

lone buffalo

2015 - 16 End of Term Report



Lone Buffalo make studying English fun

During the 2015 – 16 Term Lone Buffalo’s combined Western and Lao teaching team provided quality, structured English tuition to more than 200 young people. Lone Buffalo students come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and 45% of students are female.

Fifteen Lone Buffalo students completed their final year of State High School and are now studying at Tertiary level in Luang Prabang, Vientiane, or at Teacher Training College near Phonsavan. One student is now studying in China.

Lone Buffalo’s five local teachers taught 120 Beginners, and 35 students were able to move from the Beginner level to study with native speakers at Elementary Level.



Speaking is encouraged from an early stage

Lone Buffalo's western volunteers taught a further 80 students at Elementary, Pre Intermediate and Intermediate levels.



Teaching couple Mark and Nancy Reilly arrived in January

Class attendance during the term across the 10 classes averaged 75%, 11 students had 100% attendance over the term. This impressive figure reflects the student's commitment to studying English at Lone Buffalo, considering students attend state school during the daytime and often have many duties around the home and farms to complete too.



Students with Outstanding Attendance Certificates at End of Term Awards Ceremony

Assessing Progress

Regular testing forms an important part of assessing student's progress, providing a clear path to the higher levels. During the course of the term Senior Teacher Mark Reilly oversaw oral, listening and written testing for the Beginners and Advanced Beginner classes.

New Classes

Five new classes were added to the schedule over the course of the term as students progressed through from Beginner, Advanced Beginner to Elementary level.

Two new Advanced Beginner classes and a second western taught Level 3 Elementary class began in March 2016.



Teacher Khammanh with his 2A Advanced Beginner class



Teacher Steve with his 2B Advanced Beginner class

The new Elementary class marked a significant step in Lone Buffalo's development. These students joined Lone Buffalo without English language skills, and studied with local teachers at the two beginner levels. They are now studying at Elementary level with a Western teacher, competently speaking and writing English.



Senior Teacher Mark with the 3A Elementary class, who spoke no English when they joined Lone Buffalo

Two new Beginner classes began during the term, providing the opportunity for 50 more young people to study at Lone Buffalo. Class 1C was the first class aimed at students aged from 11 to 14. This class was also made up of a number of children whose parents work for Unexploded Ordnance clearance programs. Attendance in this class is 94%.



Teacher Philip with his 1C Class, a junior class aimed children whose parents work for UXO Clearance programs

Student Awards

Rewarding students for their efforts in the classroom is an important part of Lone Buffalo's program. Awards don't necessarily go to the strongest students; attendance, marked improvements, involvement in extra curricular activities and willingness to help with school tasks all play a part in the teachers' decisions.

During the term 50 students were awarded 'Student of the Month' certificates and received Lone Buffalo merchandise. In November Miss Veela Xiong became the youngest recipient of an award to date – aged 12. Outstanding Attendance certificates were also awarded to students at the end of the term.



Teacher Philip presents 12 year old Miss Veela with her Student of the Month Award



Beginner Class 1B Students of the Month - Mr Anulack, Miss Sydavanh and Miss Kong Jai

Special Outstanding Achievement Awards were presented to students leaving to study at University next term, who had contributed significantly to extra curricular activities.



Former Lone Buffalo Student Miss Bie Xiong receives an Outstanding Contribution Award, along with summer High School leavers Miss Chua Lee and Mr. Kao Lee.

Responsibility in the classroom

Involving young people in the running of Lone Buffalo and its extra curricular activities is part of the ethos. Allocating classroom duties to students is a great way of teaching responsibility.



Class 1C Representatives - Mr. Atdee and Miss Lima

All classes held 'elections' to appoint Classroom Representatives and Librarians for the 2015-16 term. Students make sure their class complete cleaning tasks, encourage good attendance and pass class feedback to Lone Buffalo teachers and officials. Librarians sign out books to their class - and make sure they are returned on time.



