

Healing Art for Little Hands

In about a month, Christina Ingbretsen from Larvik, Norway will be on her way to Thailand. It will be her fourth trip to Thailand, and although she holds a special place in her heart for Thailand, her first meeting with Thai culture was prompted by the tsunami in December 2004.

By: Sarah Katz

Christina Ingbretsen will never forget her first trip to Thailand. Her uncle was among the missing persons from the tsunami in 2004, and while she travelled here to say goodbye to him, she ended up working with a Thai art teacher to improve the lives of the children in Phang Nga Province who lost one or both their parents in the tsunami. She recently established a connection with the Norwegian-owned Jotun Paint Manufacturers to supply paint to the project. The story of how Jotun became a donor of paint to a one-woman arts center mixes coincidence with loyalty and is proof that tragedy can spur new beginnings...

When the Tsunami hit

Before December 2004, Christina had no relations to Thailand. She was living happily in Norway when she lost her uncle in the tsunami, and she came to Thailand as part of a trip organized by the



“After the tsunami, my family and I got a lot of help and support from the Thai people. This is a way for me to give back to them.”



Norwegian state for relatives of tsunami victims. On this trip she met Anders and Lise Bang Ericsson, a Norwegian couple who lost their two-year-old son Ragnar in the tsunami and established Ragnars Care Foundation to help children affected by the tsunami. The couple told her about The Little Hands Art Foundation, and Christina went there to visit.

“I met with Ms. Kruakaew, the driving force behind the foundation. Her dedication made a deep impression on me.”

Internship with The Little Hands
Back in Norway, Christina could

not forget The Little Hands Foundation and the impressive woman who was working to heal the psychological wounds for local children affected by the tsunami. As part of her bachelor's degree in political science, six weeks of voluntary work was mandatory.

“I did not hesitate on the decision on where I wanted to go. I wanted to meet with Ms. Kruakaew again.”

So she planned a trip for herself and two fellow students to work with her. During their stay, they worked with Ms. Kruakaew who is a teacher, but also cooperated with teachers at the different schools.