

## STUDENTS USE SPRING BREAK TO HELP TSUNAMI VICTIMS

**91 American college students and staff traveled to Thailand for Spring Break 2005 to help victims recover from the Asian Tsunami. 180 Thai students joined in relief and recovery projects in 3 areas. More American students form relief team departing in May.**

ORLANDO, FL, March 31, 2005 – 91 college students from around the USA traveled to tropical beaches in Thailand for Spring Break 2005. They didn't go to party in the sun and surf. Rather, they went to help in ongoing relief and recovery projects for victims of the December 26, 2004 Asian Tsunami that may have killed 200,000 people.

Campus Crusade for Christ sponsored the trip. 180 Thai students active in Thailand Campus Crusade for Christ joined the American students. The students divided into teams of twenty working in three coastal villages and islands devastated by the tsunami.

In the village of Khaolak where seventy-eight homes were destroyed by the tsunami, survivors are living in a refugee camp. The local people, the Morgan, are often called sea gypsies. Without outside help, they would be unable to re-build. Students finished three houses and started six others in only one week.

A 7.0 earthquake interrupted the project mid-week. Warned late in the afternoon of the danger of another tsunami, the American and Thai students dropped their tools and were rushed to higher ground. The sea gypsies posted lookouts on the shore to watch for the water to suddenly recede from shore. They knew that they would have twenty minutes to then escape the oncoming tsunami.

Fortunately, no tsunami appeared. The next morning the American and Thai students returned fearful that all of their tools would be gone, looted by poor people who had lost everything. "We were amazed!" said Penn State graduate Ross Shearer. "With tsunami lookouts posted, the Morgan had picked up all the tools and secured them. They were so grateful for our help, they didn't want anything to happen to our tools."

The Thai and American students also wanted to help meet the spiritual needs of the people. One afternoon after laying concrete block all day, Jenny Bailey from UC-Santa Barbara, and Amy Spriggs, from UC-San Louis Obispo, met villagers in the Khaolak refugee camp. Through an interpreter, they shared with one woman how she could begin a personal relationship with God through Jesus. After a few minutes, the woman made that faith decision to trust Jesus.

Just then, the man who had taught Bailey and Spriggs how to lay block came in. The woman was their instructor's sister-in-law. "I had so wanted to share my faith with him," said Bailey. "But I knew it would have been culturally inappropriate for me to seem to teach him. But now, a member of his family can share with him the same Good News we both have discovered."

Founded in 1951, Campus Crusade for Christ International is one of the largest interdenominational organizations in the world with 27,000 full-time staff serving in 190 countries. The U.S. Campus Ministry is active on 1100 campuses throughout America. Preparations are under way for the next relief team of American students to travel to Thailand in May to continue the tsunami recovery effort.

### Media Notes:

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