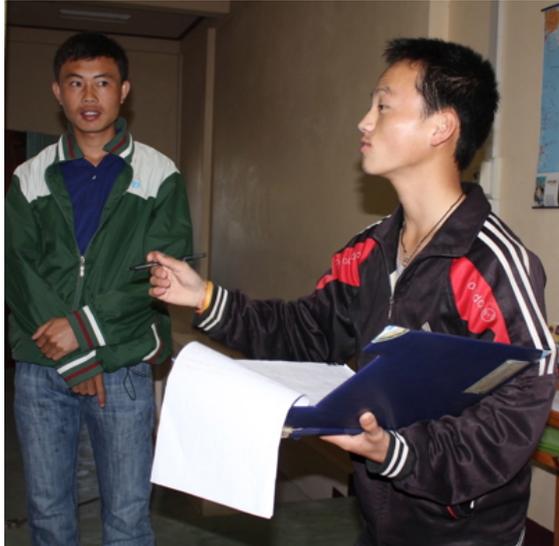
Class 2A librarians – Miss Chua E Vue and Miss Xia Vang

During the term the Lone Buffalo Student Council had their inaugural meeting. The council is made up of the classroom representatives and senior students chair the meetings. The suggestions they make are passed onto the teaching team to implement during the term.



The first meeting of the Lone Buffalo student council

Student in focus – Teng Vue Fai Dang (20}



During the term Mr Teng 'TV' Vue - one of the first ever students to register at Lone Buffalo - moved on to study at University in the capital. He is now studying Business Management at the National University of Laos.

Teng is a great example of the difference that Lone Buffalo can make to the lives of young people. He started as a very quiet and shy student and blossomed into a confident and creative individual, expressing himself through the films he has directed for Lone Buffalo. In 2015 he confidently entertained the US Embassy delegation at the Vientiane film festival - in both English and Lao. Before he left Lone Buffalo Teng Vue hosted a weekend editing workshop for other students to share his knowledge. On occasions Teng Vue has surprised his teachers with questions like 'do you think history is true?!' Teng's most recent short film is about the impact of climate change on the environment.

Teacher Training @ Lone Buffalo

Developing the teaching skills of the five Lao teachers is one of Lone Buffalo's key objectives. It allows students to move through the system more quickly, creating much needed space at the beginner level for new students. As most of Lone Buffalo's local teachers also teach in state schools it also extends influence in the wider community. Teacher Nick and Teacher Paula hosted weekend Teaching workshops and during this term Colin Vandergraaf, an English Language fellow attached to the US Embassy, presented weekend workshops for both Lone Buffalo teachers and student teachers from the local community.



Colin Vandergraaf, from the US Embassy's English teaching program hosts a workshop for teachers from Lone Buffalo and the local community.

Lone Buffalo 'Carry a Book to Laos' Library

Several years ago Lone Buffalo supporters Tom and Julie Coash began a campaign to 'Carry a Book to Laos' in order to build a library at Lone Buffalo. The library has grown into a very popular corner of the classroom - especially with the Level 1 Beginner students.



Senior student Mr Kao Lee built the new library shelving unit.

Watch out for further ways of getting books to Lone Buffalo from the US and the UK through the [Carry a Book to Laos](#) project.

Learning about the local community



“Beautiful, scary, exciting, sad, important” Is how students described the UXO Survivor centre

An important part of Lone Buffalo’s curriculum is students learning about their local community, and using their English to describe their feelings and experiences. Lone Buffalo also educates students about the dangers of unexploded ordnance and about the clearance and victims assistance work being done in the community. During the term teachers took students to visit the Mines Advisory Group and UXO Survivor Centre.

[Lone Buffalo Trip Advisor UXO Survivor Centre review](#)

[Lone Buffalo Trip Advisor Mines Advisory Group Visitors Centre review](#)



Teacher Karen and Lone Buffalo students visiting the Provincial Hospital

Students also visited the COPE Centre in Vientiane to learn about the organisation's work providing artificial limbs for victims of UXO accidents - something young people from Phonsavan are only too aware of.



