



# SAVONG FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 2016



# LETTER FROM THE CEO



We will never be an organization that supports 500 students. We prefer to know and mentor all our scholarship students individually and encourage them to reach career goals that will benefit both themselves and their families.

*Phil Caldwell CEO*

There is a book by Garth Stein called *The Art of Racing in the Rain* which I read a few years ago. As a veterinarian, I loved the story as told through the eyes of an aging terrier cross but it's the title of the book that has always stayed with me. It refers to the unforeseen challenges that lie ahead in life and how you must adapt to succeed.

For the Savong Foundation, 2016 was the year of racing in the rain and we had to make some major changes in order to continue our work in Cambodia. I'm proud to say that despite the difficult times, we have emerged as a stronger foundation and have become more focused in our goal of supporting underprivileged students. Both the enthusiasm of our students and the generosity of our donors have given us the energy we needed to get through the challenges and we have learned a lot in the process.

Our biggest hurdle this past year was shutting down the Savong Student Center which was a living/education center for our young male scholarship students. It was located at the outskirts of Siem Reap and allowed our rural students to attend Future Bright International High School. We paid for food, utilities and computer lessons as well as supplied a small monthly stipend to the students. Despite having relatively few students living there, the cost of running the facility became excessive and it wasn't possible to sustain it financially—especially with the rising costs of private school tuition. We decided to have the students live with friends or relatives and put the donor money directly towards school expenses. We could have sent our students to a less expensive government school but we want our students to go as far academically as possible and we feel that the quality of the private school education is worth it. I think our students agree; they seem to love their school!

The other big change was encouraging our senior students to attend universities in Phnom Penh. The variety of degrees offered in Siem Reap, especially professional ones, is very limited and some of the other degrees are of questionable benefit. We had some very ambitious, high ranking students this past year and we were thrilled that they decided to move to the capital, which is roughly six hours by car from Siem Reap. It took some coordination and money to make the transition as seamless as possible but thanks to our contact in Phnom Penh, we made it happen. One of our students is attending the American University of Phnom Penh and although she received a scholarship due to her phenomenal final government exam results, the tuition is still \$4500/year! We have two other students studying at the University of Cambodia and these three students will act as liaisons and support for the future students who also decide to move down there.

Although our main focus has been our scholarship program, we are still building water pumps in the community through our Student Water Pump Project. This has been generously funded by the LUSH Charity Pot as well as individual donors and to date we have installed 23 family pumps. Along with provided filters, we are giving families a source of clean fresh water in the Siem Reap area which will go a long way in preventing water borne illnesses. We hope to continue this project through 2017.

There will always be challenges doing good work in Cambodia and sometimes it's difficult to anticipate what's around the corner. That doesn't stop us because we have students who deserve a better future than working as waitresses or waiters on Pub Street or as laborers in the rice fields. With our help—and especially your help—a better future for them is possible.

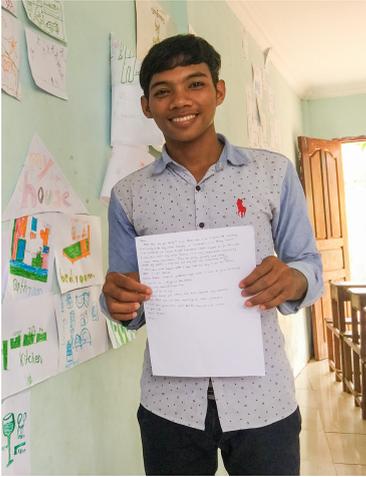
Thank you,

Phil Caldwell  
CEO Savong Foundation



# OUR MISSION

**Our mission is to support underprivileged students in northern Cambodia through education, shelter and healthcare.**



We believe in giving our students the best quality education that we can find.

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We match donors to students and we encourage them to communicate via email--although we discourage direct communication.

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We are not a "charity"; we provide our students with opportunities but we expect them to work hard for themselves and their families in return.

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**We have two main areas of support:**

## OUR PROJECTS

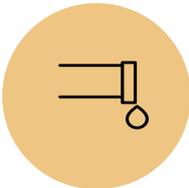
### Scholarships Program



We provide tuition at the Future Bright International High School in Siem Reap and at top universities in Siem Reap as well as Phnom Penh. We also send students to a private English school called BELS since English proficiency is extremely important for future career success. Depending on the need, we provide school supplies, including laptop computers and transportation which is usually a bicycle. We track student grades and attendance and have a scholarship manager in Cambodia to address any issues that arise.

Scholarship sponsorship starts at \$25/month and can go up to \$100/month or more.

### Student Water Pump Project



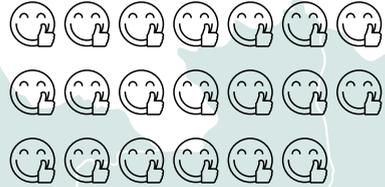
There is a great need in Cambodia for fresh clean drinking and cooking water. By building family sized water pumps in the community, we are addressing this issue and preventing water borne illnesses. We build the pumps, provide the families with a water filter and do follow-ups to make sure everything is working well.

The cost to build one pump and provide a filter is \$275.

# 2016: A YEAR IN NUMBERS

# 20

Scholarships awarded at the start of 2016/17 school year



- Young Men Scholarships (40%)
- Young Women Scholarships (60%)

# 13

Students in Grades 8 to 12



# 7

Students in University



2016 Graduates from High School

\*\*All are currently attending university.

