



Invest For the Future!

How many times have you heard the catchphrase: "Invest for the Future" or "Plan Ahead"? Early in life many of us are taught to plan for the future. Good fortune isn't just good luck. Sound planning is the surest way of guaranteeing good fortune. This concept applies just as much to educational institutions as it does to regular commercial enterprise. And so it follows that here at Ruamrudee, we invest in our future: our students.

One tangible way we are investing in our students is through the renovation of the Elizabeth Library to provide a facility that will cater to our students' needs well into the twenty-first century. Libraries lie at the heart of all academic institutions because they are the major storehouses of knowledge. Although the proliferation of internet services and online resources is growing at an amazing rate, the most reliable information is still to be found in books. Books must first be published and due to the lengthy process of approval to publish including checks for accuracy, validity and reliability, they are often the number one choice when conducting research, and looking for facts and figures. Books continue to be an extremely valuable and reliable resource even though there are many opportunities to find information through the World Wide Web. Many books are now available on the web, but "web books" just haven't caught on. People of all ages still flock to libraries and books stores to check out the latest books from fiction stories to gardening books and every subject under the sun. Books are here to stay!

Our collection of books and materials is outstanding and because our collection is strong, the first phase of our library upgrade focused on making the library more comfortable

and attractive for our students, so that they'll want to come to the library often. Secondly, we improved our shelving capacity to make our collection more physically accessible. And third, we upgraded our computer system, so that students can receive valuable instruction on how to take full advantage of the computer technology available throughout the world. Fully successful research techniques today include using all manner of e-resources along with books. The new computers also provide students with another venue for publishing their work. There is now a wealth of educational software available and by carefully choosing what resources we purchase; students are actually learning when they think they are just 'playing'!

But this is all just a beginning. The library collection, our physical space, and offerings will continue to improve. In addition, over the next few years, a team of staff and administrators are working collectively to formulate a totally integrated technology plan for the future that includes our libraries. This will be a great challenge because of the pace at which electronic communications systems are developing. But here at RIS we welcome challenge. It's facing challenge that stimulates students, teachers, and administrators to greater achievements. We never stop learning; it's a lifelong endeavor. At Ruamrudee we are lucky. We are lucky because we have such well-resourced libraries to meet that endeavor. And we are lucky because Ruamrudee is just such a nice place to be.