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THE MANTA Pulse

THE UWC THAILAND COMMUNITY

INTERACTIVE E-MAGAZINE



Photo Credit: Robinson, grade 11 (China)

National Honour

National Outstanding Mother of the Year Award

Grade 11 Orientation

Welcoming our Grade 11s to the community

Alum Spotlight

We catch up with two of our alums

Learn more about UWC Thailand and follow us on social media









Welcome to a New Academic Year

We are thrilled to welcome everyone back for the 2025/26 school year! The first weeks have been full of energy as students reconnect with friends, meet new classmates, and dive into learning across the campus. It has been inspiring to see our community come together, celebrating curiosity, creativity, and compassion in every corner of school life.

Our students are already exploring new opportunities in classrooms, outdoor learning, and co-curricular experiences, guided by the dedication of our staff and the support of our families. The year ahead promises growth, discovery, and meaningful connections for all. As of today, our community includes:

571
Students

76
National Identities

202
Staff Members

We are proud to begin this year together and look forward to the journey ahead.









National Honour

We are delighted to share that **Khun Sirivibha Dusiyamee-Berger (Khun A)**, *President of the Education for a Sustainable Future Foundation,* has been recognised with the **National Outstanding Mother of the Year Award** by the Chulabhorn Research Institute on the occasion of Mother's Day.

The award recognises not only her devotion as a mother but also her longstanding commitment to education and building a sustainable future.

Reflecting on the honour, Khun A shared:

"Being a mother has been the greatest source of strength and inspiration in my life. This award is not only a personal honour but also a reminder of the importance of nurturing the next generation with love, values, and a vision for a sustainable future."











Opening the Year with Tradition

UWC Thailand marked the start of the new school term with a traditional Lord Brahma and Land Lord God Shrine ceremony—an auspicious occasion symbolising blessings and good fortune for the year ahead. Members of the Education for a Sustainable Future Foundation Board, the Banyapura Board, and the UWC Thailand School Board joined teachers, staff, students, and parents for this meaningful gathering.

The ceremony offered a memorable way to begin the academic year, combining tradition, community, and a shared sense of purpose.





Manta SPA Morning Tea

Building Community

At UWC Thailand, the **Manta Staff-Parent Association (Manta SPA)** continues to play a vital role in strengthening our school community.

At the start of the school year, the Manta SPA Morning Tea brought together new and returning families, alongside staff, for a warm welcome.

Class Ambassadors answered questions and shared helpful tips about school life, while the Manta SPA team provided updates and shared plans for the year ahead.





The initiatives of Manta SPA go beyond individual events, fostering meaningful connections and ensuring families feel supported, informed, and engaged. Their dedication reflects the importance of parent partnerships in building a thriving UWC Thailand community.









Snake Awareness

Building awareness and understanding of snakes

Snake Awareness Day provided our community with an engaging and educational experience on how to live safely alongside snakes. We were joined by Vincent, widely known as the Snake Guy in Phuket, who shared his knowledge about local species, corrected common myths, and explained practical steps to take if one encounters a snake.

A highlight of the event was the safe presence of a rescued domesticated snake, which allowed students and staff to observe up close and, under Vincent's guidance, even touch. The session not only raised awareness but also encouraged a respectful understanding of these creatures and their place in our environment.

Click here for more photos

Welcoming our Grade 11s

Building Community and Embracing Culture at UWC Thailand

We are delighted to welcome **50 new students to our campus through the National Committee (NC) and Global Selection Programme (GSP).** After an extensive selection process, these students join our UWC Thailand community, bringing diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

This year, 47 of these students will join the grade 11 cohort alongside 35 UWC Thailand direct-entry students, **forming a graduating class of 83 students for 2027**. For the second time, we are also welcoming three scholarship students into grade 10 through our "Fulfilling the Promise" pathway. This initiative allows students an additional year to settle in before starting the IB Diploma Programme, supporting those who have been out of school for an extended period, are developing English fluency, or are using technology for the first time.

Among the 50 NC & GSP students this year: **15 have full scholarships, 18 have partial scholarships, 13 are supported by UWC International, and 4 are full fee payers.** We encourage everyone in our community to take every opportunity to meet and welcome our new students.

