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Making The World A More Beautiful Place

MEDIA & PRESS KIT

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OUR MISSION

A Global Friendship creates economic opportunity for artisans in developing regions by connecting them to U.S. markets and providing small business training.

We travel the world to find hard-working artisans and help them merge traditional craft techniques with contemporary design, then sell their products in boutiques in the U.S. and Caribbean. Making the world a more beautiful place, one friendship at a time.

Opportunity. It's a resource too often taken for granted. The opportunity to envision a better future, find work, provide for ourselves.

But opportunity does not knock equally on every door. Around the world, 220 million people are unemployed, through no fault of their own. Some live in impoverished nations. Others are born into poor, remote regions of wealthier countries. For these people, opportunity to work can mean the difference between something to eat and nothing to eat, safety and danger, healthcare and illness, an education for their children and the limitations of ignorance.

We think opportunity should know no bounds.

Welcome to A Global Friendship. We seek talented, ambitious people in opportunity-parched communities and bridge the gap between their products and thriving markets. We also teach basic small business skills such as marketing, accounting, communications and Internet usage. In the U.S. we strive to share the beauty of other cultures and a greater understanding of the challenges created by lack of opportunity. It's a beautiful vision, and it works.

We invite you to join our circle of friendship.

OUR MISSION

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PROJECTHOME

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www.aglobalfriendship.org

OUR PROGRAMS

Project HOME

Our primary development project, the Project HOME network currently consists of 26 women and 3 men working in Thailand, Indonesia, & Peru. We help direct these artists to blend traditional craft methods with contemporary design to create bracelets, scarves and handbags from organic, sustainable materials such as linen, sterling silver and recycled Thai garments. AGF sells these colorful, well-priced accessories in over 100 boutiques throughout the United States and the British Virgin Islands, as well as on-line.

We're expanding our reach, seeking more partnerships and more ways to create opportunity. We help people wear the world, and their values, on their sleeves.

Campus Clubs

Many of today's high school and college students yearn for something to care about beyond themselves and their GPAs. We help students learn about the countries where we work through the formation of Campus Clubs. Club members spearhead cultural projects and create sales programs. It's a blend of idealism and entrepreneurship that's creating powerful friends for the future.

AGF Shopping Ambassador

AGF Shopping Ambassador program is a totally unique way for people to get involved. We welcome travelers to look for beautiful accessories or talented craftspeople and let us know about them. We're always working to bring new people into our friendship family.

OUR PROGRAMS

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Treasure-to-Treasure Recycling Program:

If an item gets damaged over time, just ship it back to us along with \$10, and we'll send a new one to replace it. We'll recycle the old item into a beautiful belt.

OUR COLLECTION

We specialize in bold, well-priced, textile-based statement pieces using traditional weaving, stringing and knotting techniques. The strong colors and bold designs capture and convey the vibrant cultures of our global friends.

Selections from our Spring 2011 collection. (Retail prices vary, depending on vendor, but average around \$20 - \$48):



BELLS OF BLESSINGS Bracelet

People throughout Southeast Asia wear bells on their ankles to show their devotion, ward off evil, or notify the heavens of their position on Earth. Our charming, contemporary take on this ancient Hindu tradition is a tuneful reminder to be in the moment. Recently shown in Self magazine. Made in Thailand.



COINS OF FORTUNE Bracelet

These beautiful, pliable, good-luck bracelets are made from hand-waxed linen, using a traditional northern Thai weaving method. The strong, durable strap lies flat and changes to conform to the wrist over time, reflecting the Buddhist idea of impermanence.



TEN THOUSAND RIVERS Strappy Bracelet

This AGF bestseller features 36 strands of hand-colored, hand waxed-linen strung with a dozen sterling silver beads that sparkle like flashes of sun on a winding river. Available in a dozen colors, and shell-pink as part of a partnership with the San Francisco Bay Area Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Ten percent goes toward breast cancer research; the rest helps women artists in rural northern Thailand provide healthy food and books for their families.

OUR COLLECTION

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OUR COLLECTION



THREE STRENGTHS Bracelets (unisex)

This masculine braid has the heft and hue of polished leather, but is crafted from ecologically sustainable waxed linen. Perfect for the man or woman who exemplifies these three strengths: The ability to wield (power), to yield (to others), and to create a life of thoughtful action. Made in northern Thailand.



