1. Maia Mounsher
THAILAND DIRECTOR

2. Parinya “Paan” Jongpaijitsakul
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

3. Plangta “Pepo” Leepatanaku
SURVIVOR CARE COORDINATOR

4. Aroonied “Mon” Chermue
OUTREACH WORKER

5. Alisa “Imp” Suwee
CASE MANAGER

6. Nan “Khem” Khin
HOUSE MANAGER

7. Kampon “Bop” Maijandee
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR, CASE MANAGER + COMMUNITY EDUCATOR

8. Piyawan “Tu” Peangmon
COMMUNITY PREVENTION COORDINATOR

9. Somyot “Ton” Channa
ACCOUNTANT

10. Narong “Rong” Khamjoy
OUTREACH WORKER

11. Yuttapong Tiumsuk
OUTREACH WORKER

12. Nang “Pon” Hseng Nyein San
OUTREACH WORKER

13. Lani Hollander
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (CONSULTANT)
our mission:

We PROTECT boys and young men by meeting their basic needs and EMPOWER them through education, training, and counseling – all to give them FREEDOM to choose a life beyond exploitation.
I first came to know Urban Light at the time when I was studying at Chiang Mai University as a 4th year student and at that time my professor suggested I take on an internship at Urban Light. At that time Urban Light did not have a counselor, and since Urban Light works with such vulnerable clients, I felt it crucial they be able to provide clients with access to mental health care.

After completing my 6-month internship with UL, and after graduating I was still interested in continuing to work with UL. I was interested in the challenge of providing mental health care for this particular group of boys.

In January 2016, I started my full-time work with Urban Light and my commitment to being the best counselor and case manager to the clients they serve, all while pursuing my masters in psychology.

At first, working here, as I had expected, was very challenging – I had to adapt to working with a unique client population, and to my new role as a counselor. I had to learn fast and create...

Continued on next page >>
new counseling and therapy services from scratch that would be offered to our clients.

Each UL client has his complex and chronic issues which cause them sadness and pain. Of course, mental health condition such as trauma, PTSD, depression, anxiety has an effect on our client’s well-being as it limits their success and impacts their daily life. UL’s clients suffer extreme conditions and live in a constant state of survival mode which makes working with them quite challenging—it takes time to get through to each individual. These particular difficulties and complexities helped me to understand that I must always strive to learn and develop my own skills. The harder the case, the more I dedicate myself to studying, understanding, and finding even more information to better serve UL client’s mental health needs.

I remember when I started working at UL, hardly had two months go by and I had already read more books than I had in four years of studying for my bachelor’s degree! I’m lucky that I have such a supportive professor and supervisor at Chiang University’s Department of Psychology. It’s also a huge help that UL has such a strong team (a really strong team!) – it means we don’t get too exhausted from this difficult and complex work.

I believe that what’s important in working as a counselor, is having knowledge, techniques, and a positive attitude towards your clients. Something that I learned from working with UL’s clients is how to manage my expectations, and the ability to observe that even small changes can have so much value in the lives of the clients we work with. If we take it one small change at a time, we will be able to bring the clients we work with “out of the narrow and into the wide – out of the darkness and into the light” without getting lost, through the process of building relationships that are based on warmth and safety.

"...EVEN SMALL CHANGES CAN HAVE SO MUCH VALUE IN THE LIVES OF THE CLIENTS WE WORK WITH."
INTERNATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

Alezandra Russell // URBAN LIGHT FOUNDER, USA
Ziad Reslan // CHAIR, USA
Dave Dyer // CO-CHAIR, USA
Bruce Schuman // TREASURER, USA
Peter Sargant // FUNDRAISING CO-CHAIR, HONG KONG
Till Lembke // FUNDRAISING CO-CHAIR, HONG KONG
Marisa Marchitelli // BOARD MEMBER, THAILAND
Madeline Stenersen // BOARD MEMBER, USA
Jacqueline Romano // BOARD MEMBER, USA
Jessi Dhanju // ADVISORY BOARD TO FOUNDER
Ashley Sangha // ADVISORY BOARD TO FOUNDER
Mark Moser // ADVISORY BOARD TO FOUNDER

THAILAND BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Seri Maichan // PRESIDENT
Dr. Prasit Wangpakawattanawong // VICE PRESIDENT
Khun Monticha Puthawong // SECRETARY + TREASURER
Khun Atjaree Saimee // BOARD MEMBER
2019 giving

LOCA & GLOBAL GRANTORS

US State Department, TIP Office // USA
Highland Church of Christ // USA
Kindernothilfe (KNH) // GERMANY
New England International Donors (NEID) // USA
Lakarmissionen // SWEDEN
Interact // SWEDEN
PMU // SWEDEN
Safe Child Thailand // UK
Partners Asia // THAILAND
The Ask Family // THAILAND
Athletic Greens // USA