Orientation marked an exciting start to the two-year IB Diploma journey. With the return of school-based students and the arrival of new ones, the campus buzzed with energy. Over the week, students connected with peers, forged new... **Read More**

> **Getting to spend a few days with my new friends without our devices lets us connect more naturally and grow relationships I'm sure will only get stronger from here.**

Yaakov, grade 11 (United States)







Grade 11 Orientation Camp







Click here for more photos



Confluence







This year, we warmly welcomed our Grade 11 students as they began their journey at UWC Thailand. The occasion brought together board members from the Education for a Sustainable Future Foundation Board, the Banyapura Board, and the UWC Thailand School Board, alongside teachers, staff, and senior students, in a celebration of connection and community.

At the heart of the evening was Confluence, a longstanding tradition that goes beyond a simple dinner. It serves as a purposeful gathering where Diploma Programme students engage with the wider UWC Thailand community, fostering meaningful relationships and a strong sense of belonging. The evening concluded with Rab Kwan, the Thai traditional way of welcoming, providing a memorable and culturally rich start to the students' journey ahead.

This gathering marked not just the beginning of a new school year, but the start of a shared experience rooted in collaboration, curiosity, and community.

Click here for more photos

Life in Boarding

A Warm Start to the Year

The first weeks of the academic year have brought lively energy to our boarding community at UWC Thailand. From the moment our students arrived, the campus has been buzzing with laughter, friendly chatter, and the excitement of new connections forming.

A highlight of the start of the year was the Boarding Barbecue, where our dedicated house parents welcomed students with care and warmth. We're excited to introduce our new house parents: **Khun Khosi, Khun Lin, Khun Nermin, and Khun John**, each bringing their own energy, expertise, and commitment to making the boarding houses feel like home. Their efforts created a relaxed, joyful evening that set a wonderful tone for the year ahead.











Building a Collaborative and Action-Oriented PYP Community

In our Primary Years Programme (PYP), our focus for the learning community is collaboration. We aim to create a sense of welcoming and belonging for every member of our school community. Events such as the **Primary Picnic, Meet the Teacher sessions, and Hopes and Dreams Conferences** offer meaningful opportunities for students, teachers, and families to come together, fostering strong connections and a shared sense of purpose. These events not only allow students to form new friendships but also give families and teachers the chance to engage in dialogue, set expectations, establish partnerships, and celebrate the start of a new learning journey together.

"Seeing our community come together to work together, support one another, and take ownership of learning reminds me why our community thrives. Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do."
Jen Friske, UWC Thailand Primary Vice Principal & PYP Coordinator

Our focus for learners is action. Students take initiative to demonstrate leadership and involvement in our school community, all while engaging deeply and meaningfully with their learning. Examples of their engagement include:

- **Primary buddy classes,** where older students mentor and support younger peers, fostering empathy and responsibility
- Participation in **leadership groups** such as Student Council, Mindfulness Ambassadors, House Team Captains, and Manta Guardians, giving students a voice in school decisions and activities
- Joining various **school teams and clubs**, exploring interests and building teamwork skills
- **Auditioning for the school musical**, encouraging creativity, courage, and collaboration

Through these experiences, students develop not only responsibility and confidence but also a strong sense of agency. They learn to balance community involvement with personal learning goals, developing skills that are transferable both inside and outside the classroom.









Developing Assessment-Capable Learners

Alongside leadership and community engagement, students are deeply involved in their learning. Our focus on assessment supports students in becoming assessment-capable learners who take ownership of their progress and growth. Across different units of inquiry, students:

- Set **academic and skills-based goals** for themselves
- Take the initiative to **monitor and track their growth and progress**
- Collaborate with teachers to **reflect on their learning and make informed choices about next steps**

By combining action with thoughtful reflection, our PYP students are empowered to **take ownership of their learning journey**, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and cultivate a sense of responsibility for both their academic and personal growth. These experiences lay the foundation for lifelong learning and prepare students to confidently engage in the wider world.





A fresh start for our Middle Years Students





Our Middle Years Programme (MYP) began the new academic year with an engaging orientation for grades 6–10, designed to welcome students into a vibrant and supportive learning community.

