

Giving Where It Is Needed



► I was fortunate to meet an amazing Canadian couple, Adrienne Dartnall and Rick Lennert, a few years ago when I was working in Cambodia. They had founded Kids International (K.I.D.S.) in memory of their only child, Danielle, who was tragically killed in a car accident at the age of 21.

When we met, they were helping the hospital I was volunteering for—Angkor Hospital for Children (AHC) in Siem Reap. Over the years the couple has supported the hospital by building laundry facilities and providing a water system for clean water. They have supported the rehabilitation program with supplies as well as building several needed buildings around the hospital. This year they purchased some tools to assist the maintenance staff, art supplies for the art therapy program, and a new monitor for the x-ray machine for the hospital.

When I returned home I wanted to assist Adrienne and Rick, so my husband and I decided to donate to their organization. They contribute 100 percent of all donated funds toward helping children and families, working directly with grassroots organizations in other countries to provide better futures for children in resource-poor countries. They pay for all of their own expenses out of pocket.

Adrienne and Rick send their donors frequent updates so we can follow their adventures and good work. But what I love most about their work is that if they identify a need during their travels they are able to respond quickly. A few years ago they were visiting another part of Cambodia when they found out that several families had lost their homes due to a quick-moving fire in Siem Reap. They extended their stay, bought building supplies and assisted the families to build simple but adequate houses.

This past winter they spent December through February in Cambodia. They provided support for many facilities, including a free school for over 150 refugee children in Mae Sot, a school they built and funded in northeast Cambodia, a girls' home in Siem



Adrienne Dartnall with children at the orphanage in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Reap, a floating medical clinic called Tonle Lake Clinic, a women's weaving cooperative in Stung Treng Province, as well as the AHC in Siem Reap.

In Mae Sot, on the Thailand/Burma border, they worked with David Naing and his wife Min Min, a couple from Burma who run a home for 50 children and assist another 100 children attending a free school. The organization they work with, Agape, is serving some of the desperate children and families who have fled the crackdown of the military regime in Burma.

Last year K.I.D.S. was able to purchase a large piece of land for the school and orphanage. Previously the school did not have a permanent home. David had plans to build four classrooms, two dormitories, a nursery and a kindergarten on the new land. When Adrienne and Rick arrived this year they were surprised to see several small but strong buildings.

David and Min Min have secured additional funds from another organization and now have nine teachers living and working with the children. The teachers are also refugees, so they teach, eat and

sleep at the school. David and Min Min now plan to build a teachers' dorm, a new kitchen and install tile for the bathroom and children's floors.

This year Adrienne and Rick purchased a truck to transport the children to and from the riverbank where many of the children live. They also purchased educational and building supplies.

Adrienne and Rick are models of how to add meaning to people's lives in resource-poor countries. It can be overwhelming to visit these communities due to the tremendous poverty and heart-wrenching situations. However, Adrienne and Rick are able to maintain their focus and use their Foundation's limited resources in a very productive manner for the greater good of those in need. They return year after year to see ongoing changes, which also facilitates local accountability.

Not everyone is able to travel to provide hands-on help, but we can all donate to organizations that are on the ground helping people live more productive and meaningful lives. If you are interested in donating to Adrienne and Rick's organization, donations can be sent to Kids International Development Society (K.I.D.S.), 545 Vancouver Ave., Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, V9S 4G6. You can contact Adrienne and Rick at adrienneandrick@hotmail.com. ■

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ADVANCE THANKS TERRY CROWE