LOCA & GLOBAL PARTNERS

FRIENDS International | CAREMAT | Mplus+ Child Rights Coalition | Liberty Asia
Mekong Club | A21 | Le Meridien Chiang Mai | Jai The | Manifesto Agency
Rotary Club Chiang Mai | Disney | YouTube | UP! International
Urban Caravan | Lit World
A huge thanks

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS
Juvenile Detention Center  Chiang Mai Region 5 Police
Informal School of Chiang Mai  US Consulate of Chiang Mai
Ministry for Social Development & Human Security (MSDHS)

INDIVIDUAL PARTNERS
Russ Saldi  Tammy Funk  Grace Lee  Anthony Yu
Josh Phelps  Marianne Wedmore  Emily McNaughton
Jackie Digiovanni Lindsay  Nicole Kaseberg

LONG-TERM VOLUNTEERS
Ryan Binkley  Nadina Sommer  Sophie Perl
Gillian Rose  Jeremy Vernon
การแข่งขันฟุตบอล 7 คน
"Our Purpose Is To Inspire Fulfilling Lives, Starting With A Focus On Health."

Athletic Greens is proud to support Urban Light in their mission to provide care & wellness to the young boys in Thailand who are victims of trafficking and exploitation. At Athletic Greens, we strive to support charities run by passionate people who are looking to improve the lives of their community. As a company focused on nutrition and health, we are particularly interested in helping provide exceptional nutrition as a foundation for success and recovery.

One of our core values at Athletic Greens is Respect and Empathy for All. We treat each other as we would like to be treated. That means showing respect and empathy for every person, regardless of their situation. The population that Urban Light serves in Thailand is a very marginalized group that needs extra care and support in difficult times. We feel that focusing our efforts on these often forgotten boys is an important and worthy cause.

Chris ‘The Kiwi’ // FOUNDER OF ATHLETIC GREENS + URBAN LIGHT ANGEL INVESTOR SINCE 2011

Chris is the most generous person I know. A huge caring heart, liberal with time and money and opportunities. He truly wants to help others become the best people they can be, and when it comes to kids, Chris can’t bear for them to suffer. Two of Chris’ great passions are personal growth and physical health. Urban Light improves the lives of boys in both areas, and so providing delicious, healthy meals was a natural collaboration.

Liana Ashenden // SISTER
JANUARY
Jai Thep Festival x Urban Light Booth // Awareness
Thailand Children’s Day // Partnership / Awareness

FEBRUARY
Life Skills Training with P’Paan // Protection
Urban Light Board Meeting, QTR 1, Remote Meeting

MARCH
ChildSafe Partner Meeting // Partnership

APRIL
Songkran Swimming Excursion // Protection

MAY
Urban Light Ethical Tourism Workshop for Chiang Mai Community // Partnership
Good Touch Bad Touch Training // Partnership / Awareness

JUNE
Juvenile Detention Center Workshops // Protection
Urban Light Board Meeting, QTR 2, Remote Meeting

JULY
Urban Light Media Training // Partnership
L’oreal x Urban Light Hair Academy // Partnership
Upl International x Urban Light Meeting, Switzerland // Awareness

AUGUST
Anti-Trafficking Awareness with Local Chiang Mai Schools // Awareness

SEPTEMBER
Mobile Health Clinics Holland in Community // Prevention / Protection
Good Touch Bad Touch Training // Prevention + Partnership

OCTOBER
World Without Orphans Forum
Speaking Engagement at the USAID, Washington, DC // Awareness
Speaking Engagement, Boston, MA // Awareness
Urban Caravan Dinner to raise awareness for Urban Light, Washington, DC // Awareness
Urban Caravan Dinner to raise awareness for Urban Light, Trout Lake, WA // Awareness
Annual Urban Light Board Meeting, Google Office San Francisco, CA
A21 x Urban Light Walk for Freedom & Chiang Mai ATIP EXPO // Partnership / Awareness

NOVEMBER
Urban Caravan Dinner to raise awareness for Urban Light, Mumbai, India // Awareness
Harmony Foundation Symposium on Human Trafficking, Mumbai, India
Mother Teresa Memorial Award Ceremony honoring Urban Light Founder Alezandra Russell, Mumbai India
UL’s 2nd Annual Football Cup, Chiang Mai, TH // Partnership / Awareness

DECEMBER
Paul Cox Photography Auction @ 137 Pillars House, Chiang Mai, TH // Awareness
End of the Year Excursion for the Urban Light Boys, Floating Boat Houses, Chiang Mai // Protection
My initial experience of meeting many of the boys at the Urban Light drop-in center when I started volunteering three years ago was a bit disorienting. As an American missionary living in Thailand for over ten years now, I had grown to expect in certain social situations an automatic greeting with a “wai” (hands pressed together and raised to face), which is a show of respect from a younger person to an older. Yet, none of the boys looked at me nor “wai-ed” me those first few times.