Over one or two days, depending on the grade, students reconnected with their homerooms, strengthened friendships, and took part in a variety of activities that encouraged collaboration, responsibility, and a sense of belonging. Team-building games, classroom agreements, and group challenges allowed students to practice working together, while discussions on academic integrity and reflective exercises helped set expectations for a year of thoughtful learning.

The orientation also provided opportunities for students to explore what it means to be a part of the UWC Thailand community, understand the values that guide the MYP, and begin setting personal goals for growth. By combining fun, meaningful activities with purposeful reflection, the program set the tone for a year full of curiosity, creativity, and meaningful connections.

Open Skiff World Championships 2025









From 16–24 July, the **Open Skiff World Championships 2025** was held in Nishinomiya, Japan, welcoming young sailors from across the globe. The competition featured two categories—Under 13 and Under 17—with high levels of skill and determination on display.

We are proud to share that the UWC Thailand Sailing Squad, under the guidance of Kru Yod, achieved an excellent result in the **Under 13 category, placing 3rd overall.** This marks a significant milestone for the squad, which continues to grow from strength to strength since its formation...**Read more.**

Click here for the full article









Introducing the Early Years Atelier

We are delighted to announce the opening of our new Atelier in the Early Years, led by our Atelierista, Kru Meredith Spragg.

The role of the Atelierista comes from Reggio Emilia, Italy, a place renowned for its distinctive and child-centered approach to early childhood education. Central to this philosophy is the image of the child as capable, curious, and full of potential. Reggio educators believe that children possess a hundred languages of expression—drawing, painting, dancing, storytelling, sculpture, movement, and many others. The Atelierista supports children in expressing these languages by integrating the arts through project-based...**Read more.**

So... Do you help kids get jobs?

by Furaha Meki Mwadime (Kru Meki), UWC Thailand Occupational Therapist

Hello! My name is Kru Meki, and I'm the Occupational Therapist (OT) here at UWC Thailand. People often ask me, **"So... Do you help kids get jobs?"** (It's "occupational" therapy, after all). My answer? **Not quite, unless you count the most important job of all: being a kid.**

For the past seven years, I've been working in IB schools as an OT, and I have supported dozens of students in developing the skills they need to grow, learn, and thrive. What keeps me passionate about this work is watching children discover their strengths and feel a sense of belonging in their school community.

One of my most memorable experiences was supporting a student with Level 3 autism, beginning in Grade 4. Together, we worked on social, sensory, and classroom inclusion skills until Grade 10, when he was able to take part in a meaningful CAS placement in nature photography. The joy on his face as he contributed to school life and pursued something he loved reminded me why I do what I do.

Occupational therapy in schools is about meeting each child exactly where they are and helping them build independence in the things that matter most, in partnership with families and teachers. Sometimes this means handwriting, fine and gross motor skills, or sensory regulation. Other times it looks like... **Read More.**







Strong Personal Project Results at UWC Thailand

At the heart of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) is the belief that students should take ownership of their learning and make meaningful connections across subject areas. The Personal Project, completed by grade 10 students in their final year of the MYP, is a culminating experience that challenges them to explore an area of personal interest through an interdisciplinary lens.

We're proud to share that this year's Personal Project results reflect a **strong and consistent upward trajectory:**

- Our average score increased to **5.44,** continuing the positive trend over the past three years: **2023 – 4.93 → 2024 – 5.08 → 2025 – 5.44.**
- Our students achieved results that are **well above the global average of 3.94.**
- **15%** of the cohort earned the highest possible score of 7.

This year's cohort included outstanding achievements by students who are now in grade 11, each of whom achieved the perfect score of 7:

- **Kian, grade 11 (Philippines):** *"Completing my Personal Project taught me how to manage a long-term project independently while still learning from others. It was exciting to turn my idea into something tangible that I'm proud of."*
- **Issabella, grade 11 (United Kingdom):** *"The Personal Project gave me the freedom to explore my passions while connecting different subjects. The challenges I faced were worthwhile and inspired me to continue pursuing ambitious goals."*
- **Cecil, grade 11 (United States):** *"This project gave me insight into what it takes to succeed in the IB. It also allowed me to pursue my interests in science and engineering through the coilgun I made."*

The Personal Project allows students to draw from knowledge and skills developed across disciplines—from science and design to the arts and humanities—and apply them in meaningful, real-world contexts. This year's projects reflected a wide range of interests and innovative thinking: handcrafted chess sets, homemade skincare products, student-built devices, TikTok accounts that went viral, and much more. Students combined creativity, research, and critical thinking to produce work that was not only personal but also deeply connected to broader learning.

