ISSUE NO.30 / APRIL 2024

THE MANTA Pulse

THE UWC THAILAND COMMUNITY INTERACTIVE E-MAGAZINE



"Let us stand together to make of our world a sustainable source for our future as humanity on this planet."

Nelson Mandela, Late Honorary President, UWC

Learn more about UWC Thailand and follow us on social media









Songkran

Thai New Year, known as Songkran, is one of the cherished festivals at UWC Thailand.
Celebrated annually in Thailand and several other Southeast Asian countries, Songkran brings smiles to the faces of millions of people, especially children.

At UWC Thailand, the celebration began with a palm-watering ceremony, during which our community paid respects to each other, wishing for a healthy and prosperous new year. The serene atmosphere soon gave way to excitement and joy as buckets of water made their way to the fields. Amidst water fights, a long slip 'n' slide, and universal drenching, nobody was left dry.

This celebration was a fantastic opportunity for the UWC Thailand community to engage with and appreciate Thai culture, creating lasting memories and enjoying a plethora of fun before the April break.

Click here for more photos





















World Book Day

Once upon a time, nestled in the enchanting grounds of UWC Thailand, we embarked on a delightful journey to celebrate World Book Day. With an array of imaginative and captivating activities, the day unfolded into a tapestry of literary wonder...

Packed with fun activities, we kicked off World Book Day with the Book Character Scavenger Hunt, roaming through the Early Years and Primary Years buildings. Then, we got creative with the Page-to-Plate Challenge, cooking up dishes inspired by our favourite books.

Everyone got into the spirit by dressing up as their favourite book characters, bringing stories to life all over campus. **We were lucky to have Nawal Kalra, a children's book author, join us for storytelling sessions in the library.** Students, parents, and staff participated in storytelling sessions and workshops, making it a day to remember. We all had a blast diving into the world of books together.

Click here for more photos

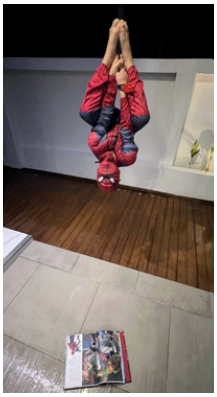
World Book Day Challenge Winners



Reading Challenge Winners

Lower Primary - **Kit, grade 2**
Upper Primary - **Hannah, grade 4**
Secondary - **Michael, grade 6**

Reading in Unusual Places Winners







1st place - Max, grade 1: Max truly embraced the superhero spirit by dressing up as Spiderman, hanging upside down, and fully engrossed in his book!
2nd place - Mason, grade 4: Mason, captivated by his reading, didn't even spare a glance at the breathtaking view from the Burj Khalifa.
3rd place - Amira, grade 3: Amira dazzled us with her multitasking prowess, effortlessly practising gymnastics while flipping through the pages.

Book Face Challenge Winner

Kru Ann showcased her creativity and earned herself a well-deserved book voucher!

Dress up Class Prize

Congratulations to **Kindergarten A** and **grade 8** for their outstanding costumes! Enjoy your pizza party!

Masked Reader

Special thanks to **Kru Frederick,** who volunteered to be the masked reader and added an extra layer of excitement to the event. The winners of the Masked Reader challenge are **Angelina, Kindergarten** and **Dorothy, grade 7.** Enjoy your prizes!

Scavenger Hunt Winners

Aayansh, grade 2 and **Henry, grade 5,** cracked the code and won exciting prizes!

Page-to-Plate Challenge

Congratulations to **Kate** and **Rachel, grade 2**, for their delicious vanilla cupcakes! Enjoy your book voucher!











EARTH DAY

Sustainability lies at the heart of UWC's mission and values, reflecting our deep commitment to environmental responsibility. At UWC Thailand, this ethos is not just preached but practised, with special emphasis placed on occasions like Earth Day.