# 3



Total Contributions

# \$33,041

from

Singapore

USA

Canada

Japan

ENGLAND

Germany

Australia



Over 98% of your donations went directly towards supporting our education and community programs!

# OUR WISH LIST

Since we are a grassroots non profit, we rely on even the smallest donations to make our programs successful. However, even small non profits can dare to dream and we hope to turn these dreams into reality for the upcoming year. Can you help?



## ***High School scholarships in Siem Reap***

Cost: \$25 to \$100/month

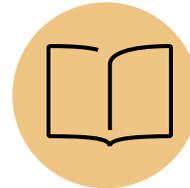
We are always looking for funds to cover tuitions for new students. We handpick our students based on academic ability as well as financial need and we send them to the Future Bright International High School.



## ***University Scholarships in Phnom Penh***

Cost: \$100 to \$300/month

We would love to have all our students study in Phnom Penh next year to pursue advanced degrees. We need to start looking for these funds as soon as possible so we know how many scholarships we can provide.



## ***Extra English classes at BELS***

Cost: \$50/month

Learning English is an essential skill for our students and this school excels at providing language instruction from native English speakers. We currently have a wait list for those students who would love to attend this school.



## ***Laptop computers***

Cost: \$250 to \$450/computer

We provide laptop computers to our university students if they don't already have one. We prefer to purchase locally to support the local businesses in the Siem Reap or Phnom Penh community.



## ***Student Water Pump Project***

Cost: \$275/pump and filter

Under the supervision of our Outreach Student Manager, our team builds a pump which brings clean and purified water to a family in the countryside. Along with a filter, the pump helps reduce water borne illnesses which can cause loss of income for parents and missed school days for children.

# ONE STORY: A THANK YOU

***This is an excerpt from a thank you letter from a student to his donor. This is a typical story that we hear from our students and is the reason we do what we do.***

My parents are farmers. They live in the village which is very far from the city and we have a small farm. At this time, farmers are very busy. Farmers in my village are very traditional and 100% are farmers. In my village have no English school, no electricity, no jobs. Although it's quite traditional I love countryside, especially in this season. It is very beautiful. Fields are colorful, countryside has fresh air, a lot of animals. I love them and I love natural life. In my family, we have four cows and many dogs and cats.

On the other hand, villages live in the poverty and their standard of living are very low and they have faced with a lot of problems. Especially children. Children in my village 95% were stop study after they finished their primary school. Obviously when I was young I used to face with all of those problems too when I was living with my parents. My parents wanted to stop supporting me to school but I absolutely refused with them and I insisted to study. Although at that time, my parents very influenced me. Actually, as much as they formed me to stop, as much as I desperately want to study. They are very sympathetic to me but children in my village are stop study because our village quite far from school and they don't have enough money so they can't afford their children to school. After stop study most of them help their parents at work and some of them emigrated to Thai to work there. They have to work hard all day and they live in the terrible situation because they are uneducated. They suffered. For me, my parents work really hard to support me to school but I definitely knew that my parents can't support me to study at high school or university and I was suffering acute anxiety.

Fortunately, one day my classmate told me about an organization which is located in the city. It is a non-government organization and they have supported many children in Cambodia to study and this organization is supported by generous people. It was the Savong Organization Cambodia and I was very happy to hear that so I requested to them and they quickly accept us. I was very happy and bring the good news to tell my parents. I was warmly welcome by them and at that time, I felt on top of the world because I can continue my studying and I severely hope that they can afford me to school until I am graduated and I'll be grateful for all of you who have always supported me to school.



# OUR BIG THANKS

Nearly six years ago, we were excited about getting a \$20 donation and we still are! It's true that we make every donation go as far as possible but it costs a lot of money to provide full scholarships to the best schools and employ the people to make all this happen. We are so thankful for the ongoing support that we have received and we look forward to your support for the years to come.



## Individual donors

Through our scholarship program, we pair up a student with a donor (or donors). These donors give us a yearly lump sum or donate every month. The students communicate to their donors (via the Savong Foundation) every three months through letters that they write.

We are always looking for supporters who would love to help our students and since the Savong Foundation is a 501(c)(3), your contributions are tax deductible in the United States.



## Corporate donors

**iHerb®**

We are very thankful to iHerb.com for their continued generosity. They have been a huge sponsor for our students and we are honored to be in partnership with them.



LUSH got our Student Water Pump Project off to a great start! They have provided the funding to build over 30 pumps in the community.

# GET IN TOUCH WITH US



Siem Reap, Cambodia



[phil@savongfoundation.org](mailto:phil@savongfoundation.org)



[www.facebook.com/savongfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/savongfoundation)

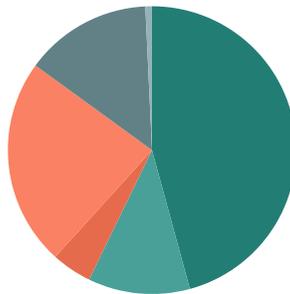


[@savongfoundn](https://twitter.com/savongfoundn)

# THE FINANCIALS

Total contributions for 2016  
\$33,041

## Program breakdown for 2016



- Scholarships (45.76%)
- Water Pump Project (11.44%)
- Savong Organization Cambodia (4.52%)
- Savong Student Center (23.30%)
- Young Cambodian Women's Center (14.24%)
- General Cambodian Program (0.74%)



Over 98% of 2016 public contributions went to program expenses.



We are very proud of our gold-level GuideStar participant award which means that we are committed to transparency!

<http://www.guidestar.org/profile/27-3567820>