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS Bracelet Trio

The three color-coordinated strands of woven linen can be shared with friends, or worn as a set to represent the three friendship joys—love, trust and happiness. Three pewter balls on each end add a unique, stylish flair. Handcrafted by artists in Padang Tegal, a village in Bali, Indonesia.



FRINGE Tote

Each of these one-of-a-kind designs is fabricated from a recycled, 100-percent cotton Thai garment and decorated with hand-knotted fringe. Shoulder straps boast colorful, hand-embroidered brocade flowers or geometric patterns. Earth tones with black accents, available in large (approximately 17" wide by 14" long), or medium (17" wide by 10" long). Zippered top closure and fully lined. Made by a husband and wife team in northern Thailand.

OUR COLLECTION

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PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

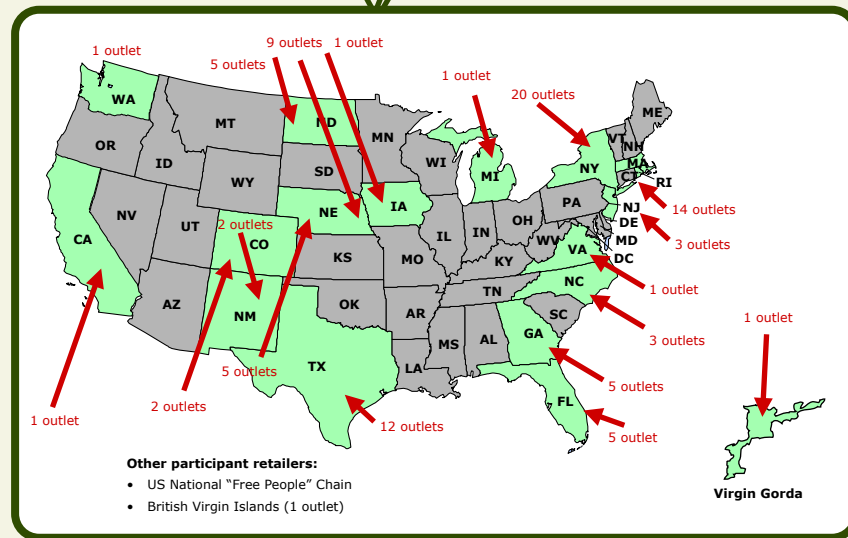
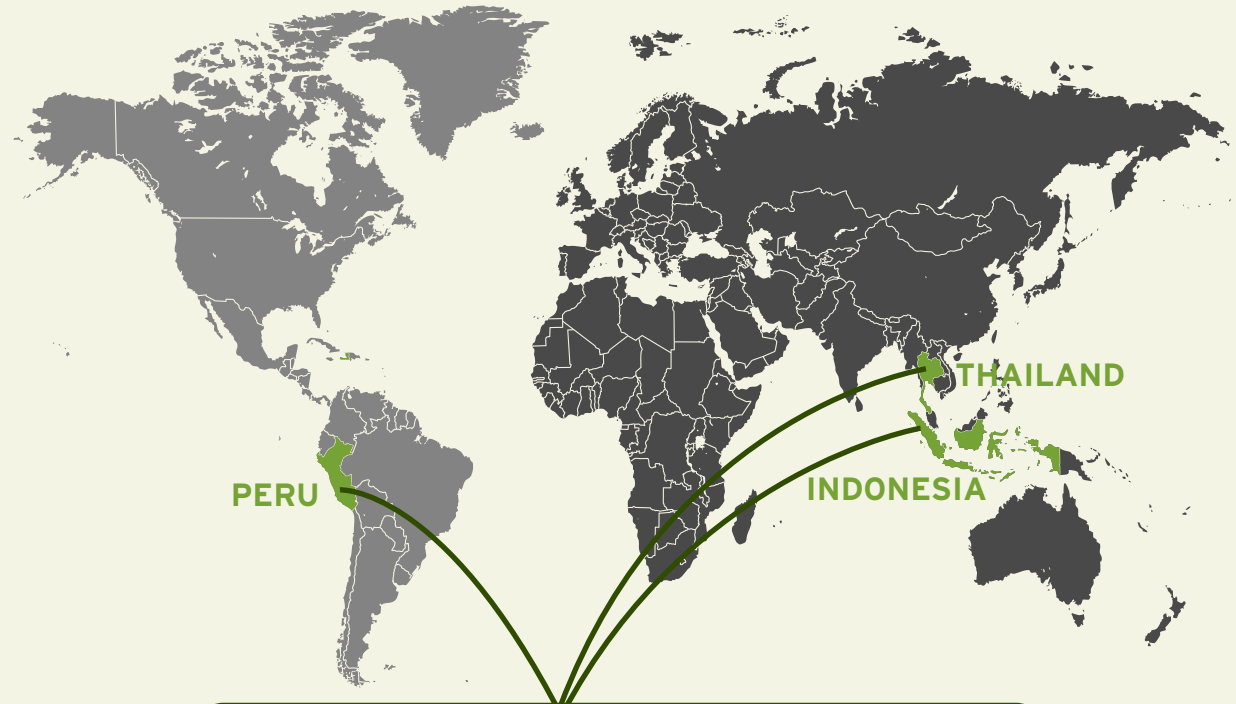


