



SEKOLAH BINA CITA UTAMA

The First National Plus School in Central Kalimantan

PROGRESS REPORT

September 2008



From 2005...

...to 2008



OUR MISSION

Is to develop a high-quality learning environment which nurtures and educates children, so that, as adults, they will be able to make real and positive contributions to the development of their communities and the world.

BCU SCHOOL CONTINUES TO GROW!

The school holidays feel already very far behind; maybe they did not even happen? The pace seems to accelerate and we try to go with the flow, but not too fast.

The highlights:

- ❖ The BCU Students that participated in the National Examinations in June achieved good results, being in the top half of the state average. These results are more impressive considering that the students only devoted one hour per day to prepare for these Indonesian exams (the rest of the day they learn the international curriculum). Additionally, we are very proud of the grade 9 pupils who achieved the 1st, 5th and 8th place in the Palangka Raya Mathematics Olympiad. The school is a happy place with a positive atmosphere, which is always reinforced by the principals Pak Gunardjo and Karim Macdonald and all the teachers.
- ❖ Our marketing efforts - headed by Litha Mustafa - had a good result and our student numbers rose from 36 to 52 kids.
- ❖ The Widarbo house was transformed into a boarding house and was ready for the first day of school. Teguh and Renee Santosa with their 2 young children arrived in July from the UK to act as house parents and also to do some teaching. The boarding house started with 7 boarders: 6 boys and 1 girl. There is interest from other parents as well. Financially, the boarding house is making a loss as the break even point is 12 students. The maximum capacity of the boarding house is around 15 kids.
- ❖ We have received all the money for the School Bus as promised by Japanese Subud members and we are most grateful for their support. The bus was ordered in June, and after many months of negotiations and bargaining, Mansur Geiger was able to obtain a discount. We expect delivery in November/December, as there is a large backlog and shortage in Indonesia. The bus will improve the safety and also the economy of the transport of pupils from Palangkaraya.



BCU Students win Math Olympiad



BCU School welcomes Teguh and Renee Santosa



Boarding House in Rungan Sari

GROWING PAINS

As a school, we have moved from the early start-up phase and into the more intermediate phase of growth and consolidation.



Students play Indonesian baseball

BCU started very small and informally, but with more pupils, teachers, fundraising, admin, boarding house, etc, there is now a clear need to organise ourselves more formally and to ensure that all of the small things are not left to key personnel. With this in mind, we are reviewing our organisation, writing job descriptions, delegating tasks and other good stuff without becoming bureaucratic, we hope.

With the increase in the number of students, the size of classrooms has also become an issue. For the present, we have managed to squeeze most of the 52 students into the classrooms around the

Latihan Hall. Two of our classes are at full capacity and is a challenge for both teachers and students.

In order for us to be able to increase student numbers in the next academic year, 2009-2010, we will have to build at least 2 or 3 larger classrooms. We estimate the cost to be around \$25,000. So, we need to do a lot of fundraising, as we need to start building already in February.

TEACHER TRAINING

One of the missions of the BCU school is to help improve the quality of the local schools; the Education Department of Central Kalimantan has also requested this. In January 2008, YUM (Yayasan Usaha Mulia) took the initiative to submit a funding proposal to Barclays Bank for an Integrated Educational Program in Central Kalimantan; which also included a Teacher Training component that BCU would carry out. Being successful in getting grants is always an uncertain business and we were pleasantly surprised when we heard just recently that Barclays Bank (Hong Kong) had approved the funding.

The program aims to train a total of 80 teachers in the local area of Bukit Batu, in the six villages surrounding Rungan Sari. Training workshops will be held on Saturdays, in 4 groups, over a period of one year and also will provide classroom support to help solidify the material learned. We are now busy working on a detailed project plan and are starting to recruit key personnel.

We very much look forward to working together with YUM.

TEACHER CONTINUITY

Maintaining teacher continuity is an ongoing challenge. Often, the qualified teachers in Central Kalimantan are unable to speak English, and teachers from Java generally do not want to live in Kalimantan. In the last month we lost two Indonesian teachers, including a very promising Mathematics teacher with good English. She just got a marriage proposal that she could not resist, which means a move to East Kalimantan. His gain is our loss!

