

THOMAS HART BENTON MURAL MEDIALLION AWARD CEREMONY



To Honor

Mom Rajawongse
Disnadda Diskul

*Chairman of the Mae
Fah Loung Foundation*

Monday April 4, 2016

Plaza Athenee, Bangkok



มูลนิธิแม่ฟ้าหลวง ในพระบรมราชูปถัมภ์
Mae Fah Luang Foundation Under Royal Patronage



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

**Thomas Hart Benton Mural Medallion
Award Ceremony
in Bangkok, Thailand**

Guest of Honor



M.R. Disnadda Diskul

Chairman, Mae Fah Luang Foundation
Under Royal Patronage

Join us as we honor Mom Rajawongse Disnadda Diskul, Chairman of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation Under Royal Patronage for his lifetime achievement in the design and implementation of sustainable development to eradicate opium crops and consolidate alternative livelihoods in the Golden Triangle between 1988 and 2015.

The outcome of his effort has been recognized at global level, as a truly multi-sectoral and participatory rural social enterprise, whereby empowered people have overcome poverty and ultimately helped themselves.

Date: Monday, April 4th, 2016

Time: Registration: 18.00

Reception: 18.30 – 20.00

Venue: Kandhavas Place – 4th Floor, Plaza Athénée Bangkok
61 Wireless Road (Witthayu)

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AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

PRESIDENT MCROBBIE, EXCELLENCIES,
COLLEAGUES, AND IU ALUMNI,

1. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to Indiana University for awarding me the prestigious Thomas Hart Benton Mural Medallion. I am humbled and honoured to be receiving such an important recognition from my alma mater.
2. However, this esteemed award is not mine to accept alone. I am only able to stand here today, owing to the steadfast vision and mission of Thailand's great lady and inspiration, Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra, the late mother of our King and the grandmother of Princess Sirindhorn, who founded the Mae Fah Luang Foundation. Her Royal Highness devoted her life to building our nation through alleviating poverty and providing livelihood opportunities to marginalized people regardless of race, nationality, gender, and religion. This award is for Her.

3. In addition, I would like to dedicate this award to the people of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation... To the communities who have faith and who put in every effort to better their own lives and the lives of their families and serve as inspiration for others... To Mae Fah Luang team who commit their hearts and souls to “give, give, and only give”. And to our likeminded partners and allies, many of whom are in this room, who believe in and work with us to realize more benefits for more communities. The impact we have created on the ground is not an effort of one person but a result of teamwork, perseverance, and years of continuity.

4. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Indiana University for shaping a part of who I am today. From the days of captaining the IU Hoosiers soccer team 53 years ago, the fighter spirit continues to live on in this body. IU has built me up to dare, to do, to fail, and to keep on redoing and redoing. Importantly, IU has taught me the values of good education- which does not stop in the classroom but is a journey of lifelong learning, of lasting friendships, of continuing to connect and find synergies. And that is why we have found each other here today. I am grateful to IU leadership, President McRobbie, and IU alumni network in reaching out, reconnecting, and looking to this corner of the world to learn from the ASEAN, share knowledge and expertise and work together for the greater good of the world.

5. I am very happy that Indiana University has expanded its presence in Asia and chosen Thailand as a strategic partner. Compared to IU's extensive faculty and student body, the Mae Fah Luang Foundation is only a small organization. However, I strongly believe that the examples and lessons we have accumulated from working firsthand with communities over the past four decades can be of use to communities tackling poverty and trying to realize sustainable development regionally and globally. I am confident that Thailand can be a hub for North-South collaboration, forging synergies between our field experiences and real-life examples with IU's academic expertise and far-spanning alumni network. I am excited to visiting IU next week, from the 12th to the 15th of April, reuniting with old friends who go a long way back 56 years and meeting with IU management to look to the future together. I truly look forward to the promising collaboration between Indiana University and the Mae Fah Luang Foundation bearing fruit and realizing profound benefits for communities globally.

I thank you sincerely.

