Welcome to 2019 and the fourth issue of the iPACE Alumni Newsletter!

My name is Andrea Welsh and I am thrilled to be joining the iPACE community as the new Program Director. Having worked and lived in Myanmar for a year and a half, I have followed iPACE’s stimulating courses and activities and am excited to meet you all.

Alumni are an essential component of iPACE and we are committed to supporting you as take what you have learned during the program and apply it to your organizations and communities. In celebration of our Alumni Network, we look forward to hosting you on Saturday, March 02 for the second Alumni Reunion at the American Center Yangon. We encourage all Alumni to attend as it will be a great opportunity to re-connect with iPACE trainers and classmates from your course as well as meet with other Alumni. Stay tuned to our Facebook page for updates!

Since Issue 3 of our Alumni Newsletter was released in August, iPACE hosted its second Civil Society Conference in September as well as a 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Event in November. We have an exciting program of events for 2019 and will keep you up to date with the latest information through email and our Facebook page.

The iPACE team is committed to maintaining contact with all of our Alumni. If you are in touch with former iPACE participants, please share this newsletter and encourage them to send their updated contact information to ipace@worldlearning.org.

Many thanks for your continued involvement and support of iPACE. We look forward to seeing you at the American Center soon and supporting the amazing work you do each and every day across the country.

Warm regards,

Andrea Welsh
iPACE Director
World Learning
Myanmar

WHAT IS iPACE?

The Institute for Political and Civic Engagement (iPACE) is an educational resource for Myanmar’s emerging democratic leaders to develop and increase their knowledge and practical application of fundamental democratic principles while promoting civic engagement to foster more representative and accountable governance.

iPACE designs and implements intensive civic education through thematic courses, mobile clinics, and networking and advocacy events at the American Center in Yangon and the Jefferson Center in Mandalay. Workshops and networking activities are provided to alumni and the public.

To bring information to those who cannot attend our courses in Yangon and Mandalay, iPACE mobile training programs have been conducted in partnership with local community-based organizations in every state and region in Myanmar.
16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM EVENTS

iPACE is committed to promoting gender equality and ending gender-based violence (GBV). In partnership with the Gender Equality Network (GEN), iPACE developed and delivered two unique courses in both Yangon and Mandalay to equip civil society leaders with the skills and knowledge they need to address this urgent issue - Advocacy for Ending GBV and Training of Trainers for Ending GBV.

To compliment these courses and further enhance awareness, iPACE organized a 16 Days of Activism for Ending GBV Event in Yangon on November 30, 2018. During this event, participants were fortunate to be joined by the U.S. Ambassador to Burma, Mr. Scot Marciel, Director General of the Department of Social Welfare, Dr. San San Aye, as well as GEN’s Board Member, Daw Pansy Tun Thein.

Another 16 Days of Activism event was held by iPACE Mandalay at the Jefferson Center on the same day. MP Daw Nyeint Thet Nwe, MP Daw Su Myat Htet, and Director of Women’s Initiatives Platform, Daw Lway Aye Nang, led a panel to discuss the situation of GBV in Myanmar, current laws against GBV, and weaknesses of the police and judicial system. In both locations, alumni organized thoughtful panel events.

SAVE THE DATE FOR iPACE ALUMNI REUNION YANGON!

It’s time for a reunion! Come and join us!

iPACE is pleased to invite all of our Alumni for an Alumni Reunion to be held at the American Center Yangon on Saturday, March 02 from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. This is the second time we will hold such a reunion in Yangon, which aims to strengthen our growing iPACE Alumni network.

For attendance, registration is essential! Please, RSVP with your name and the year you attended iPACE to ipacereunion@gmail.com or send a message through our iPACE Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/ipace.myanmar) by February 24. We would like to connect with all of our Alumni to learn more about their experience with the program as well as how they have applied the knowledge and skills gained to their communities. We look forward to hosting you at this great event with fun activities, refreshments, and lots of opportunities for networking with fellow iPACE-ers. Save the date and see you there!
Wondering what we have been up to lately?

**RECENT COURSE OFFERINGS**

**Yangon**
- iPACE Yangon 2018 Term 4: Peace Advocacy; Leadership for Change: Foundations for Community Development; Pluralism and Governance; Voter Education; English for Advocates (November 5 – December 15, 2018)
- iPACE Alumni Workshop Yangon: Effective Argument Construction for Advocates (November 16, 2018)
- iPACE Yangon 2019 Term 1: Democratic Foundation; Advocacy in Democracy; Federalism; Electoral Observation; Strategic Planning for Change; Communications for Civil Society (February 5 – March 16, 2019)

**Mandalay**
- iPACE Mandalay 2018 Term 4: Foundation for Community Development; Civic Education; Peace Education (November 5 – December 7, 2018)
- iPACE Mandalay 2019 Term 1: Communications for Civil Society; Conflict Transformation; Democratic Foundation (February 11 – March 15, 2019)

**iPACE IN ACTION: ALUMNI PROFILE**

“iPACE equips us with knowledge, empowering us to contribute more effectively to the community. iPACE lights up the candles to glow by their own flame”

As workers across the country became aware of their rights under Myanmar’s 2011 Labor Organization law, they were more willing to speak out against inhumane working conditions at the work place as well as engage with employers in disputes regarding unfair dismissal of union activists, mass dismissal of striking workers, and blacklisting protesting workers among employers.

Originally from Mandalay, Thet Hnin Aung is the Secretary General of Myanmar Industries, Crafts and Services Trade Union Federation (MICS-TUsF). In 2015, he attended iPACE’s Human Rights Documentation & Advocacy and Transitional Justice courses at Mandalay’s Jefferson Center which gave him a clear understanding about human rights. Thet Hnin Aung, together with the Union Federation members, led several campaigns to increase the minimum daily wages to 5,600 MMK from the current daily wages of 3,600 MMK to cover the high cost of living. In March 2018, the Government set the new daily minimum wage at 4,800 MMK. To bring justice and protect worker’s rights, Thet Hnin Aung continues promoting the livelihood of the workers through nation-wide campaigns, advocacy meetings with the authorities, cooperation with international labor organizations, and organizing training programs.

**STAY CONNECTED**

We want to hear from you! Our Alumni Network is over 2,600 people strong and is one of the reasons that makes the iPACE program stand out. Stay connected so that you have the latest information on courses, programs, and exclusive Alumni events:
- Send your contact information, news, and updates to ipace@worldlearning.org
- Connect with us on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/ipace.myanmar)
- Attend Alumni reunion and networking events
- Refer people to iPACE courses, networking events, and share our Facebook page