



April 23, 2007

Dear Friends,

As you know from my previous “update” letters, 39 children moved into the New Lingap Center almost exactly one year ago. As of today, 95 children are residing there, safe from the abuse, neglect and exploitation that they experienced in the past. It has been a very good and challenging year!

I thought I would use this opportunity to tell you about our progress on my pledge to develop a transition plan for the children, to integrate them back into happy, healthy lives when the time comes for them to leave the Lingap Center. We have worked with several large companies in the Philippines and have found a number of future career opportunities for them in an area with a very high unemployment rate. The future is bright, but employment at these organizations will require a college degree.

While I continue to be very excited that all of the children are now attending the public school (many for the first time in their lives), it should be noted that the classroom conditions are abysmal, with as many as two children sharing a chair and five per book. The lucky ones will have books with most of the pages! Considering these conditions, the odds of them being accepted into college are not very high. To remedy this problem, we are partnering with the West Bay Learning Center – a private college preparatory school located about 1 km from the Lingap Center where eight of the children will be enrolled for the 2007 – 2008 school year. West Bay is a fairly new school, with a maximum of 30 students per class. The total annual cost for tuition, uniforms, fees, administrative costs etc. is \$400. It is my hope that in time, we will be able to find enough sponsors to place all Lingap children having college potential into West Bay. Not all will attend, as some will choose the vocational path. If any of you are interested in providing educational sponsorship assistance, please let me know. It really is an opportunity for you to help change their lives.

Some other developments that I would like to share include:

- The launch of a concerted effort to raise an endowment for the Lingap Center. This will ensure that the work we’ve done will be sustained and that the less fortunate children will continue to have basic food, safety, shelter, educational opportunities and religious backing for years to come.
- The introduction of two new Board members to The Lingap Children’s Foundation. Dave Richmond and John T. McFarland have been avid, long-term supporters of our organization and have agreed to contribute their time and talent to the cause. We are absolutely delighted to have them on board.

<http://www.lingapcenter.org>
a 501(c)(3) organization

- The incorporation of the Lingap Children’s Development Center, Inc. in the Philippines. This is a mirror organization of the U.S. based Lingap Children’s Foundation, which gives us tax-exempt status in the Philippines and allows us to actively conduct business there. The Board of Directors consists of myself and six other individuals in the Philippines – all active supporters of the Lingap Center.
- The accreditation of the Lingap Center by the National Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). This accreditation allows us to provide a wide range of services – such as family counseling, parenting skills workshops and other programs that will benefit not only the Lingap children, but countless others in the community. When awarding us with the certificate, Regional Director Teodulo Romo told us that our application was approved faster than any other in the history of the DSWD and that our facility was the best of its kind in all of the Visayas, if not all of the Philippines! This is a wonderful tribute to our staff of 23, which includes 4 experienced social workers.

Several of you have asked what you can do to help the children at the Lingap Center. As you may know, our monthly operating costs are covered primarily through our “*A Place at the Table*” sponsorship program which ensures that no child who needs our services will be turned away from the Lingap Center and returned to the streets. Sadly, we have fallen far short of our sponsorship goal this year. If you are not currently participating in this program, would you consider doing so? It costs just \$25 a month and it makes a huge difference in the lives of children who have nowhere else to turn. If you are already a sponsor, thank you from the bottom of my heart. Please talk to your friends, family members or others in your community who may be interested in participating as well. It is easy to enroll online by visiting our website at www.lingapcenter.org, or by contacting me.

In closing, I will say that we have made significant progress on virtually all fronts. We should all be very proud of what we have accomplished together – because none of this would have been possible without you. However, we still have much work to do.

As I think of the Lingap Children and all of the less fortunate children of the world and about how blessed we are, I am reminded of the following quotes:

“Never believe that a few people cannot change the world. In fact, it’s the only way it’s ever happened.”

Margaret Mead

“There is no better exercise for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.”

John Andrew Hillman

Sincerely,



John Drake