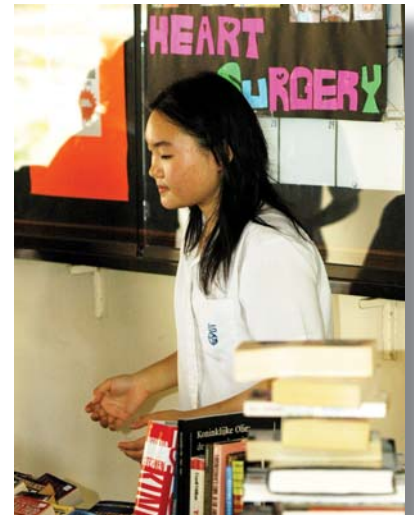
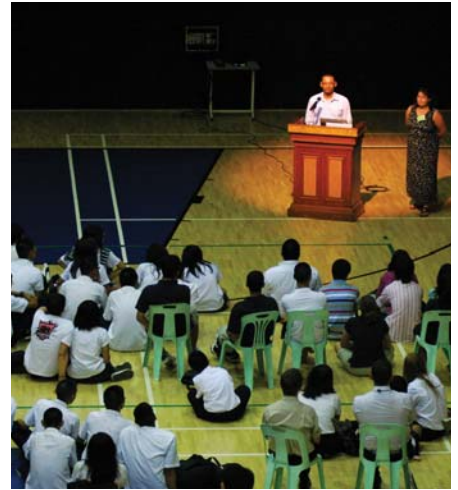


GLOBAL ISSUES SUMMIT

RIS HAS A DAY OF REFLECTION ON THE ISSUES IMPACTING OUR

By Barbara Bilgre, Nattapoj Kangthong, Pariya Sripakdeevong, Aziya Taalaibek-kyzy, Sid Sarawat, and Sanya Kalia



On Friday, October 10, the Global Issues Group (GIG) at RIS High School organized the first RIS Global Issues Summit. The aim of this summit was to raise awareness on the different global issues that face our world today. It also provided an opportunity for our school community to learn what world-changing activities our students are involved in and what opportunities are available for people to make a positive difference.

The GIG invited speakers from different local and international organizations to come and share their work on global issues and ways we can get involved. Presentations were made by:

- Sangduen Lek Chailert from the Elephant Nature Foundation speaking on the plight of the Asian elephant in Thailand
- Sarah Jacobs from the Clinton Climate Initiative speaking on climate change initiatives in Bangkok
- Mahesh Pradhan from the UNEP speaking on Environmental Challenges in the Asia-Pacific region
- Annette Bromdol from UNIFEM speaking about violence against women
- Sue Sangkum from Plant-a-Tree-Today Foundation speaking about climate change and our environment

As a bonus to these speakers, RIS was fortunate to have two keynote presentations. The High School keynote address was presented by Saksinee Emasiri from Action Aid. She spoke about Global Student Action and shared a wonderful video, "The Story of Stuff" about the negative impacts of consumptive use. (The free video can be downloaded at storyofstuff.com.)

The Elementary/Middle School keynote address was presented by RIS's very own 11th Grader, Natascha Yogachandra. Natascha spoke about how she started with a simple idea of sending books to the poor when she was seven years old and that idea snowballed into building libraries in various impoverished communities around the world. She also spoke about establishing the Hope is Life Foundation (www.hopeislife.org) after her month-long visit to India and Sri Lanka to help with the tsunami relief efforts in 2005. Natascha made a similar presentation to the high school students later in the day with her message about becoming involved. She encouraged students to develop their own projects and make a difference in the world. Students and teachers were very impressed by Natascha's presentations and efforts to give something of herself to helping others. Natascha serves as a role model to her RIS peers as students can see they have the ability to make positive changes in the world right now.

In addition to the speeches, the various NGOs set up information booths in the High School breezeway. RIS clubs, classes and professional staff also set up display booths to share their community service with the school.

The Global Issues Summit also attracted interest from other international schools in Bangkok. Teachers and small student groups from ISB, TCIS, Harrow's, ISE, NIST and St. Stephen's came to see the presentations and to consider how to plan a similar type of event at their own school.

The GIG was initiated in January 2008 under the supervision of Ms. Barbara Bilgre. The GIG's mission is for students to work with their school peers and outreach to other students around the world to work on solving some of the current global issues. The three global issues RIS students are working on are reducing global warming, education for all and eradicating poverty. Meetings are held in room H102 on Tuesdays at morning break. We hope more students will join us throughout the year and look forward to another Global Issues Summit next year.

Ever wonder where all your **STUFF comes from?
And where it all goes?**