> **This year's Personal Project outcomes are a testament to our students' commitment to meaningful learning and their ability to manage complex tasks independently. I am incredibly proud of their achievements and the effort they put into their work."**

Chantal Kruger, UWC Thailand Secondary Vice Principal and MYP Coordinator

Congratulations to all our grade 10 students for embracing interdisciplinary learning and completing their Personal Projects with confidence and purpose.





Achievements and Future Pathways

AVERAGE SCORE 33 maximum 45 points

30.58 Global Average

TOP SCORE 43

3 SCORED ABOVE 40+

Reflecting on the UWC Thailand Class of 2025

As we reflect on the UWC Thailand Class of 2025, we are proud to share both their academic results and the many opportunities ahead. Their achievements highlight strong academic preparation and a commitment to UWC's mission of using education as a force for peace and sustainability.

IB Diploma Results

Our 76 full diploma students achieved an average score of **33**, **above the global average of 30.58**. Three students earned 40 points or more, and the overall pass rate of 85.1% exceeded the global average of 81.26%. Beyond scores, students fully engaged with the IB Core — Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay, and Creativity, Activity, and Service — deepening their critical thinking and global awareness.

University Offers and Scholarships

Graduates received **254 university offers** from **159 institutions** across **17 countries**, demonstrating the global reach of their applications. Collectively, they were awarded **over USD 8 million in scholarships**, a testament to the value placed on their academic achievements, leadership, and service.

Fields of Study

The Class of 2025 will pursue studies in more than 40 fields across six areas:

- **STEM:** Engineering, Environmental Science, Biochemistry, Architecture, Computer Science, Data Science
- **Social Sciences & Humanities:** Political Science, International Relations, Sociology, History, Urban Planning
- **Business & Economics:** Business Administration, Finance, Economics, Marketing, International Business
- **Health Sciences:** Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, Life Sciences
- **Creative Arts, Media & Communication:** Film, Game Development, Fashion Design, Performing Arts, Visual Communication
- **Interdisciplinary & Liberal Arts:** Liberal Arts, Interdisciplinary Studies, General Studies

TOP UNIVERSITY OFFERS

Among the 254 offers, **29 came from globally top-ranked institutions**, including Brown University, University of Chicago, Northwestern University, UC Berkeley, UCLA, University of Michigan, University College London, Tsinghua University, University of Toronto, McGill University, University of Sydney, Monash University, and University of Amsterdam.

BROWN · THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO · NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY · UC Berkeley · UCLA · UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN · UCL · 清華大學 Tsinghua University · UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO · McGill · THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY · MONASH University · UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Looking Ahead

As we continue the 2025–26 academic year, we celebrate the Class of 2025 for setting a high standard of resilience, achievement, and international mindedness.

With their pathways spanning continents and disciplines, they reflect the diversity and purpose-driven spirit of UWC Thailand.

We now look forward to supporting the next generation of students as they follow in these footsteps, ready to make meaningful contributions to their communities and the wider world.

Alum Spotlight



Mega's New Journey

Margaret (Mega), UWC Thailand Class of 2025 (Philippines), is now at Ithaca College in New York, where she is pursuing a major in Speech-Language Pathology with a minor in Deaf Studies, following her passion for supporting inclusive communication and communities.



As an alum of UWC Thailand, Mega carries forward the values of curiosity, resilience, and compassion that she cultivated here. We are proud to celebrate her journey and look forward to seeing the impact she will make as she embraces this next stage of learning and growth.