A young Thai artisan named Sintuva created many of the bracelets in our current line. Elizabeth Firgeleski, AGF's founder, met Sintuva in the craft market of Chiang Mai, and was inspired by her skill, intelligence and drive. They worked together to fashion new lines and improve Sintuva's production methods and business skills.

Since getting involved with AGF, Sintuva's designs have been so successful that she has been able to hire 12 additional women from her village to help her weave and string her bracelets.

To Carry Our Line, Contact:
 Kate Moran
 Sales Manager
 917.423.5111

WHERE WE WORK: LINKING ARTISANS TO RETAIL LOCATIONS



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OUR FOUNDER

In December 2004, a tsunami ravaged Thailand while Elizabeth Firgeleski was visiting on holiday and studying the healing practice of Reiki. As Elizabeth was ushered to safety, she was surprised and moved by the consideration and selflessness of the Thai people.

Due to the Indian Ocean earthquake and resulting tsunami, more than 230,000 people were killed in 14 countries, including Thailand. Elizabeth was in the midst of the destruction and spent the following weeks recuperating from her injuries before returning to the U.S.

During that time, she became increasingly committed to the idea of finding a way to give back to the people who helped her to safety. Upon her return to the U.S. Elizabeth decided to leave her lucrative careers as a fit model and marketing assistant in New York City.

Her mind was now clearly focused on a broad goal of working towards making the world a more empowered, beautiful place, with a goal for communities to use their own resources and knowledge to build better, sustainable livelihoods.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth couldn't help noticing how much her friends and family loved the handmade objects she brought back from her trip. An idea formed: Why not combine her own love of beautiful things and her commitment to the Thai people? The artisan Thai products were unique and desirable and she was continually surprised there weren't more available.

Locally, Elizabeth started hosting trunk shows in private homes and public restaurants, selling various artisan's work, and turning over 100-percent of the proceeds to the artisans. As the trunk shows grew in popularity, she realized if she could bring these designs to more people in more places, she would be helping the artisans develop strong enough markets to sustain their own small businesses. Opportunity; a critical factor to a stable economic life.

Elizabeth Firgeleski founded A Global Friendship in 2007. She filed for 501C3 status for AGF to be recognized as a non-profit organization later that spring and began selling artisan handicrafts at U.S. boutiques and online retailers, as well as reaching out to artisans in other countries to expand the product catalogue.

Elizabeth continues to meet others who share her dedication to making the world a more beautiful place. AGF, headquartered in CT with an office in Brooklyn, NY has connected 37 artisans representing three countries with over 100 U.S. retail locations. Her team consists of over 20 driven, dedicated and passionate sales and volunteer staff members.

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PRODUCT CARDS

PROJECTHOME
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This product from 'Project Home' Development Project, A Global Friendship Organization, is beautifully hand crafted by villagers from minority groups of Thailand.

The income from your purchase helps to improve their quality of life, providing opportunity for self-sustainability.