On 22 April, our campus buzzed with vibrant green, blue, and brown hues as we collectively celebrated our planet. During lunchtime, the Sustainability Committee organised a series of interactive activities designed to instil a sense of environmental consciousness. From weaving rugs with recycled cloths to crafting eco-bricks and repurposing plastic bottles into pots, our community engaged in hands-on initiatives aimed at reducing waste and promoting resourcefulness. Our youngest learners, the Mini Mantas and Kindergarten students, were actively involved in these endeavours. While some got their hands dirty in the garden, others explored the beauty of flowers, deepening their appreciation for our natural world.

Together, these efforts exemplify our dedication to nurturing a sustainable future, both locally and globally.





Click here for more photos





Empowering Environmental Change:

Student-Led Initiatives at UWC Thailand

Written by:
Subreena, grade 11 (Singapore), and Juliette, grade 11 (Belgium)









At UWC Thailand, students are taking charge of impactful environmental initiatives aimed at promoting sustainability both within our school community and beyond. Two standout projects led by our students include the 10% Challenge and our active participation in Earth Hour.

10% Challenge
In today's world, environmental concerns are more pressing than ever, making sustainability a critical concept guiding our actions towards a healthier planet... **Read more.**













OFFSEAS at UWC Thailand

The final weekend of April marked a significant event on our calendar: the Outdoor Forum for South East Asian Schools (OFFSEAS) conference. Held across our main campus and the UWC Thailand Outdoor Education Centre, OFFSEAS brought together hundreds of outdoor and experiential education professionals to Phuket. The conference served as a platform for sharing ideas, fostering collaboration, and exploring innovative approaches to transformative learning. Many of our staff members participated, with some taking on roles as presenters and workshop facilitators. Some of them, like Rob Carmichael, UWC Thailand's Director of Outdoor Experiential Education, Aleka Billa, Director of Wellbeing, and Heidi Oxley-Whitnell, our Community Engagement Coordinator and Creativity, Activity & Service Coordinator, shared insights and best practices from their experiences at UWC Thailand.

We hope all attendees felt warmly welcomed on our campus and departed feeling inspired and excited, ready to enhance the experiential and transformative education experience throughout South East Asia.

Spiritual Mindfulness Retreat

In a world where technology is omnipresent and being online is the default, disconnecting from it may seem like both a challenge and a privilege—a challenge and privilege that some of our Diploma Programme students happily embraced during a three-day Spiritual Mindfulness Retreat at Thanyamundra Organic Resort in Khao Sok, Surat Thani Province.

They gained profound insights into mindfulness and honoured the mind-body connection. Mindful silence helped promote inner peace through deep contemplation while assisting with organic farm work demonstrated the value of physical labour and its connection to the earth.

We extend our gratitude to Khun Klaus Hebben, our Education for a Sustainable Future Foundation Board Member, for extending the invitation to our students and to Kru Julia and Kru Len for their guidance and supervision throughout the retreat.

> **"Disconnecting from technology during the retreat was a breath of fresh air, allowing me to purify my mind and body from the constant noise of the digital world. It enabled me to fully immerse myself in the present moment and connect with my inner self."**

Sofia, grade 11 (Italy)













The Essence of Mindfulness at UWC Thailand

Julia Feste,
UWC Thailand Head of Mindfulness

I am privileged to lead a programme deeply woven into the fabric of our community's daily life. Mindfulness is not merely an activity or a scheduled class here; it is an ethos, a way of being that permeates our interactions, our learning, and our approach to global citizenship.

Integrating Mindfulness in our Curriculum
Recognising its profound impact on emotional well-being, cognitive function, and social relationships, mindfulness is seamlessly integrated into our curriculum at UWC Thailand. From the youngest learners in our primary years to the reflective teenagers in our secondary grades, each student embarks on a journey of self-discovery and mindful living. Our dedicated mindfulness sessions provide a structured space for this exploration, but the true essence of mindfulness extends far beyond these moments.