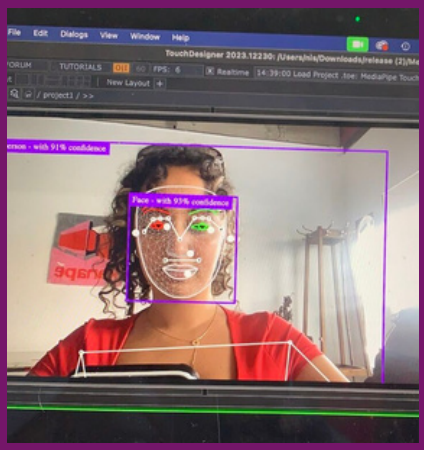
Mega reflects on her time at UWC Thailand and the journey that has brought her here:

"Thank you, UWC Thailand, for opening your doors and equipping me to go out into the world with courage and purpose. From the white beaches of Phuket to the South Hill of New York, I carry your motto in my heart and promise to embody it wherever life takes me. I am also grateful to UWC Davis for giving me the opportunity to pursue my dream of learning, serving others, and making a meaningful difference in the world."

Nisrine's Cross-Continental Research Journey



Nisrine, UWC Thailand Class of 2023, spent her summer as a **Davidson Research Initiative Fellow,** working with Davidson College's Boundaries and Bridges research group to explore German-American relations and diasporic identities. Funded by The Halle Foundation, she engaged in collaborative research, creative projects, and critical dialogue under the guidance of faculty mentor Joelle Dietrick.



Her project, **"Between Borders: A Diaspora's Journey"**, combines an animated short film and a reflective essay, tracing Moroccan migration to Germany and examining themes of displacement, belonging, and collective memory. Through workshops, fieldwork, and collaboration with Berlin-based animators, Nisrine explored how diaspora resists linear narratives, demonstrating how creative practice can bring research to life.

We are proud to celebrate Nisrine's achievements and the ways her UWC Thailand experience nurtured her curiosity, resilience, and commitment to understanding diverse perspectives. She now looks forward to continuing this work during her upcoming semester at the **Stockholm School of Economics.**

SPORTS & ACTIVITIES ROUND-UP

















by John (JP) Powell,
UWC Thailand Director of Sports, Activities and Camps

CCP Fair and Sports Tryouts: Getting Active at UWC Thailand

The new academic year is off to an energetic start as students explore our Co-Curricular Programme (CCP) and prepare for the season ahead.

It began with the CCP Fair, where students discovered the wide range of offerings available this year. With 165 options, including student-led initiatives and staff-led activities, students explored opportunities that match their interests. This year, 19 of the offerings are student-led, giving students chances to develop leadership, creativity, and collaboration.

Following the fair, Primary sports team tryouts provided younger students with the opportunity to showcase their skills, demonstrate teamwork, and secure a place on the teams they are excited to join.

Next, secondary students participated in Manta Mania, designed to help them prepare physically for the competitive season ahead. Led by Coach Brian and the team coaches, the sessions focused on conditioning, drills, and understanding the commitment required for UWC Thailand Sports. Building on that preparation, Secondary sports team tryouts followed, allowing students to put their skills into practice and aim for selection in our traveling competitive teams.

Through the CCP, the CCP Fair, Manta Mania, and sports tryouts, students continue to develop not just skills and fitness, but also teamwork, discipline, and a sense of commitment—setting the tone for an exciting year ahead.











Thinking Outside the Book

UWC Thailand Summer Camp

This summer, UWC Thailand partnered with **Teems Global** to host Summer Camp 2025, where campers were encouraged to *Think Outside the Book* over four exciting weeks.

From hands-on STEM challenges and creative workshops to outdoor adventures and collaborative team-building, students embraced a purposeful and dynamic approach to learning. The camp was filled with curiosity, connection, and personal growth — a summer to remember.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to making this year's camp such a meaningful and memorable experience.

Click here for more photos

Inside Elite Youth Coaching

Coach Steve shares takeaways from Aspire Academy's Asia tour

Coach Steve was invited to attend a regional coach education workshop this summer, delivered by the **Aspire Academy (Qatar)** at the Jalan Besar stadium, the headquarters of the **Singapore Football Association (FAS)**.

The Aspire Academy hosts 'knowledge sharing' events between professional club staff in person and online from a network of over 50 elite football clubs & member associations. Their mission is to "gather and synergise the know-how of worldwide expertise to offer recommendations for the management and modern training methodology of youth football players".

The next step is to share with parts of the broader football community through the "Fellows in the World" initiative - Coach Steve attended 'The Workshop Tour Asia' from 15-17 June with around 150 youth club and academy directors/coaches from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia.



