Lily’s House
Giving special children a hope and a future!

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From start to finish, how one special person decided to honor children by pushing himself to the limit!

Wei was no stranger to being called unable or different as a child. Growing up in China, Wei was born of small stature and grew to be only 168 cm. In China if a boy did not grow to be about 170 cm then he was considered unattractive and was tagged as a “second degree disability” with very little hope of finding a girlfriend in the future. He was very good a school but was considered a “bookworm” with very little abilities in athletics. His mother was so concerned about him that she actually made him hang on a bar every night as to try to increase is height but to no avail. So it was a great surprise to many of his high school alumni when he finished his first Ironman in October of 2016. From 2009 - 2012 when his wife was pregnant with their first son and then their daughter, Wei put on a lot of weight, 40 pounds to be exact. It was at this time he decided that he did not want to be considered a second degree disability anymore and started to work out and run. Working thru many triathlons and marathons, he eventually worked his way up to running Ironman competitions. But running for Wei turned out to be more than a personal accomplishment. He wanted to set an example for his kids of a “Yes I can” attitude.

Being misdiagnosed with hydrocephalus as a child when he instead had rickets, it was very fortunate that someone had noticed the difference otherwise today he would have been in a wheelchair. It was his love to help children, and his own personal experiences growing up that eventually hooked him up with Harmony Outreach where he ran an Ironman to raise money for Lily’s Van. His attempt to raise money this time was almost hindered when he had to go home to China for several months to care for his mother. When he returned there was only 8 weeks to train and usually one needs about 20 weeks. When he heard that Harmony had closed and that Lily was to handle these children on her own, Wei stepped up to the plate and gave it all he got training about 20 hours a week. Wei also followed the story of Gia Cannelongo and how brave and how strong this little girl’s faith was, so he also ran the Ironman in honor of Gia. At the end Wei didn’t give up and was able to raise using his companies matching program over $20,000 for Lily’s House. To Wei we say God bless you for your love and faithfulness. Your hard work and tireless efforts will never go unnoticed and now so many children can be blessed with a hope and a future because of your determination. Thank you!
When I first worked with orphans in 1999 in a foster home, my heart was touched. Most of the children had special needs and were high risk. Their illnesses consisted of Cerebral Palsy, heart disease, Spinal Bifida etc. Being with them I saw that they needed special care and love, and I realized I was in a different life that I had never known before. Children who have families are loved, but these orphans have no family. They should be loved but the core of their life was broken because they were abandoned for numerous reasons. At end of 2001 I started to become involved in their lives to help them. By 2006, I started working as a director of a foster house in China! Over the last 12 years we have taken care of more than 160 children of whom 130 children were adopted to loving families. But the quest to do better has always persisted in my mind. I always ask, how could we strive to do better to take even greater care of these children? What are the most important things orphans’ need, and what is the best route for their life after surgery or after therapy?

All children are precious, and they should be loved unconditionally by their families, but these unfortunate ones need surgery, need therapy, and some have no natural family. They are weak, and some of them are at high risk and need to be urgently sent to the hospital. Our first and most important responsibility when we receive new orphans is to save their lives. After the hospital is able to stabilize them, they come back to our house, and their new life begins. They have nannies to take care of them as their mothers, and I have witnessed them smile and open their hearts more each day as they slowly adjust to this new, loving way of life. I am overjoyed to see their bright faces every day. Sometimes we get children who have psychological problems such as autism, ADHD, or mental delay, and they require a psychologist to help them. Other children have Cerebral Palsy, Downs Syndrome or other muscular or physical issues that require the help of a physical therapist. All of these children will receive the help they need but I continue to ask myself, “What is the most important need in their lives?” For many children their first words is “mama” or “baba” and every child desires to be held. Why? Because they need to be loved, and the most important element is love. Only love can truly give them the overwhelming confidence that they are safe from abandonment and are saved from illness, and to be adopted to a new family is the best way to receive love and security and to have a wonderful, rich and colorful life. So, the cornerstone of our work has been developed after so many years of experience and contact with all of these wonderful children. First, is to save their lives by getting them whatever medical or psychological help they require. Second, is to lovingly care for them and grow, develop and prepare them for a hopeful and brighter future, and third, is to help them find a loving adoptive family so their story can continue into the future.

Life is truly unfair at times, but I hope every child I receive will be nurtured in love and that in turn will make them happier and more hopeful. Eventually, my desire is that they will all find a loving adoptive family, and I hope I can continue to help orphans because every day I see this picture and it calls to me, “Come, hold me!”
How Poor is Poor?

By Allen Kuo

You know maybe my mom was right. Maybe I have been living too sheltered a life. All my life things were provided for, and I have always had loving parents, clothes, shelter, warm food on the table and a wonderful education. Because of this I was able to achieve much and go very far, and yet, even with all of these, I have been unsatisfied with my life on many occasions. I think many of you feel the same way as I do. Life is too busy or there are too many obligations. The house is not quite right or the kids are asking for too much etc. I have also had the privilege to work with many special needs individuals in my life, but this has had its ups and downs. It is wonderful to be able to help and serve those in need but it also can create a more numb and unfeeling heart, where I start to believe that at times there is really no hope and that my small help doesn’t really amount to much. But then, when does the cycle stop? When does the Lord reach out to every individual heart and break it so hard that one realizes that all of the blessings given must also be returned so that hope can be restored?