'Project Home' works for equality and Fair Trade and is devoted to the restoration of dignity. Our hope is to help the Thai people regain trust, and return home - to self.

www.aglobalfriendship.org

Thailand

PROJECTHOME
आत्मन्

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This product from 'Project HOME,' AGF's development program, is beautifully hand crafted by villagers of Padang Tegal, Indonesia. Your purchase helped employ persons who otherwise would not have work. These friendship bracelets represent all that is great – love, trust, and happiness. Please help make the world a more beautiful place by sharing the bracelets with your loved ones. Remember, the meaning behind these bracelets is two-fold; not only do they symbolize your deepest friendships, but they help to spread AGF's innovative movement.

Thanks for being a conscious buyer!

www.aglobalfriendship.org

Indonesia

www.aglobalfriendship.org

PRODUCT CARDS

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<http://abcnews.go.com/Primetime/HaitiEarthquake/tsunami-charity-sets-sites-helping-haiti/story?id=9700601>

Double Trouble: Charity Worker Draws Lessons for Haiti From Tsunami

By SAMANTHA WENDER

Jan. 30, 2010

As the relief effort in Haiti switches gears from emergency response to long-term aid, many observers recalled similar scenes of devastation from five years ago.

Elizabeth Firgeleski, a Connecticut native, was standing on the shores of Thailand, Dec. 26, 2004, when the tsunami waves hit Krabi Beach. As she watched longtail boats and the fishermen on them disappear into the waters and heard the screams of panic all around her, locals directed her to safety. She ran for her life, literally.

U.N. officials speculate that the death toll in Haiti will surpass the nearly quarter-million lives lost in the tsunami.

Firgeleski recalled the raw emotion of full-scale disaster.

"It's complete chaos," Firgeleski said. "Part of you is trying to make sense of the circumstance and the other part of you knows to run. You look around and all you see is devastation. But from chaos comes order and opportunity."

Firgeleski told ABC News that people who have friends and family in Haiti that are not yet reachable should remain positive.

"Communication in the aftermath is near-impossible," she said. "Cell towers are wiped, families are displaced and communities are in complete shock ... Hold on to that window of hope."

Firgeleski vowed that when she could, she would return and give back to the Thai people -- the very people she said gave her a fresh start at life. Two years after returning home, Firgeleski left her job in New York City, emptied out her savings and, in 2007, started a charity called "A Global Friendship."

"My motivation to start A Global Friendship was simple," Firgeleski said. "It stemmed from both my gratitude to those people that helped me to safety and the promise I made to those who I couldn't help that day."

A Global Friendship is a young, environmentally conscious, not-for-profit service and educational organization whose aim is to help develop communities in poor nations. It emphasizes self-sustainability, particularly among community matriarchs.

In Thailand, many such women lost their husbands in the tsunami. The organization also works for equality and fair trade practices for artisans.

Project Home, a program of A Global Friendship, helps artisans get micro-financing and find markets.

The program also teaches small business development skills. Eighty-five percent of proceeds go back to the artisans and the youth of Thailand.

Life Is a Privilege

In order for artisans to participate in Project Home, they must agree to take on apprentices.

"The passing down of trade to younger generation is central to A Global Friendship's mission," said Firgeleski. "The hope is that a strong skill will help bridge the gap between past generations of inopportunity and future generations of success."

The opportunities for young women in Thailand are minimal. According to UNICEF, more than 500,000 women and children in Thailand fall into the sex trade industry each year. By providing other options for women, communities become stronger.

Last September, Project Home installed a water filtration system in Khao Lak's Duang Prateep Orphanage. The World Health Organization estimates that over 43 million Thais do not have access to clean, safe drinking water.

This April, before rainy season, Firgeleski will return to Thailand to put a roof on a school in Western Thailand that educates 74 young people.

"The greatest lesson for me is not to take any moments for granted," said Firgeleski. "Life is a privilege, and while many Haitians are in mourning, I hope that they will find the strength to make change happen as they rebuild. Together we can make the world a more beautiful place."

When the debris clears, A Global Friendship hopes to partner with organizations in Haiti to help Haitian communities rebuild.