Students learning more about Unexploded Ordnance at the COPE Centre in Vientiane

Lone Buffalo students past and present were also welcomed at the American Center in Vientiane. Students learnt about opportunities to study overseas, to learn English, use the library, and participate in youth leadership programs. The US Embassy is receiving more and more scholarship applications from former students studying in the capital.



Lone Buffalo students visit the American Centre in Vientiane

Presentations @ Lone Buffalo

Spirit of Soccer founder Scotty Lee spoke with students about how they use football as a means of getting across Mines Risk Education messages in UXO affected counties as far afield as Iraq, Cambodia and Colombia, and of course Laos. Spirit of Soccer support Lone Buffalo's football coaching program in Phonsavan and have to date certified 14 students with FIFA D licenses.



A ball and 'bombie' being displayed during a presentation by Mines Risk Education organisation Spirit of Soccer

Interplast, a volunteer team of Australian plastic surgeons, anesthetists and nurses made a welcome return visit to Lone Buffalo. Students learnt about their work with burn injuries and deformities and even had an impromptu emergency first response lesson. Students toured the local hospital and met some of the patients treated by the Interplast team.



Volunteer plastic surgeons from Interplast visit Lone Buffalo

United World Colleges made a trip to Phonsavan to spend an evening discussing their scholarship programs with a group of senior students.

Observing International Events

Teachers planned themed lessons around Mines Awareness Day and World Earth Day. On hearing about President Obama's visit to Laos, Lone Buffalo students crafted a special invitation that was presented to the US Embassy for forwarding to Washington.



Miss La Xiong presents an invitation for President Obama to visit Lone Buffalo to Matthew Ference, Public Affairs Officer at the US Embassy, Vientiane

Lone Buffalo film making



On the set of the award winning 'The Twins' production

Encouraging creative skills plays an important part in the development of young people at Lone Buffalo. Students started working with film in 2012 and have had films shown at youth competitions around the world and regularly featured at the Vientiane Film Festival. This summer current student directors, Miss Pa Nyia and Miss La Xiong attended a five week film making course in Luang Prabang.



Lone Buffalo students at the 2016 Vientiane Short Film Festival

During the term students produced four new short films – '[Obstacles..](#)' about the difficulties in finding a place to study English, '[I Am Messi](#)' which won an 'Excellent Comedy' award from Cinema Sports, and '[The Twins](#)' which won a 'Top Pick' award at the Cinemas Sports for Universities 2016 competition.



Korean animation expert Hui ching-Tseng works with Lone Buffalo students on their first animation.

Students also produced their first animation - a powerful production highlighting the '[The Danger of Bombs](#)'.

In March a group of young student filmmakers attended the Vientiane Short film festival in the capital. During the weekend they also introduced their films to the British and America Embassies in the capital, the first time many students had stood on a stage.



Lone Buffalo co-founder Mark Steadman and students introduce their films at the British Embassy Cultural Day.



'We have learnt many new things and have met people who can help us in our future'... Miss Pa Nyia puts a positive spin on the disappointment of not winning a prize at the 2016 Vientiane Short Film festival

Student in focus - Miss La Xiong (17)



Miss La receives her third Student of the Month Award from Legacies of War Founder Channapha Khamvongsa and Teacher True.

Miss La's family understood the importance of learning English and the opportunities Lone Buffalo provides. La's older sister Miss Bie Xiong was also a star student at Lone Buffalo and last year became the first ethnic H'mong girl to study at the Faculty of Engineering in the capital, Vientiane.

La has a record four Student of the Month awards. She studies in the senior Intermediate level English class. La is a class librarian and manages the Lone Buffalo Girls football team. This summer she spent five weeks studying film making in Luang Prabang and now co-directs Lone Buffalo movies.