Mindfulness for the Whole Community
Acknowledging the interconnectedness of our student, staff, and parent communities, we extend our mindfulness practice beyond the classroom. Weekly mindfulness classes for parents, held in our serene Mindfulness Centre, offer a space for our adult community to pause, breathe, and connect. These sessions delve into various mindfulness practices, from sitting meditations to mindful movements, reflecting our commitment to supporting the well-being of not just our students, but their... **Read more.**

Embracing Thai Studies

A Commitment to Cultural Understanding







At the educational core of UWC Thailand lies a commitment to understanding our geological and cultural context. In this spirit, students across all grade levels engage deeply with Thai studies, encompassing language, culture, immersive field trips, and local festival celebrations. In pursuit of excellence in teaching, **we recently welcomed representatives from the Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC) to oversee the delivery of Thai language, culture, and history instruction.** Their visit underscores our dedication to providing students with a rich and comprehensive experience in Thai Studies.

Our educational philosophy prioritises active learning methodologies and the cultivation of collaborative networks to build sustainable Thai Studies programs. Our goal is to continually refine these programs for the enduring benefit of our students.

Proud to be UWC parents!







The last Proud to be UWC Parent session was titled **"Empowering Student Wellbeing: Parenting Mindfully".** The session, led by Aleka Bilan, Director of Wellbeing, and Julia Feste, Head of Mindfulness, covered key topics such as the parenting journey, setting intentions to create wellbeing habits for children, committing to try mindfulness strategies within your family, and envisioning the future as a UWC parent.

For more information on these topics, log into the parent portal and watch the recording.

Join us for the next session on Friday, 24 May, to discuss "Parenting a Young Adult: UWC Alumni Journey"

If you wish to discuss sponsorship opportunities here at UWC Thailand, please contact Nicki, our Director of Philanthropy and Strategic Initiatives: nicki.robertson@uwcthailand.ac.th or go to the Support Us page on our website.



UWC THAILAND

April Mini-Camps

April Mini-Camps provided more than just a chance for kids to enjoy extra time with friends and engage in fun activities; they also welcomed the participation of some parents. Whether during the lively Hip-Hop and Street Dance sessions with Coach Debbie or the invigorating Fitness for Life classes led by Coach Brian, everyone had a blast while honing their skills or discovering new ones.

These camps offer a valuable opportunity for families to bond and for children to continue their learning journey even during school breaks.

Additionally, we're excited to announce that signups for our upcoming Summer Camps are now open, providing another chance for enriching experiences.

Learn about our upcoming **Summer Camps**

Click here for more photos







Myth Busters!

What exactly is Learning Support and Who is it for?

Written by: **UWC Thailand Learning Support Team**

Learning Support encompasses various aspects, including skill development, accommodations and interventions tailored to individual needs. Let's debunk some long-held myths surrounding this crucial area:

Myth: Occupational Therapy will help me find a job.
Reality: While the term 'occupation' might conjure images of career hunting, this actually refers to meaningful daily activities. Occupational Therapists assist students in essential tasks for success in school, such as handwriting, emotional regulation and sensory needs, aiming to support academic and developmental goals and overall well-being.

Myth: Dyslexics can't read or spell.
Reality: While dyslexia poses challenges, individuals can excel with the right strategies, becoming proficient readers and writers.

Myth: Getting help labels a child negatively.
Reality: Early identification and intervention for learning challenges are beneficial, helping students reach their potential and avoiding negative learning associations.

Myth: Learning support students can't learn new skills.
Reality: With support, accommodations, and tailored instruction and learning support, students can make significant progress academically and personally.

Myth: Every student in learning support needs a shadow teacher.
Reality: Support needs vary; not all ...

