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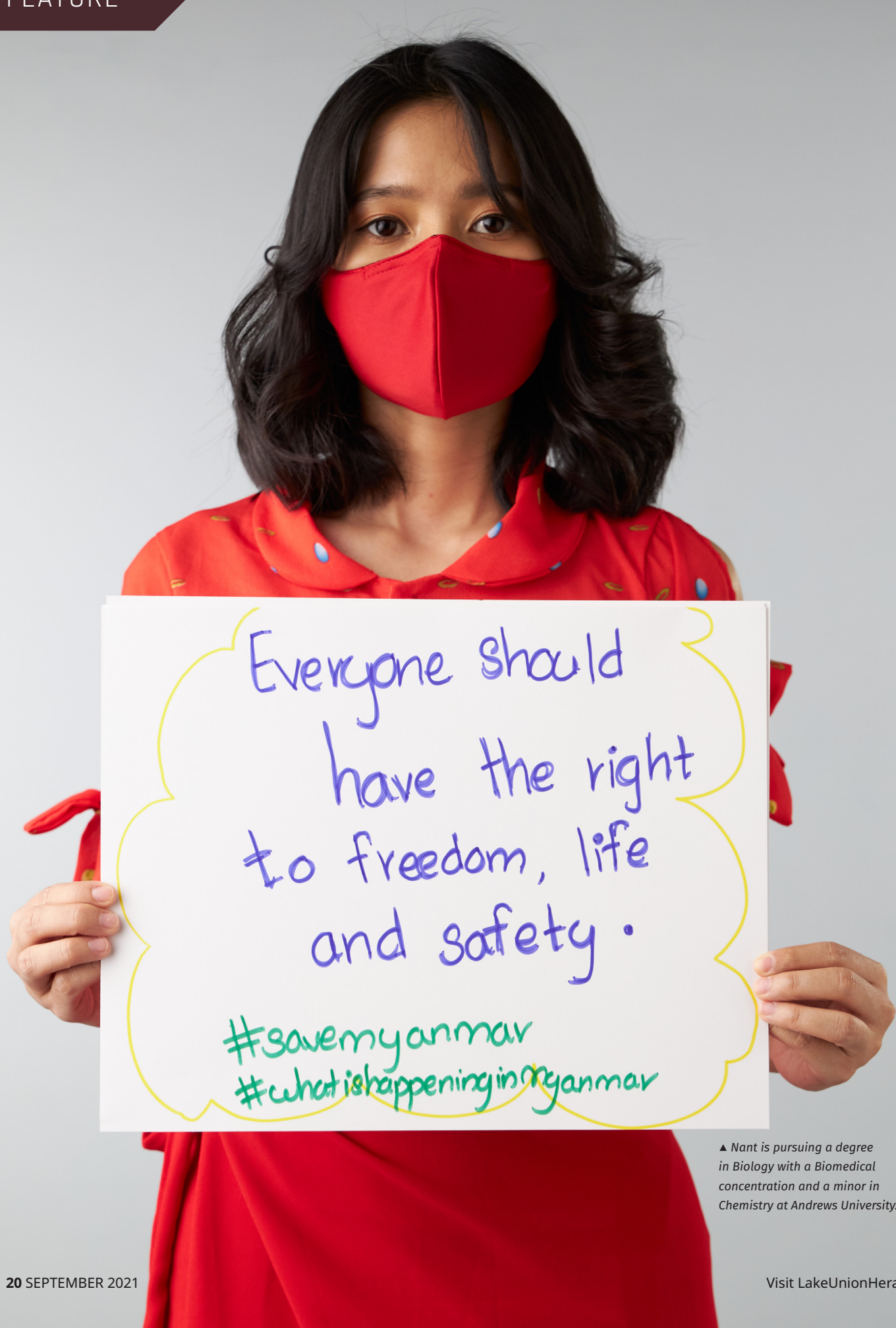
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### By Grace and Faith

Isabella Koh

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Everyone should  
have the right  
to freedom, life  
and safety.

#savemyanmar  
#whatishappeninginmyanmar

▲ Nant is pursuing a degree  
in Biology with a Biomedical  
concentration and a minor in  
Chemistry at Andrews University.

Courtesy of Nant Yadnar Precious



# BY GRACE AND FAITH

For some, deciding on a life's direction is an ongoing journey. Others know very early on what work their aspirations and passions will lead them to. Nant Yadanar Precious is someone who knew from a young age what she was meant to do: care for others. In fact, she discovered a particular interest in healthcare from experiences with her own childhood ailments, stating, "I enjoy assisting others and making them feel better, especially those who are unwell, because I have experienced illness myself."

BY ISABELLA KOH





Zechariah Li

▲ Nant (fourth from right) participated with Revive in an outreach service in winter 2019.

“I was born and raised in Myanmar,” Nant explains. “In the village where I grew up, there was no power or running water. We didn’t even have a clinic.” As the village was also without a pharmacy of any kind, families in her community often had to face sickness and other difficulties with traditional medicines and faith.

When dengue illness struck her village, Nant faced death, despite being taken to other communities over an hour away from her own. She was told she had less than a 20 percent chance of surviving, but her mother refused to give up and did everything possible to bring her back to health. Nant remembers hearing her mother’s prayers every night and humbly affirms, “I’m here because of God’s grace and my mother’s faith.”

Throughout her childhood years, Nant walked to school roughly two hours each day, faced with a poor and corrupt educational system upon arrival. With an average of 80 individuals per class, she knew that a student had to be close to the teachers or their children in order to receive good grades. She describes, “Going to school under a dictatorship was like chasing an arrow that didn’t know where it was going.” After schooling, most college graduates were unable to find use for their specific degrees and went on to work as waiters and farmers.

