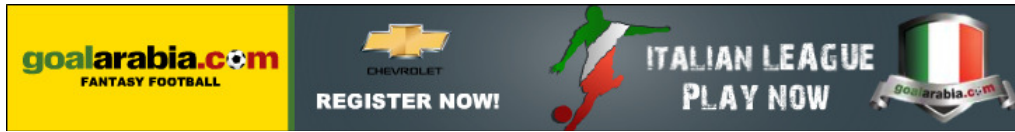


The National



Students on trek to help Thai villagers

Essam al Ghalib

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AL AIN // Danica Radulovic always dreamed of travelling to faraway places to help others. Tomorrow, she and 25 other students from Al Ain English Speaking School will do just that.

The students are scheduled to arrive in Thailand on Thursday and will make their way to Doi Pha Hom Pok National Park in the country's north. They plan to spend 10 days trekking through jungle and helping to build schools and teach English to villagers.

"I am particularly excited about this expedition for the service part of it," said Danica, 18.

Her goal is to work for the United Nations or Amnesty International when she graduates from university, and to volunteer with Doctors Without Borders after high school. She sees this trip as a first step.

All 26 students heading to the Chiang Rai region are working towards the Duke of Edinburgh Award for Young People. The award requires them to show commitment, understanding, tolerance and perseverance through community service, adventure, skill and talent.

The younger students, aged 15 and 16, will trek through the jungle for three days and two nights. They will travel on foot, by bike and canoe, and on elephants.

The older group, eight students aged 17 and 18, will climb Pha Hom Pok mountain, Thailand's second-highest peak, over four days and three nights.

For the remainder of the trip, the students will work with and teach villagers in conjunction with the Maekok River Village Outdoor Education Centre.



Shannon Offer, 13, left, and Ann Hellig, 12, are briefed about their upcoming trip at the Al Ain English Speaking School. **Jeff Topping / The National**

The students have raised Dh4,000 (US\$1,089) to buy supplies and items for the villagers.

The school is the only one in Al Ain to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

eaalghalib@thenational.ae



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