

Changing young lives



Awareness Cambodia Newsletter | Edition 1 | 2022

Volunteer help needed

If you have the “skill set”, we desperately need your help!

One of the ways Awareness Cambodia keeps our administration costs at a minimum is we use pro bono services. Our PR, Legal, Accountant, Graphic Designers, and annual Auditor all contribute their services pro bono. We are incredibly grateful to these generous businesses who do pro bono work for us, as this allows donations to get to Cambodia and change more lives.

Awareness Cambodia is seeking a volunteer to help us with our website issues. If you have the skills and are willing to be on call when we hit a few problems, we would so love to hear from you.

Role: Protocol Web Designer

Hours: The volunteer position is – “on call”. Our office will make contact and seek help when we hit a snag. We don’t see the position as being taxing in term of hours. It’s your skill set that we need.

Please email Heidi with an expression of interest: heidi@awarecam.org.au

Thank you!

Jingling all the way – our 2021 Christmas parties bring joy



The festive season is one of the most anticipated times for celebration in Cambodia – with Christmas, the New Year and Lunar New Year. Although most Cambodians are Buddhist, Christmas is celebrated right across the country – and certainly at Awareness Cambodia!

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, everyone at Awareness Cambodia got into the spirit of the season and had a fun-filled Christmas.

Awareness Cambodia Inc (ABN: 69 234 355 895)

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We usually hold one big party for all our students and staff, but this year the pandemic restrictions made this impossible.

What to do when you can't hold one big party... hold two! So we held one party at Sunshine House in Kampong Speu and another at Graduation House in Phnom Penh. And what fun everyone had!

At Sunshine House we planned a memorable day with lots of fun and exciting things to do. The day began with lots of loud music (a must for any Cambodian party!), followed by playing games with prizes, a feast and then gift giving.

A very important aspect of a Cambodian party is lots of yummy food – and the food on the Christmas party menu was no exception.

There were lots of different dishes but two had everyone coming back for seconds (or thirds!).

Banh Sung (a popular local dish) contains fresh vegetables with pork and was a popular choice. Another absolute favourite was beef with bread and salad. The smell of the grilled beef being passed around had the young children bursting with excitement.



After lunch, it was gift time. A special gift was handpicked for each child and there was lots of joy and excitement as they opened their presents.

It was a truly wonderful Christmas party packed full of fun and giggles!

An evening soiree was planned for our students at Graduation House. The rooftop of Graduation House was decorated with stunning lights and a large Christmas tree. And everyone got dressed up in new clothes and shoes and put their best feet forward as we celebrated the season under the twinkling lights.

The celebration kicked off with everyone singing a few favourite songs. Next up, it was game on – quite literally, with a series of fun games being played. The girls ruled and were proud of themselves as their team won more prizes than the boys' team.



Having worked up an appetite with all the fun and frivolity, it was time to eat. And what a feast it was! The table was fully stocked with fried noodles, fried corn, salad, bread, beef and squid – expertly grilled by staff members Papy and Kimna – and some exotic sauces.

The addition of grilled squid tentacles to the Christmas spread proved a winner – it won the vote as the best dish on the menu. The meal ended with fruit and drinks – and lots of satisfied young adults with full bellies! The only thing left to do was open the gifts and give thanks for the wonderful celebration.



A huge thank you to our wonderful donors who make a special donation each year to enable us to hold Christmas celebrations at Sunshine House and Graduation House. We are so grateful for your kindness and generosity. Our students feel incredibly special each Christmas thanks to you.

Head over to our YouTube channel to see videos of the Christmas parties at Sunshine House and Graduation House.



www.youtube.com/user/AwarenessCambodia

We need help. You want to help. Here's how you can!

"How can we help?" It's a question we get asked a lot. And the answer is, in many ways. There are lots of creative ways people have found to support our cause over the years. Just look to Elizabeth Hird and Janice Maxwell for inspiration.

Elizabeth and Janice travelled to Cambodia to visit our projects in 2005. Inspired by our work, they came home determined to raise funds for us.

The savvy duo decided to run market stalls to raise money – and the support has been very welcome, with the annual donations helping fund our projects.

On Saturday 20th November 2021, they held a market stall at the Bayview Gardens Retirement Village. Elizabeth and Janice were joined by good friend Bronwyn selling handiworks, made by a band of incredibly talented people, at the stall. A wonderful total was raised and these funds will make a big difference to us. It's only the generosity of people like Elizabeth and Janice that have allowed Awareness Cambodia to continue to change the lives of vulnerable children.



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All dressed up – thanks to a wonderful donor!

For many of us, being able to buy new clothes is something we take for granted. But for our students at Sunshine House and Graduation House, it's a real treat. And one that they are incredibly thankful for.

The amazing generosity of the Au family meant that our students were able to have new clothes in time for the festive season celebrations.