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The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter post from the user 'mrfire'. The post includes a link to an Amazon page for the book 'Manifesting Change by Mike Dooley' and a link to the website 'http://www.aglobalfriendship.org'. Below the main text, there are two smaller text snippets: 'Get blood drawn and a mosquito bite. The bite from more Texas sized mosquito.' and 'Completely sold out http://www.theplumb.com/paradigm.com'. To the right of the tweet is a book cover for 'ATTRACT MONEY NOW' by Dr. Joe Vitale, featuring a man in a brown jacket standing in front of a background of money.

PRESS

<http://media.www.thebrownandwhite.com/media/storage/paper1233/news/2010/11/09/Lifestyle/Club-Beat.A.Global.Friendship-3955721.shtml>

Club Beat: A Global Friendship

By Aidan Fennelly

Issue date: 11/9/10 Section: Lifestyle

As Lehigh students, we spend so much of our time worrying about homework and hookups that we often forget to think about the world around us.

A new club at Lehigh is hoping to change that mentality. "A Global Friendship," started at Lehigh by international relations major Emily Gordon, '11, aims to promote development in underprivileged countries.

AGF is a branch of a centralized organization. Over the past summer, Gordon worked with AGF's headquarters to start new satellites of the club at various college campuses ? and she jumped at the chance to start one at Lehigh.

"I got involved with AGF because I like traveling, I liked going abroad. [Studying] IR made me care about the world--how it's important to help people," Gordon said.

AGF certainly appeals to someone with such noble ideals. The organization's primary goal, according to Gordon, is to develop the economies and infrastructures of developing countries to the point where they can be self-sustaining and grow.

The club goes about this in a variety of ways, but they primarily act as instructors and promoters of local culture. According to Gordon, AGF brings artisans and skilled laborers into impoverished villages to teach the population basic skills ? essentially like an apprentice-

ship. Eventually, unskilled laborers morph into skilled tradesmen and are able to sustain themselves, their families and their communities through their work.

AGF is unique in its focus on sustainability. Where other global awareness programs look to throw money at a problem, AGF seeks to establish functioning microeconomies that have the potential to grow with time. It's kind of like the old "give a man a fish" analogy in action. By giving the impoverished the tools for advancement, AGF hopes that they can help poor regions become capable of generating their own wealth and, eventually, flourishing.

On the local level, however, Lehigh's "A Global Friendship" club is still in its infant stages.

"Right now, we're focusing on some basic fundraising ideas. Eventually, we'd like to sell some of the items produced by local artisans to help raise awareness, but we're not there yet," Gordon said.

Gordon said, so far, about 15 to 20 students have expressed interest in helping her and AGF's cause. Though the club is currently still in its brainstorming phase, Gordon hopes it will be out raising money and doing well by the start of next semester.

Any students interested in getting involved with AGF should contact Emily Gordon at eng211@lehigh.edu

PRESS



Making Friends Worldwide

Thinking Globally

Continued from page 2

Firgesleksi explained the purpose of her organization in her May 1 press release. "The partnership works by bringing to market local handwood, fair trade garments, accessories, and handcrafts to be sold in the U.S., with profits returned to communities in the developing world. A Global Friendship's goals parallel three of those set forth by the United Nations for the New Millennium: Promote gender equality by empowering women, Ensure environmental sustainability, and Develop global partnerships."

Returning to America, Firgesleksi took her love of fashion and mixed it with her newfound desire to help those suffering half a world away. "AGF's core belief is that self-sustainability empowers people," the release explains. "Elizabeth affirms that, 'If you find a way to improve socioeconomic conditions one woman at a time, you will ultimately find a way to help families, communities, and future generations.'"

Several Fairfield boutiques have expressed interest in Firgesleksi's project to bring Thai jewelry and other handmade accessories to the area, offering to carry the merchandise. "I'm excited about bringing these Thai

items, during which she sells the garments and accessories made by Thai artisans, at Savatona Restaurant, 4108 Black Rock Turnpike, on May 15. She will be traveling to places such as Charleston, S.C.; Dallas, and Greenwich Village, New York City, in the coming months to raise more awareness and money for her cause. More than 90 percent of all profits go directly back to the Thai women who create the merchandise.

