypes, business plans, and startups. My vision for the AIT Entrepreneurship Center is to create social impact with innovation, just as in our slogan. The Entrepreneurship Center has only been in existence for about two months, so perhaps I should report on its activities and impact sometime in the future after its activities have been ramped up.
Workshop on "Biofloc, Biomimicry, and Biological Farming for Innovative Aquaculture Entrepreneurship" from 2 - 7 December 2019

AIT Roadshow in downtown Bangkok on 1 December 2019

The Thai Red Cross Society worked with volunteer students and staff to collect units of blood from the AIT community on 3 December 2019

A seminar on “Integrated Environmental Monitoring and Modelling Framework for Cumulative Effect Assessment” was delivered by Dr. Anil Gupta at AIT on 4 December 2019

"WINTER CAMP 2019- Essential Skills Project Management Training for all engineers and architects who work in construction projects, conducted on 12 -14 December 2019

A talk on Blockchain Application by Iwan Spillebeen, CEO, BlockchainLabs.ai on 12 December 2019

AIT-BNU Joint Seminar on Belt & Road Water and Eco-Environmental Development was hosted by the AIT Belt & Road Research Center on 18 December 2019
132nd Graduation

WELCOME & FAREWELL

WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Santipong Grailert</td>
<td>Research Associate</td>
<td>EEM/SERD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Chaichan Poonperm</td>
<td>Research Associate</td>
<td>AI Center</td>
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<td>Mr. Phawaphol Udompitayatorn</td>
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<td>Ms. Angsana Chaksan</td>
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<td>GIC</td>
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<td>Mr. Brighton Nhau</td>
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<td>Mr. Jeffrey C. Hamilton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Chaklam Silpasuwanchai</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
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<td>Mr. Ranadheer Mandadi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Shadhini Krisna</td>
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FAREWELL: 31 DECEMBER 2019

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<tr>
<td>Mr. Ekkankun Krong-atek</td>
<td>Senior Technician</td>
<td>EEM/SERD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Gyanendra Ratna Shhapit</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Habitech Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss Natnipha Vimuktanon</td>
<td>Media Officer (Public Relations)</td>
<td>OPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Adelaida Bonquin</td>
<td>Program Specialist</td>
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Retirement

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<td>Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Thitima Olarikabutr</td>
<td>Campus Architect</td>
<td>OFAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Maneerasht Kampipop</td>
<td>Construction Project Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Panuwat Chaiwut</td>
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<td>OFAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Pemmpun Plumsud</td>
<td>Receptionist</td>
<td>OFAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Rodolfo L. Cesar Jr.</td>
<td>Technician</td>
<td>UG/SET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Chatchai Pruetong</td>
<td>Laboratory Supervisor</td>
<td>ISE/SET</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Sarojani Shhapit</td>
<td>Assistant Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Xinjian Qi</td>
<td>China Relations Officer</td>
<td>OIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Fredric W. Swierczek.</td>
<td>Director of Vietnam</td>
<td>AITCV</td>
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Source: Office of Human Resources Services
Coming Up

18 JANUARY 2020
AIT Roadshow in Mandalay, Myanmar

19 JANUARY 2020
AIT Roadshow Yangon, Myanmar
To register: http://bit.ly/301VBkY

25 JANUARY 2020
AIT Roadshow in Kathmandu, Nepal
To register: http://bit.ly/36uCKRM

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