Click here for the full article

Primary Years Exhibition Preparations

Connect-Present-Reflect

At the core of UWC Thailand's educational model lie four essential components: **Mindfulness, Sustainability, Transformative Learning, and Global Citizenship.** Global Citizenship has taken centre stage for our grade 5 students, who have been deeply engaged in workshops and preparations for their final Primary Years Exhibition. In an effort to further engage with the local community, our students connected with numerous community organisations to explore ways to form mutually beneficial relationships.

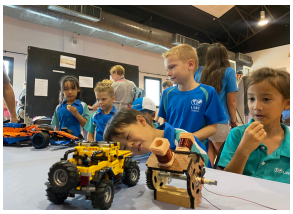
As they near the exhibition date, they invited local community members and parents for a **Connect-Present-Reflect session**. Here, they eagerly shared their projects, seeking feedback that will help refine their work and address any remaining challenges. Through their dedicated efforts, our students showcased the essence of aware citizenship, demonstrating a genuine concern not only for their own wellbeing, but also for the broader community.














Click here to watch the video

Grade 8 Science Fair

Almost everyone, at least once in their lives, wants to be a scientist, perhaps one who experiments with colour-changing chemicals or revolutionises the functioning of systems—yet, the reality is far more challenging than one might imagine. Despite these challenges, our Grade 8 students amazed us with their scientific achievements.

During their Science Fair, which welcomed parents, peers, staff, and other community members, each student presented a unique project showcasing scientific curiosity, methodical problem-solving skills, and a deep understanding of scientific concepts.

The fair buzzed with energy and innovation, featuring projects ranging from the study of flower species to the formation and evolution of the Solar System, from solar-powered go-karts to natural water filters and much more. It was a vibrant showcase of creativity and potential, offering a small glimpse into the promising future of our young scientists.



Essay Triumph

Krystal, grade 11 (Uganda) takes home the inaugural John Hick Essay Competition Prize

We are thrilled to announce the remarkable achievement of Krystal, grade 11, who won the inaugural John Hick Essay Competition organised by UWC Dilijan, Armenia. This nuanced academic competition, named after the esteemed philosopher and theologian John Hick, attracted participants from UWCs worldwide, inviting them to dive into the themes of religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue.

Krystal's winning essay offered a profound reflection on Hick's ideas, particularly emphasising his perspective on the diverse manifestations of the ultimate reality within different religions. Her insightful analysis not only embodies the spirit of philosophical inquiry nurtured within the UWC community but also serves as a catalyst for meaningful discussions on interreligious understanding. Krystal's success stands as a testament to her academic excellence and underscores UWC Thailand's unwavering commitment to supporting students in their academic endeavours, fostering an environment of intellectual rigour and growth.

Congratulations, Krystal! We are proud of you!

Watch the Competition's Award Session

Learn about the John Hick Essay Competition

Seniors Week

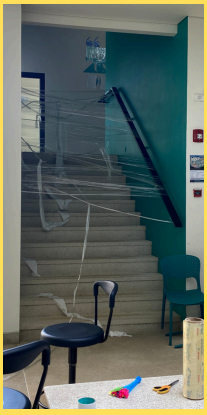
To end high school with a splash, our soon-to-be graduates have the answer. During their last week of classes, affectionately known as Seniors Week, our grade 12 students seized every opportunity to have fun and leave a lasting impression. Throughout a week brimming with creatively themed days and events, they not only brought smiles to our faces but also demonstrated how enriching it is to be a part of such a diverse community.

Whether through an April Fools' joke, dressing up as their favourite movie characters, carrying a shoe rack instead of a backpack to class, or even impersonating teachers, they embraced the spirit of fun and concluded this incredible journey in the most positive way - with smiles on their faces.

As they set off to write their final IB exams, we wish them the best of luck!





Annual Aquatics Galas

Ali Wyatt,
UWC Thailand Physical Education and Experiential Learning Teacher







The annual Primary and Secondary Swim Galas, held prior to the Songkran break, dazzled with resounding success, setting a vibrant tone for our aquatic endeavours.