In addition, AGF includes a development project called "Project Home." Firgesleksi writes, "Project Home is devoted to the restoration of dignity. Our hope is to help the Thai people regain trust, and not only return home to self, but to elevate their lives to the unimaginable." This offshoot of AGF can be attributed to the founder's desire to develop poorer nations and their people. "Having this goal, it is hard not to immediately be able to help all of the people in need. We start with one person, one village, one community, one nation at a time. I feel a sense of reward, and believe it is our



PRESS



Tsunami survivor finds a silver lining

Expanding the mission

Fugelski's first buying experience was in Thailand last December and she plans to return before autumn. She also intends to visit numerous countries throughout Asia and South America.

"I used all existing personal resources to working this non-profit and continue to fund this very important project with personal funds," she said. "When the model I created, as it must

non-profit, there is an alternative in the future for administrative expenses and salary. The hope is that we will create numerous ventures and thus give us gradually. There will then be the need for related employees," she said.

A Global Friendship committee is seeking corporate sponsorships and backing from local businesses, to help offset operating expenses. Additionally, the group is asking for donations of business like sales, to assist

current and future needs.

It also hopes to establish partnerships with hardware companies that can create computers with internet capabilities, so that artisans will have immediate contact with the Western world — putting them directly in touch with consumers in the United States.

"This will enable them to become self-sustaining and will enable us to concentrate profits from the merchandise directly back to the communities and the

artisans," Fugelski said.

The group's first trunk show recently took place at Fashion Resource in Fairfield. Future shows are scheduled this year in Charleston, S.C., Dallas, Texas and Glenview Village, New York City.

"The May event was definitely positive," Fugelski said. "We learned a lot about marketing to our community and were deeply touched by the great response. People were impressed by the quality, the price, and, of course,

the stories behind the merchandise."

"Seeing photos of the artisans and reading about the relief gave me an emotionally warm feeling to meet people upon their purchase. I overheard more than one person asking our host, 'who else could I buy a gift for?' That says so much," she said.

To find out more, visit globalfriendship.org.

'sunami survivor finds a silver lining

By Claudia Allen Palumbo

For the two weeks spent in the aftermath here Fairfield native Elizabeth Fugelski never felt quite as living a life of privilege in her own back yard.

Working for her very first job in a different country she felt her and spent one month in Thailand teaching, learning and making up. As it turned out, her first of self-discovery was learned a both profound and life altering lesson was on the beach of Phuket at where the Tsunami struck.

recalled "I saw fishermen's boats flipped into the water and some were... While standing by my life, I... we seemed like the stars of a... I... which anything dry last."

I was moved by the waves into... which... head before flying away... I then... through a... I... with my... A... my head by several inches."

What Fugelski experienced next was the total destruction of villages, as people and animals struggled to stay alive. But then she encountered a spirit among survivors that made change her way of living forever.

"I saw, perhaps, the greatest display of human resilience, strength, warmth and selflessness," Fugelski said. "I... that their own had been taken by the tsunami, picked themselves up and immediately started to rebuild. They... me, like myself. My physical recovery was a long one, but it was during this time that I knew I would go back to help rebuild," she said.

Finding her calling

Fugelski had found her calling. Last year, she started a non-profit group called A Global Friendship. Its mission is to partner with disadvantaged communities and artisans in hard-impacted countries, to help them build toward self-sustainability.

Still more than 10 years of... the program's bi-monthly... social organization helps to promote gender and social economic equality

Fairfield native Elizabeth Fugelski, far right, a Tsunami survivor, helps Thai people put the pieces back together on the heels of the natural disaster through her organization, A Global Friendship.

by... to purchase... and... and... in the... market, which... Fugelski... "as the first... to be... the... to... the... in... Tying... "What... about... the... people, in general, are very... and their... in the... - on... at page 10

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Your help is very greatly appreciated.

YES! I'd like to participate

Dollar amount \$ _____
\$35 - \$99 Donor
\$100 - \$250 Friend
\$250 - \$500 Kind Heart
\$501 - \$1,500 Warm Heart
\$1,501 and Up Passionate Heart

Thank you for helping to make the World a more beautiful place.

Send Check to:
A Global Friendship
P.O. Box 1013
Southport, CT 06890

Wire Funds to:
Account Name-A Global Friendship
Bank of America - 026009593
For US Wires: Account # 003851567029

We also now accept all major credit cards:
Payments can be set up for one time, or monthly recurring options.

www.aglobalfriendship.org/donate

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