



# Life and Hope Association

Bringing hope into life through loving care and education

Dear Friend of LHA,

I want to dedicate this first letter of 2013 to you -- our sponsors, donors, partners, volunteers, and staff. It is only through your selflessness energy and generosity that Life and Hope Association continues to fulfill its mission. So let me tell you about a few of the many people who allow us to "bring hope into life through loving care and education."



GO Campaign's Scott Fifer opens a new high school.

Over the past two years, the GO Campaign has become a major contributor to several capital projects at LHA. So we were delighted when the organization's founder, Scott Fifer travelled to Siem Reap in January to be present at dedication of their most recently sponsored projects.

After spending a week with the monks in our Wat Damnak temple, Scott was wearing his monks robes as he officiated at the opening of the two houses that are now home for the 25 girls in our Program Advancing Girls Education (PAGE). These girls are all studying hard to complete high school and continue on to tertiary education, many with the support of a PAGE university scholarship.

On his visit, Scott also cut the ribbon at two new school buildings that the GO Campaign has funded. Without the generous sponsorship of o the GO

Campaign and our many other program sponsors and donors, the dreams we have of improving the lives of the poorest and most disadvantaged students would remain just that -- only dreams.

Equally invaluable are the incredible efforts of LHA's many committed volunteers. Let me tell you the story of just one of them. Kylie Sykes is a nurse from Australia who has just completed her seventh volunteering visit to Siem Reap. She typically devotes her entire month long annual vacation-- sometimes with her husband and three daughters -- working with "her kids" at Children's Development Village (CDV) and spending time with the PAGE girls.



Volunteer Kylie Sykes finishes a project with CDV kids.

This year, Kylie supplemented this extraordinary generosity by personally raising \$10,000 for LHA. She did it by running raffles, hosting parties, and in December, completing a 500km bike ride from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap. It's devotion like this that not only adds so much to the quality of life of our children, it also inspires all of us at LHA to work harder to achieve our vision.

I also want to acknowledge the commitment of my fellow monks, particularly Venerable Chhoeum, Venerable Loerm, and Venerable Y Nol who are working so hard during my educational sabbatical. But in this letter, I'd like to highlight the work of Venerable Vuthy and Ven. Sambath Ly-Yoeurt who are leading our newest initiative, the Buddhism Social Program.



Sewing students in the monks' class on moral ethical living.

This program is expanding our commitment to bring Buddhist-based values into all LHA programs and to the broader community. With the assistance of the monks supported by LHA's Monk Scholarship Program, we are able to offer more lessons to our children and young people about how to live a moral and ethical life. And we now have funding to broadcast an hour long radio program each day to bring these important messages to the broader community.

Finally, I want to thank the dedicated LHA staff who run all our programs. This talented group of coordinators, teachers, house mothers, and administrators provide loving care and support to the more than 1000 children, young people, and families we care for each day.

Typical of this group is Vann Ratha, a young man who became the program coordinator for LHA's Sustainable Community Program just 18 months ago. Since then, he has overseen the growth of this program from its origins as our founding food for education project, to incorporate agricultural training, sewing skills training, a "green village" vision, and micro loans for new village businesses. In the process, he is demonstrating the commitment, skill, and energy that characterizes so many of our LHA staff.



Mr. Ratha (left) distributes food to 70 poor families so their 199 children can attend school.

So thank you all for your generous and loving hearts. Together, we are changing thousands of lives.

With peace and love,

*Somnieng*

Executive Director | Life and Hope Association | Wat Damnak | Siem Reap | Cambodia.