Miss La is in her final year at High School and hopes to study International Banking at university in 2017.

Lone Buffalo Football Coaching



Lone Buffalo encourages girl and boy students to participate in football coaching

Football plays an important part in Lone Buffalo's ethos of bringing young people together in different environments to develop confidence, companionship and teamwork skills. These values can be taken into the classroom and applied to their studies. Lone Buffalo offers the only regular girls football coaching program in the province, which has been supported by the US Embassy since the program began 2013.

Around 40% of students are involved in weekend football coaching, providing an important social side to the project. Once students show a commitment to both English study and football training they are awarded Lone Buffalo football kit.



Senior Coach Lassi and Miss Nar, student coach

The current coaching team consists of former and current students. During the term Lone Buffalo student Miss Nar (15) was awarded a FIFA D licence coaching badge, becoming Lone Buffalo's youngest ever coach. She now assists with coaching junior boys and girls.

During the term Lone Buffalo's filmmakers teamed up with the girl footballers to film a short [Thank You](#) to the US Embassy.

Visitors @ Lone Buffalo



US Deputy Chief of Mission Michael Klein awards new players with Embassy sponsored football kit

In January US Deputy Chief of Mission Michael Klein spent two hours with Lone Buffalo students, teachers and staff. It was the fifth visit from the US Embassy since 2013. The Embassy has been an enthusiastic supporter of Lone Buffalo, sponsoring both girls football and filmmaking at the centre.



The Deputy Chief of Mission was impressed by the talented young students, 'This place is buzzing!' he commented about the energy that he felt during his visit.

Lone Buffalo also welcomed Lao students from Vientiane, participants in the US Embassy's South East Asia Youth Leadership Program. Lone Buffalo Teacher Khammanh was selected to escort these young leaders to the United States for a month. In return they pledged to visit Lone Buffalo and donate books to the library.



Students from the US Embassy's South East Asia Youth Leadership Program visit Lone Buffalo.

Rudi Leidl, who works with a Cambodian NGO run by Buddhist monks, visited Lone Buffalo and was very impressed with the commitment of the students.

Two tour groups from UK adventure travel company Wild Frontiers stopped by – including a returning group who acted as book mules delivering donated books from the UK and the US for the student carry a book to Laos library.

During the term Lone Buffalo 'Ambassadors' Mr Lucky Yang and Miss Bie Xiong returned to deliver motivational talks to Beginners and meet with senior students to discuss final exams and life outside of Phonsavan.



Former student and now Lone Buffalo Ambassador 'Lucky' Yang returns to Lone Buffalo.

Clients from class supporters Wild Frontiers, Khiri Travel, Stray Asia, Nakarath Travel and Selective Asia all arranged visits for their clients to the English Development Centre.



Wild Frontiers clients deliver donated books for the Lone Buffalo library.

Student in focus - Mr Koua Neng Vang (14)



Teacher Steve with Mr Koua Neng Vang

Mr Koua Neng is a great example of how Lone Buffalo can help young people to a better life. His parents live eight hours away in the neighbouring Hua Phan province.

He was sent to Phonsavan to study and stays with relatives. He was always an outstanding talent at football coaching – but he struggled in class and his frustrations affected his attendance. Teacher Steve stepped in, adding him to his class so he could watch over him. Since then his confidence has grown and he played the lead part in the award winning 'I am Messi' film, attended the Vientiane short film festival earlier this year – and scored a hat trick on his debut for the senior football team!

More importantly Mr Koua Neng's English is really improving. He can study for another five years with Lone Buffalo, by which time his English will be as good as any of our current senior students. In June Mr Koua Neng received his first Student of the Month Award.

Moving on from Lone Buffalo

Among the Lone Buffalo students who started their tertiary studies in the capital, Vientiane, during this term were Mr Sone Kao (Disability Studies), Miss Soukdivan (Marketing & Business) Mr Yee Chang (Accounting),

Mr Fue Lor (Accounting) and Miss Bie Xiong (Environmental Engineering).