A little poor village in China, a broken family, and a wonderful little boy whose hope in life is barely surviving and close to being snuffed out might be what it takes. Several years ago the wife had run away from this father leaving him with two children because he was a drunkard and had beat her on occasion. The father finds very little hope in himself and though he wants to work hard in the fields, there is at times no work, and he cannot escape the violent grips of alcohol addiction which has ravaged his body as well as his mind. Being about his early forties but already looking like he was 65, he ended up having nothing and spent much of what he had on alcohol. The villagers even built a shelter for him, and even though this was not much, he ran it down to such a dilapidated condition that by any standard it was unlivable and yet there he raised his children. When I visited to donate bags of rice and other goods such as clothes, packaged milk etc., the daughter was attending middle school and had already escaped living at home. The 10 year old son was attending the local school. Outside started to snow and the shelter was getting cold. Conditions were miserable and the only thing heating the room was an old coal burning stove. Spoiled food was sitting on the table and what could be considered a bed was filled with all kinds of dirty items such as clothes and boxes. This was where the son slept which was unbelievable. The father himself did not say much, and you could detect the shame and defeat in his eyes, but being gripped with addiction and moments of violent outbursts had already ripped his soul into pieces. He accepted the items gracefully, and we went to visit his son.

This wonderful 10 year old boy was doing very well in school but the principal of the school had stated that at times he would not show up because his father would not allow him to. The school tried to provide food and a warm place to sleep in the afternoon so he could get rest but by the looks of this boy you could see his life was about to consume him. His clothes were smelly and dirty and definitely way too thin for the cold weather. When you asked questions of him he was very polite but he looked away as if afraid to answer you. The teacher had said that his father would beat him on a regular basis particularly when he was drunk. The boy’s eyes were starting to show defeat and the little resources that were being donated to him by Lily on a regular basis was having almost little to no impact in his life. Money was provided to him and his school for his education but this was also being squandered by the father for alcohol. The school was trying its best as well but with only 69 students in the whole school and limited resources they could only go so far. The teacher himself would actually go to the home and try to reprimand the father but this was to no avail. The downward spiral was already beginning, and with his sister gone and no one really to care for him, our biggest concern was that he eventually would turn out to be like his father. I am reminded of a verse, “where does my help come from? My help come form the Lord.”
I am sure many of you have heard this story before. Maybe some of you have witnessed this first hand. Even in America you don’t have to look very far to find situations that are somewhat similar. The questions is when does this cycle stop? If we could even stop this cycle for one little boy and give him a hope and future brighter than the one he faces now, is there the possibility he might return one day to this village and help others as well? Chinese really don’t like to leave their home no matter what the conditions might be. In their heart home is the land where they were born and raised. So where does Lily’s House play a role in this?

Lily’s House has received many donations, some of which have been sent to areas such as the one above, but none of these donations have come from Christian churches. Many come from regular supporters who are atheist or Buddhist. I am extremely saddened to see this. As ambassadors of Christ we surely can do better. Lily’s House is committed to continue to help individuals like this and hopefully in the future to give these children some hope and future. If you feel moved to help this project in anyway than let us know. Continue to remember that 95% of donations will go to fund Lily’s House and projects like this one. The cycle can stop and who knows, one child who was saved by Lily’s House in anyway might one day return to continue to give hope to other children such as the opportunity that was provided to them.
Thanks for taking the time to read Lily’s House first newsletter. Unfortunately due to security reasons we will not be posting pictures of the the children at Lily’s House on this newsletter. If you want more information on the children there please contact Lily via WeChat or me via email at akuomd@gmail.com. The journey to helping all of these children is like this road. It is long and can be smooth at times and sometimes filled with large holes and obstacles. If you wish to join us on this journey financially please feel free to give via Holt International. Their website is https://www.holtinternational.org/appeals/where-most-needed.php. Just be sure to write LILYS HOUSE in the comments section and send an email to Yih-Pai Lotz at yihpaichu@gmail.com letting her know that you have donated so she can track your donation. Remember 95% of all donations will go directly to help these children. Everyone in the United States is donating their time and efforts to make Lily’s House a true reality. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you!!

Volunteers

Lily Huang: Founder and China Director
Allen Kuo: United States Coordinator
Yih-Pai Lotz: East Coast Fundraising coordinator and Bookkeeping
Casie Thomas: Midwest Fundraising Coordinator and Promotional
Kat Kung: Midwest Fundraising and Support
Wei Guan: Financial Supporter and fundraising
Bruce Lotz: Website Manager
Kim Block: Video Production
Johanna Canellango: Fundraising Supporter