Anticipation ran high among our Primary students, fueled by their unwavering determination to refine their skills leading up to the event. Engaging in a minimum of three events, they not only showcased their progression but also rallied points for their respective house teams, embodying our ethos of pushing boundaries and embracing discomfort in pursuit of personal growth. The day was a testament to the students' exemplary sportsmanship and fair play, fostering a culture of positivity and camaraderie.



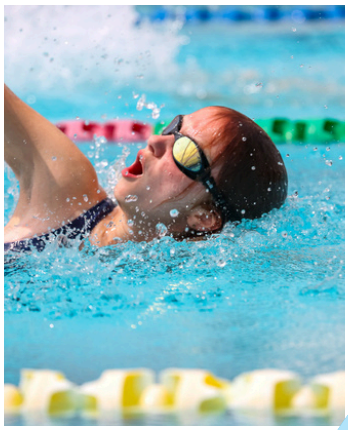




The pool was awash with achievements as numerous personal bests and school records tumbled, underscoring the relentless hard work and dedication of our students. Amidst the individual showcases, the atmosphere bubbled with excitement during the entertaining relays, including the spirited doughnut relay where students gleefully propelled teachers across the pool.



Transitioning to the Secondary Swim Gala, students relished the opportunity to tailor their participation, exploring a diverse array of races and relays. The event not only celebrated the prowess of our Secondary students but also showcased the dynamism of aquatics sports through the thrilling grade 8 and 9 Water Polo tournament.





Embracing inclusivity, students were seeded according to their abilities, leading to remarkable progress and fiercely competitive performances, notably by our esteemed Manta team members. As the waters... **Read more.**

Click here for more photos

The Pulse Noticeboard

Here's whats coming up at UWC Thailand, and in our community!

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness theme: Balance

Through a range of in-class and out-of-class activities, our students, staff, and broader community will explore the essence of balance in all aspects of their lives.

Contact: Kru Julia

COMMUNITY

Table Top Sale

Join us on **Friday, 3 May, from 2:30-5 pm** behind the Admin office for the first Spring Table Top Sale organised by our Manta PTA. **Book a table for THB 200.** Contact Glenda on WhatsApp at +66 (0)66 121 6921.

Contact: Manta PTA

WELLBEING

Counsellors Coffee Morning

On **7 May**, join our Counsellors in the **Boarding House lounge from 8-9 am**. Meet the team, ask questions and understand our Social Emotional Learning programme.

Contact: Kru Aleka

MIDDLE YEARS

Middle Years Social Evening

On **Friday, 10 May, 5:00-7:30 pm**, our MYP students will dance the evening away at their highly anticipated annual Middle Years social evening being held in the Secondary building!

Contact: Kru Emma

PRIMARY

Student-Led Conferences

Primary students lead parents through a full-day experience, showcasing their learning journey and daily activities. **17 May, from 8 am-3 pm in Primary School.**

Contact: Kru Jen

ACADEMICS

Grade 5 to 6 Transition

This coffee morning will discuss the transition of students moving from PYP to MYP. Learn what to expect and how to support your child on **22 May from 8:15-9 am.**

Contact: Kru Emma

COMMUNITY

Proud to be UWC Parents!

We welcome the parents of the graduating class of 2024 to join us on **Friday, 24 May** to engage in the last parenting session: **Parenting a Young Adult: UWC Alumni Journey.**

SECONDARY

Grade 12 Graduation

Graduation is a time to celebrate the academic journey of our grade 12 students. This final event in our grade 12 student's journey at UWC Thailand is celebrated with friends and family on **25 May**.

COMMUNITY

Community Weekend

Our final Community Weekend of the academic year is a wonderful way to wrap up the year. Bring a plate/dish to share (no peanuts) and enjoy time with the rest of our community. **24 & 25 May, begins on Friday afternoon!**

View the Manta Weekly to stay informed and engaged with what is happening at UWC Thailand.

UWC THAILAND