Sharing their expertise on this occasion were club academy coaches from Liverpool, FC Porto, Juventus & Ajax, as well as national team staff from the Italian Football Association (FA), the English FA & the Singapore FA, in addition to the Aspire Academy staff, many of whom have worked at top clubs such as Lazio, Real Madrid and Manchester United.

"***I have been fortunate enough to attend many coaching conventions and educational events over the years, but I learn something new every time, without fail. It was great to get some fresh insights into the way youth football coaching methods are developing both on and off the field at elite organisations, with many practical applications that can be used directly or modified for those of us helping kids in the development phase or grassroots football.***"



Pathways for Change

Summer Programme 2025

This summer, UWC Thailand once again partnered with **Amala Education** to host the Pathways for Change Summer Programme, a three-week journey rooted in ethical leadership and cross-cultural connection. Students from **UWC Mostar, Good Shepherd Phuket Town, and an IB school in Busan, South Korea,** joined together on campus to live, learn, and grow as future ethical leaders.

The first week set the tone with sessions exploring leadership and communication, alongside team-building activities that nurtured friendships and community. A visit to Old Phuket Town was a highlight, where students explored local streets and markets, discovered the history of the island at the Phuket Thai Hua Museum, and enjoyed panoramic views from Khao Rang.

Cultural immersion continued with visits to Old Phuket Farm and Wat Phra Thong. At the farm, students learned about traditional agricultural practices and the region's tin mining history, while the temple visit introduced them to the legendary half-buried Buddha statue and the spiritual heritage of Phuket.

Across the programme, students engaged in diverse workshops, cultural experiences, and meaningful dialogue, each moment strengthening their understanding of leadership, identity, and the power of community. Their time in Phuket was not only about knowledge and skills, but also about forging connections that extend beyond borders.

The Pathways for Change Summer Programme at UWC Thailand was a celebration of curiosity, collaboration, and cultural appreciation — a truly inspiring example of learning in action.













Click here for more photos

The Pulse Noticeboard

Stay informed and engaged with what is happening at UWC Thailand

PRIMARY

Primary Coffee Mornings

Join us for the **Parents in the PYP series** with weekly coffee mornings **every Friday throughout the month of September** on different topics.

Contact: Kru Kurtis

WHOLE SCHOOL

Parent Book Discussion Group: Self-Confidence

Join our parent discussion group on Thrivers by Dr Michele Borba on **Tuesday, 9 September**, to explore the character strengths that help children thrive.

Contact: Kru Paco, Kru Len, or Kru Laurie.

PRIMARY

Primary MAP Assessments

Grade 3 to 5 students will participate in our Growth assessments in Math, Reading and Language Usage from **Monday, 8 - Friday, 12 September.**

Contact: Kru Kurtis

SECONDARY

Secondary MAP Assessments

Secondary students will participate in the MAP Growth assessments in Mathematics, Reading, and Language Usage from **Monday, 15 - Friday, 19 September.**

Contact: Kru Chantal

WHOLE SCHOOL

UWC DAY

UWC Day is an annual celebration held on 21 September, emphasising global values, community engagement, and environmental stewardship under a specific theme. This year, UWC Day will be celebrated on **Monday, 22 September.**

Contact: Kru Heidi

WHOLE SCHOOL

Wai Kru

Our annual Wai Kru Day, also known as the "Teacher Appreciation Ceremony," will be held on **Thursday, 25 September**. This Thai traditional event is where students pay respect to their teachers.

Contact: Kru Yui

WHOLE SCHOOL

Banned Books Week

Explore banned and challenged books with classroom discussions and library activities celebrating freedom of expression and the power of reading. **Monday, 29 September - Friday, 3 October.**

Contact: Kru Rebekka

WHOLE SCHOOL

SPT Conferences

Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences. Students lead conversations reflecting on and celebrating their learning, and setting goals for further improvement.
Thursday, 2 - Friday, 3 October.

Contact: Your homeroom teacher

WHOLE SCHOOL

Phuket MUN

Phuket Model United Nations at British International School Phuket (BISP) is an engaging conference where students develop debating, diplomacy, and leadership skills while discussing global issues.
Friday, 3 - Saturday, 4 October.

Contact: Kru Curran