You will remember Brenda Au, she was our Sunshine House Health Manager who, alongside her husband and children, lived onsite at Sunshine House for 14 years.

Although the Au family is no longer resident at SH, they haven't forgotten just how much a new outfit means to a disadvantaged child. Their gift lit up the faces of our all our children and young adults.

The boys saw it more as a mission – they were straight into the shops, picked up desired items and were back home in a flash.



The new clothes debuted at the Christmas party and these much-loved outfits will be kept for special occasions. For videos of these wonderful gifts, visit our YouTube channel.



The students from Graduation House loved the opportunity to go out shopping and being allocated a budget so they could choose new clothes and shoes.

The girls spent lots of time choosing and conferring with their friends about how they looked in the outfit and how it fitted, before deciding which items to buy.

Graduation House welcomes new students

At Awareness Cambodia we believe in the power of education to transform lives. It's why our child development program is focused on affording our students every opportunity to pursue learning – from primary school through to university.

There are so many advantages that a solid education brings, and we want each child in our care to succeed. The progression of our students from Sunshine House to House and Progress and on to Graduation House sets them on the right path.

Once students have completed Year 9, they move from the Sunshine House project to the House of Progress. HoP enables our students to continue their studies (from Grade 10 upwards) at a private school where they have access to the best resources.

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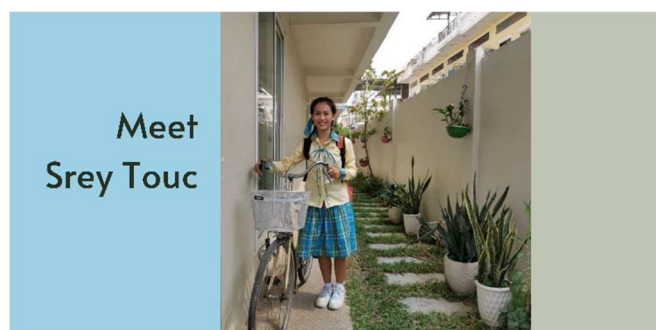
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The move between projects also means a physical move – as the students leave Sunshine House in Kampong Speu and move into Graduation House in Phnom Penh.

The transition can be challenging initially, but our students are forever resilient and soon adjust. Currently, four students have moved from Sunshine House to Graduation House to continue their education journey – Srey Touc is one of them.



Moving from a rural village to the capital could be daunting, but Srey Touc has adapted well to living in the city and is popular with the other students residing at Graduation House. She has made lots of new friends and fitted right into her new school environment.

Srey Touc takes her schooling seriously and works hard – as evidenced by her excellent results. She was the third top ranked student in her class and got a B in Physics, Morality and Biology and a C in English Language. We received great feedback from her classroom teacher too.

We are looking forward to seeing more achievements from Srey Touc as she completes Grade 10.

**This month, we're
giving you five reasons
to donate to
Awareness Cambodia.**

1. We're small, and proud of it.

Being small makes us effective, agile and responsive. We know the communities we work with, and avoid unnecessary administration.

We build relationships with businesses and a number support us with pro bono services (accountant, auditor, lawyer, public relations consultants and graphic designers), which allows us to use your generous donations to provide services in Cambodia, where it is most needed.

2. We believe education is a gateway out of generational poverty.

The evidence is clear – whether it's orphaned children or the rural poor, education is empowering. Through education, Cambodia's most vulnerable can have a voice in their society.

3. We empower and enable.

We believe in building *independence*, not dependence. Within our child development and education programs, we listen to each child's dreams and goals, and help make them a reality by providing long-term educational and vocational training.

4. We believe in community.

We see our role as a supporting one. We could never, and should never, replace community, culture and tradition. We believe that when you build up a child, you're building up the *entire* community.

5. Our care is holistic – we are in it for the long-haul!

We strive to meet all of a child's needs, from education, health and nutrition to counselling and vocational training.

We have been on the ground in Cambodia since 1996 – that's over 26 years impacting lives and creating brighter futures.

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The children who first joined us in 2000 have graduated with degrees and are now young professionals. They are marrying and starting families of their own.

We couldn't be more proud of the progress these young people have made!



Make your tax-deductible donation today.

If you share Awareness Cambodia's belief that real change can be sustained by investing in people, not just in programs, then partner with us to invest in young Cambodian lives.

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible in Australia.



If you would like to donate online, please visit <https://accovid19-gdg-j515.raisely.com/>

Alternatively, please complete the enclosed donation form and return it to us by post or email:

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Tax deductible receipts for gifts over \$2 with a preference for project J515 or J675 are issued by the Awareness Cambodia Overseas Aid Fund (ABN 15 815 273 527). If projects are overfunded, funds may be applied to other approved project activities. Awareness Cambodia Inc (ABN 69 234 355 995) partners on these projects with Global Development Group (ABN 57 102 400 993), an Australian DFAT approved NGO.

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