

Grace in Action

Stories of God at work in and through the GIS community

February 2018

Just-in-Time Provision

Twenty years ago, newlyweds Gary and Robin Alward of Campus Outreach arrived to Thailand with the simple vision of reaching Thai college students with the gospel. With the college years being a crucial time for young people to consider new ideas—including the good news of Jesus—Gary and Robin saw the college campus as a strategic place for ministry. Armed with youthful optimism and energy, the Alwards thought it might take seven years to see people come to faith in Christ, and to identify, train and hand off the work to local Thai leaders. Seven years came and went, and Gary and Robin realized their calling was for a lifetime.

The Alwards worked for many years with college students in Thailand's Isaan Province, with their four children in tow. God's favor was on their work, giving increase and growth, drawing Thai students to Himself. The Alwards and their expat teammates eventually worked themselves out of a job. They then handed the reins of ministry over to Thai believers to lead the work in Isaan from that point on.

With its many universities, Chiang Mai seemed an obvious next point from which to start a new chapter of student ministry. The Alwards, along with other outreach staff, moved to Chiang Mai in 2013. While Gary and Robin were aware of the strategic location that Chiang Mai would be for campus ministry, they did not realize at the time how strategic it would turn out to be for the needs of their own children.

Landing in Chiang Mai, and faced with the growing educational and social concerns of their four kids, Robin began praying, "Lord, give us what we need." After considering what GIS had to offer, the Alwards decided to enroll their kids in the school. Later, Robin accepted the job of elementary librarian where she now has the privilege of ministering to others' children, as well as to her own kids. By getting to know the families at GIS, Robin gets a glimpse of what God is doing all over Asia, and she is happy that her role supports that work.

Robin knows that GIS is providing more than just academics for her children. Without the school, she says, "Yes, we could have enrolled the kids in Internet courses, but there would not have been any of the extras that kids need, too—student government, sports trips, or Wednesday night Bible studies. I am so thankful that God knew what we needed, and He brought us to a place with all of this support for our kids."

Grace International School exists to enable international Christian workers to remain in their field of service by providing for the educational needs of their children.

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