When she was just 12 years old, Nant left her home and has spent the last ten years abroad. Throughout those years, she says that she has “learned what it’s like to be free,” particularly in the United States where people can peacefully speak up for what they believe in without fear of committing a crime.

“During my senior year of high school, I learned about Andrews University through my Louisville church,” Nant recounts. She felt herself drawn to the University, as it provided opportunities to pursue her deeply rooted passion for healthcare, and decided to attend. She chose to major in Biology with a Biomedical concentration and minor in Chemistry, with the ultimate goal of becoming a physician assistant.

Currently a junior, Nant expresses, “I feel God has brought me to Andrews to confirm that He is a loving and caring God.” Although her parents were raised in a Buddhist household, Nant was brought up in a Christian village and found herself wanting to learn more about Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. She has found the University to be a diverse, friendly place, noting, “Andrews has provided me with numerous life-changing experiences, such as meeting people from various cultures.” She has enjoyed encountering both

# GRACE

NANT HAS FOUND THE UNIVERSITY TO BE A DIVERSE, FRIENDLY PLACE, NOTING, “ANDREWS HAS PROVIDED ME WITH NUMEROUS LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCES, SUCH AS MEETING PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS CULTURES.”

professors and classmates, finding every person to be pleasant, helpful and supportive.

Throughout an array of math, science, religion, fitness and writing classes, her fascination with science only grew. Although she struggled to grasp some of the more difficult scientific concepts due to English being her fifth language, she credits a combination of “God’s grace and my professors’ faith in me and my hard work and effort” as the key to overcoming those obstacles. She has continued to enjoy learning about how the human body functions, explaining, “All of my biology classes have confirmed my desire to pursue a career in medicine.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic prompted the necessity of remote learning, Nant endured the significant and challenging transition to studying via Zoom. She has been particularly grateful for professors who did their best to teach and keep in touch with their students, noting, “My lecturers are really resourceful and help me achieve in my academics, even though I am taking classes online.” Happily, Nant plans to be on campus for the fall semester. Excited to participate in face-to-face classes once again, she says, “I’m thrilled to be able to return to college this fall, and I can’t wait!”

An involved member of multiple University groups, even when at a distance, Nant contributes notably to the Andrews community. She has membership in the Pre-Medical Society, the Chemistry Club, the

Women’s Empowerment Association of Andrews University (WEAAU), Biophilia, and the Southern Asian Student Association (SASA). She also serves as outreach coordinator for the Revive club which performs both inreach and outreach in praise of God. “Revive is more than a worship space,” Nant enthuses. “It brings individuals from all walks of life together to share and serve God’s teachings as a family. Revive gives me a sense of belonging.” Her duties have included visitation to individuals in need of food, shelter and worship, as well as helping with weekly vespers and Bible studies. Through her participation in the club, Nant discovered a passion for helping children and sharing God’s Word with them, finding purpose in engaging with those in need.

In the midst of her busy Andrews life, news of Nant’s home country swept across the world. On February 1, 2021, directly following the democratic election of Aung San Suu Kyi and other members of the National League for Democracy (NLD), military commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing successfully took control of Myanmar. Before they could be sworn in, the newly elected officials were imprisoned. In the wake of these events, as well as an ongoing civil conflict between the Karen ethnic group and Burmese’s military, thousands of people took to the streets in peaceful protest, faced with beatings, kidnappings, detainment and death.

# FAITH

“PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MYANMAR’S PROBLEMS, AS THEY ARE NOT ONLY ABOUT POLITICS BUT ALSO ABOUT INJUSTICE.”

Nant watched as her people were captured, kidnapped and attacked. She saw reports of how journalists, reporters and peaceful protestors alike were detained, jailed, hurt and killed.

She felt a personal, devastating blow. Unable to eat or sleep during the first week of the crisis, Nant received news of family members and a very close friend who were abused and even killed in the military takeover and civil conflict within the country. She recalls, “My heart was heavy, and seeing the injustice made me feel uneasy, unhappy and angry.”

Preoccupied and anxious, she struggled with why such awful things were happening and tried to understand where God was in all of the tragedy. A response came through the people around her. “God has been extremely generous to me,” says Nant. “He never forgets about me and has proven it by providing me with several counselors and teachers, as well as friends, to help me through this difficult time.” Nant also began attending Bible studies with pastors, professing, “I am steadily recuperating from my losses, thanks to God’s grace.”

Other students at Andrews began to share their personal connections to Myanmar/Burma, reassuring Nant with the fact that she was not alone. At a vespers program in early March, several students addressed the violence in the country and the necessity of becoming involved in order to speak up for the voiceless.

Nant found her own voice in the months following as

well, asserting, “I don’t want to see young folks like me fearful and protesting when they should be studying like I am. When youngsters should be in school, I don’t want to see them selling flowers and food.” To raise awareness, she has participated in both nonviolent protests and fundraising from the United States with the purpose of providing food for citizens in need under the current dictatorship.

A heart for service and care for other people has prompted Nant to speak out for change. She expresses, “Myanmar has been ruled by a military coup for far too long, and our never-ending civil war continues.” She hopes that others will take time to educate themselves, respectfully asking, “Please take the time to learn more about Myanmar’s problems, as they are not only about politics but also about injustice.”

In the future, Nant plans to attend a PA program at Kettering College after graduation. Once she has obtained her degree, she hopes to return to her village and create a non-profit clinic in order to provide free services to those who cannot afford it — a way to pass on to others the grace she herself has been granted. She also wishes to aid children who want to learn but don’t have the means to attend school. With the continued goal of helping others as well as she can, Nant affirms, “I’m willing to serve wherever God leads me.” ■

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*Isabella Koh, University Communication student writer, Andrews University*

Rayno Victor





▲ Nant has worked to peacefully raise awareness of her home country, Myanmar.