So we have to do more recruitment again.

We are in contact with several potential volunteers from overseas, but we can use more, as 2 of our present team are completing their terms in December.

We are very grateful to Sylvana Gleeson and Lucinda Young for their dedication and hard work and will be sorry to see them go in December.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact us !

We are also looking to appoint a senior Indonesian teacher or another expatriate teacher on a longer term basis.



Melinda the math teacher who couldn't resist a marriage proposal!



Sylvana Gleeson - cool in the pool with the Grade 2 swimming class.

COST ISSUES NEVER GO AWAY FOR LONG AND BCU IS NO EXCEPTION

■ Electricity costs per KWh have more than doubled, due to a general energy shortage in Indonesia. We held a competition between classes and staff, to see who could use the least air conditioning. The class that won all got ice cream!

■ Teacher's salaries in Indonesia – which were traditionally very low - were increased 30% earlier this year by the government, and will be raised again soon by a similar percentage. This is a good thing, as it will motivate more capable people to go into teaching. For BCU School it means we have also increased teacher salaries in order to be competitive in attracting teachers to the school.

■ The boarding school will make a loss in its starting up year, which we predicted.

Of course, all these cost increases affect our operational budget which we now will have to adjust again.

20% of student population on scholarship

We are very grateful to our new scholarship donors: Lienhard Berger, Lilian Cadera, Lewis and Rosemary Hayward, Siti Ismana Tsujimura, Nick Mawdsley and Mary Jo Heher. These donors join our existing scholarship donors: Lance and Alya Monnichmeyer, Subud Adelaide, and Subud Perth.

Thank you for your support!!

Comments from a questionnaire to the scholarship students:

One 8 year old boy wrote: "I wanted to go to school at BCU because this is a school that truly educates children to be useful human beings"

A 10 year old girl said: "I want to become a child that is clever and that has good behaviour, and also because I also want to be able to speak English".

Another student wrote, "I like BCU School because I feel safe and students are not allowed to say bad things".

Donations

In this phase of stabilisation and growth the school cannot yet break even financially and this year about 40% of income needs to come from donations. We are making efforts to keep costs low where possible and increase school fees. We plan to reduce the need for donations to 20 % in the coming year and then break even the year after. Of course, the cost of building 3 more classrooms will be an extra investment.

This means that donations are more than welcome and we attach a donation form.

Our team enjoys the cooperative challenge and we look to the future with optimism.

Once again, our heart felt thanks for your support and greetings, from the management team:

Michael van der Matten, Utami Geiger, M. Bachrun Bustillo, Litha Mustafa, and Karim and Rashidah MacDonald.



Scholarship students have a good reason to smile!



Dorotea with scholarship students Maria and Anik



GM Michael van der Matten at work



BINA CITA UTAMA SCHOOL

The First National Plus School in Central Kalimantan

FRIENDS OF THE SCHOOL

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

I WOULD LIKE TO BE A:

1. Founding Partner of the School:

Donating on a regular basis of _____ per month for a period of _____ year(s)

2. Friend of the School, one off donation of _____

3. Scholarship Supporter

Full Scholarship at a cost of US\$ 2000 per year

Or, partial donation to the Scholarship Fund of _____

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE:

1. Secure on-line donations through Susila Dharma International at
www.susiladharm.org (Please specify it is for BCU School, Kalimantan)

2. Through Susila Dharma national bodies. Please contact your national SD chairman. Donations made through SD Canada, SD France, SD Germany, SD UK, and SD USA are tax deductible.

3. By Bank Transfer:

BENEFICIARY: Yayasan Bina Cita Utama

BENEFICIARY ADDRESS: Rungan Sari, Jl. Tjilik Riwut Km36, Sei Gohong, Bukit Batu, Palangkaraya 73225, Kalimantan Tengah, Indonesia

BANK: BNI (Bank Negara Indonesia)

BANK ADDRESS: Palangkaraya, Kalimantan Tengah, Indonesia

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 0083731002

SWIFT CODE: BNINIDJA