

## Banpu Offers Unique Career Guidance to Youth by Career Role Models Building a Strong Foundation for the Right Future

The unemployment rate in Thailand has been increasing since 2013. According to the National Statistical Office of Thailand's 2017 labor force survey, over 550 thousand new graduates who graduated in March 2017 are seeking jobs, which raised the total number of unemployed persons from 120,000 to 140,000 – 150,000. The problem was resulted from many factors, namely economic and investment factors. It was also due to the fact that job seekers' experiences do not meet employers' requirements. Therefore, encouraging young people to discover their true interests and develop their career plans at a young age will provide them with ample time for education and preparation so that they become well-equipped and successful in the job market. This is a first and most important step toward future success young people can achieve by themselves.

To lay a strong foundation for youth's successful career and to empower them to become valuable assets for the country, **Banpu Public Company Limited**, who established "**Banpu Education for Sustainability**" (BES) project since 2004, has recently launched "**Career Day: Opening Doors into a Professional World and Planning for the Future**". Supported by Banpu, this activity was jointly organized by Banpu and a-chieve, a social enterprise, to introduce professions to the students from six schools in three Northern provinces. The schools include Chiengmuan Wittayakhom School and Bansra School in Phayao; Sobprab Pittayakom School, Maeta Pattanasuksa School and Maeta Wittaya School in Lampang; and Wiengjedee Wittaya School in Lamphun. Career owners were invited to talk to young learners about professions in their everyday lives. Students also learned about the careers that might not be popular and the fact that they do not necessarily require a college degree to get a job as it is widely believed in Thai society. In fact, the key to career guidance activities is to provide young learners with the right direction, making them successful and happy with the career that suits each of them.



Mrs. Udomlux Olarn, Head of Corporate Affairs, Banpu Banpu Public Company Limited said, “Based on our 14-year experience supporting the schools in three Northern provinces where Banpu used to have its business operations, we realize the local students’ limitations on career and education planning. These young learners do not perceive their true interests and potentials and accordingly do not have the clear direction for their further studies and career. To help them have a clearer vision for their future and guide them to take their very first step into the right direction is of utmost importance. Building upon Banpu's philosophy, “Learning is the Power of Change and Development”, this activity aims to promote integrated learning among young learners by helping them discover their passions that fit their aptitudes. Striking the right balance will bring them job security and satisfaction, thus contributing to strong families and society in the future.”

The activity " Career Day: Opening Doors into a Professional World and Planning for the Future " attracted more than 1,000 young participants, most of them were Grade 9 and 10 students. In this activity, the participants had an opportunity to learn about many careers and to seek guidance on career planning from young career role models from Bangkok, Chiangmai and the local provinces. Speakers were from different professional groups such as health professionals from local hospitals; new-theory agriculturalists; engineering and maintenance professionals, e.g. engineers, programmers and mechanics; practical arts professionals, e.g. architects, designers and chefs; language and communication professionals, e.g. public relations officers and translators. Those career models provided career advice and recounted their life experiences from different perspectives in order to help young learners get the clearer vision of their future. Health professionals in all areas emphasized that hospital works require more than medical doctors recruited from super-smart students. In fact, hospitals also need other professionals such as nurses, pharmacists, nutritionists, medical technologists, or physical therapists.

Moreover, this activity was honored by students from leading universities who shared their experience of university life with young participants to expose them to what they may encounter in the future. After joining the activity, more than 91% of the participants had a better

understanding of their future careers, and more than 75% of them were more eager to find further information about studying and careers by themselves.

Apart from the above special activity, Banpu has continuously provided support to the six schools under the BES project. In the academic year 2017, Banpu, for the third consecutive year, has provided a grant of more than 2.4 million baht to cover expenses for hiring native English speaking instructors with the determination to improve students and teaching staff’s English communication skills. However, career guidance and school supports are only small parts that Banpu, as an engaged society member to push Thailand's education forward and reduce unemployment at some levels. It is young people themselves who need to be inquisitive and find their true passions. Academic competence, understanding of their circumstances, and self-awareness will guide them into the adult world and equip them with capabilities to analyze, plan and set the right career goals.

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**Photos**



Mrs. Udomlux Olarn (front row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left), Head of Corporate Affairs, Banpu Public Company Limited, joins the opening ceremony of “Career Day: Opening Doors into a Professional World and Planning for the Future”.



Mrs. Udomlux Olarn (standing row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from right), Head of Corporate Affairs, Banpu Public Company Limited, is presenting a grant to Maeta Wittaya School in Lampang and other five schools in Northern Thailand for hiring foreign teachers.



Young professionals from Bangkok, Chiang Mai and other northern provinces are sharing their professional experiences with young students.



Young participants are enjoying activities on "Career Day: Opening Doors into a Professional World and Planning for the Future".



**“Learning is the Power of Change and Development”**

Banpu’s CSR activities are based on our firm belief that "learning is the power of change and development" for people and society by emphasizing the promotion and development of continued “learning” among young people and communities in a number of ways. Banpu supports sustainable development of communities and society through a variety of learning opportunities for both individuals and teams, ranging from daily real-life experiences both in and outside classrooms, to hands-on practices which enhance capabilities and skills.

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