Former Lone Buffalo students meeting together in Vientiane.

In Vientiane, former students Mr Yeng 'Lucky' Yang and Miss Bie Xiong coordinate a support network for alumni. There are currently more than 30 former Lone Buffalo students studying at Universities in Laos, Vietnam, and China. Put Phimmavong, one of the first students to study with Teacher Nick at Lone Buffalo, completed his University studies and began studying Korean language and Material Engineering at Sunmoon University in South Korea.

Lone Buffalo Supporters Program

The **US Embassy** (gold), **Explore Worldwide** (silver) and **Bamboozle Bar and Restaurant** (bronze) all continued to support Lone Buffalo during the 2015-6 term.

The class supporters program is in it's second year now, providing valuable funds as well as giving organisations the opportunity to share in our students' progress. Linking up with International schools in Laos (Panyathip and Kiettisack International Schools both support classes) presents opportunities to bring together young people from different backgrounds and cultures to work together on films, sport and UXO projects. In addition to individual donors travel companies Wild Frontiers, Khiri Travel, Stray Asia, Nakarath Travel and Selective Asia all continued to support classes at Lone Buffalo.



1000 Facebook Likes! – Miss Ly Ly from Luang Prabang’s @My Library project became Lone Buffalo’s 1000th Facebook ‘like’ during the term – now there are over 1300 followers.

Lone Buffalo Social Enterprise Program

During the term Lone Buffalo expanded its English program for employees of UK charity, Mines Advisory Group (MAG). Lone Buffalo invested this additional funding into new community classes – including one specifically directed at the UXO Clearance workers children.

Fundraising

Primary and secondary students from Kiettisack International School in Luang Prabang held a "Valentine's Day Carnival Day for cause!" fundraising event to support a class. Students spent weeks planning booths, games and events to raise money to help Lone Buffalo. Lone Buffalo Chief Operating Officer, Mark Steadman, visited the school to make a presentation to teachers and students.



Fundraising for Lone Buffalo at Kiettisack International School



Mark Steadman talks about Lone Buffalo to students of Kiettisack International school in Luang Prabang

Governance

Lone Buffalo became a registered UK Charity in 2014. During the 2016-17 term two new trustees were added to the UK board and former Lone Buffalo volunteer Jackie Thomas was appointed Head of Trustees.

2016 – 17 Term Key Objectives



More than 300 young people registered to join LB at the start of the 2016 – 17 term.

Start new classes for many of the young people waiting to join Lone Buffalo. More than 300 new students registered this term and are waiting for classes.

Work with experienced educators, to develop a new dynamic curriculum for beginner levels.

Monitor Lone Buffalo students finishing high school to ensure they find university and vocational school placements.

Provide employment and training for 2 new local teachers.

Continue to develop opportunities for females – 45% of students are girls and Lone Buffalo has female football coaches and film directors.

Provide school fees, where necessary, to assist current Lone Buffalo students finishing High School to secure university or vocational school placements.

Host regular Lone Buffalo Teacher Training workshops to improve the quality of teaching within the local community.

Fund FIFA coaching certificates for an additional five male and five female students and prepare some of the girls to represent their province at the National Games in 2018.

Fund filmmaking projects at Lone Buffalo for the 2017 Vientiane Film Festival and Cinema Sports school and university events.

Launch the Lone Buffalo website in early 2017.



'English is my future'

Thanks to Lone Buffalo's supporters

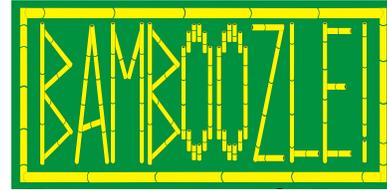
Gold Supporter



Silver Supporter

EXPLORE!

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Class Supporters



SELECTIVE
āSIA



'Teacher Nick' Williamson

Gill Charlton

Ross Masterman

