

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

The writer Stephen Covey describes proactive people as those who focus on issues within their circle of influence – they work on things they can do something about with a great, positive energy. Prodpran in Year 13 exemplifies this practice. Presently, she combines her studies with initiatives that are having a practical and meaningful impact on the lives of others in her circle of influence.



Prodpran “In Year 10, I became involved in a long-term project with the Fiscal Policy Research Institute Foundation of Thailand. My focus was tourism. I conducted fieldwork speaking to tourists at BTS stations. I noticed that a recurring theme was the lack of transport connectivity. With the BTS train system still growing and the bus system being very hard to navigate, many tourists rely on taxis. However, communication can then be a real problem for all involved.

This got me thinking and as the picture cleared, I thought perhaps I could help taxi drivers improve their English? So I got together with a lady called Khun Julie, who runs a taxi business, and now, every Saturday at their office in Ratchatewi, I teach English. I started teaching at 16. This led on to designing a guidebook, ‘A Guide to Basic English Conversations’, specifically tailored to the taxi transport system, highlighting commonly used phrases, numbers and greetings as well as pictures and descriptions of popular destinations.”

Prodpran’s work with the taxi driving community led to her meeting little Namoe, the son of one of the drivers working with Khun Julie. Namoe was born without a septum - an extremely rare heart condition.

“I am passionate about art and so I held an exhibition to sell my paintings to raise funds to pay for the high-calcium milk he needed in order to gain weight so that an operation was viable.”

It worked. Namoe has now had the operation he so desperately needed.

At the end of this year, Prodpran will leave us for Boston University. For her, an unexpected destination, as, until recently, she had always believed she would complete her education in the UK. However, as she learned more about how the UK application system works, with its emphasis on grade profiles, she had second thoughts.

“I was pleased when Prodpran started looking at schools that would recognise all the extra work she had done beyond pure academics. In Boston University, she has found an academic community that prioritises values and interests she shares. As a result, she will thrive there.”

*Amanda Poel
Head of Careers & University Guidance*

Prodpran: “Some people have really clear mindsets about their future, whereas others, like me, still don’t know. I can’t picture myself in 10 years. In Year 12 I had already made 5 changes to my major! I thought to myself, ‘How can I combine my interests and leave room to explore?’ In answering this question, I finally settled on Sociology at an American university. There I believe I can explore myself and find out who I really am. The flexibility of the US system is a big positive for me. I will be packing my suitcase with my art supplies, paint brushes, my Kopek Markers, my teddy and a camera - I love taking photos and currently manage four Instagram accounts including a food review account: Hungry Proddie.”

Prodpran will not be leaving the taxi drivers at Khun Julie’s without a teacher, she is currently training up Poon in Year 10 to continue the initiative she started.