In a hierarchical society like Thailand where everyone knows their place in relation to others, giving and receiving honor is of high value, alongside physical needs like food and shelter. In the eyes of most Thais, however, there is nothing honorable about the boys of Urban Light. Their first interaction with me was not a lack of manners or desire to show respect, but quite the opposite: they weren’t confident that I saw them worthy enough to even play the honor-giving game.

I also noticed early on that the boys did “wai” people at the center - namely, the Urban Light staff. And after three years of being around the staff and boys I know why. The staff treat the boys who come each day not as problems to be fixed but as fellow human beings who are worthy of respect.

The boys at the center are not “street kids” or “sex workers” - they are friends, brothers and sons. In fact, Urban Light case workers serve as legal guardians for some clients. Whether it is teaching them how to cut hair, offering a place to bathe, sharing a meal together, lending an ear in a counseling session or tending a wounded leg, the Urban Light staff show day in and day out that these boys are honorable and lovable.

While “honor” might not be one of the official services offered by Urban Light, I believe that empowering these young men to protect themselves from exploitation also includes restoring to them dignity and self-worth. When staff celebrate a client’s high school graduation with flowers and pictures, attend the funeral of a client who died from alcohol abuse, or visit them in prison, they communicate that each one is a valuable human being, despite what society tells them. These acts may not make the annual report but they are just as important as Urban Light’s other services.

Each time I play soccer with the Urban Light boys I am reminded how much this community has positively affected the self-esteem of these boys. On the soccer field there is no difference in social status. We play together as equals—laughing, smiling and teasing each other. Though in reality I am a horrible soccer player, the boys honor me by intentionally passing the ball to me, knowing that seconds later it will most likely be stolen. Now when I leave the soccer field many of the boys raise their hands to “wai” me.

We all know each of us is worthy of giving and receiving honor.

... EACH ONE IS A VALUABLE HUMAN BEING
9 YEARS IN OPERATION

228 Visits where services were received during Outreach & Community Outreach
4,759 Visits from Boys that made it to the Urban Light Youth Center

1,811 Boys who received services during Outreach*
776 Boys who received services in 2019*
127 Boys who received services @ the Youth Center

549 Hours providing 1-on-1 Case Management
365 Hours spent providing education-based services including life skills & professional development**
549 Hours providing 1-on-1 Case Management
8,681 Total Hot + Healthy Meals provided to UL Boys

1,811 Boys who received services during Outreach*
776 Boys who received services in 2019*
127 Boys who received services @ the Youth Center

3,098 Hot Meals served @ the UL Center
1,760 Hot Meals served during Outreach
1,268 Snacks/Meals served @ Prevention/Community Development

8,681 Total Hot + Healthy Meals provided to UL Boys

30 Girls came to the Drop-In Center in 2019

Urban Light Staff Members:
9 Thai Staff
2 Foreign Staff
5 Volunteers & Consultants

** "Boys" refers to all male clients (boys and men). **In 2019 these services included screen printing, hair cutting, baking snacks, tattoo, general & sexual health, career & life clinic, art therapy, excursion, everybody in & upcycle. However, no English services were included as it was prohibited by immigration.

127 Boys who received services @ the Youth Center
30 Girls came to the Drop-In Center in 2019
8,681 Total Hot + Healthy Meals provided to UL Boys

3,098 Hot Meals served @ the UL Center
1,760 Hot Meals served during Outreach
1,268 Snacks/Meals served @ Prevention/Community Development

8,681 Total Hot + Healthy Meals provided to UL Boys

30 Girls came to the Drop-In Center in 2019

Urban Light Staff Members:
9 Thai Staff
2 Foreign Staff
5 Volunteers & Consultants

** "Boys" refers to all male clients (boys and men). **In 2019 these services included screen printing, hair cutting, baking snacks, tattoo, general & sexual health, career & life clinic, art therapy, excursion, everybody in & upcycle. However, no English services were included as it was prohibited by immigration.
# of Boys enrolled in alternative education: 15 Boys
# of Boys enrolled in formal education: 10 Boys

# of Boys who entered the UL Transitional Housing Project: 18 Boys
# of Boys who received emergency Housing: 10 Boys

# of hours spent on medical case-management first aid, pharmacy visits and HIV screening: 138 Hours
# of Boys who received medical check ups: 43 Boys
# of Boys who received HIV & STI screenings: 29 Boys
# of Boys who received health screenings for other illnesses: 78 Boys
# of Boys who received mental health services: 59 Boys
# of on-site health clinics at the UL Youth Center: 7 Clinics
# of hours spent providing health education to UL Boys: 15 Hours

# of Boys who received medical check ups: 43 Boys
# of Boys who received HIV & STI screenings: 29 Boys
# of Boys who received health screenings for other illnesses: 78 Boys
# of Boys who received mental health services: 59 Boys
# of on-site health clinics at the UL Youth Center: 7 Clinics
# of hours spent providing health education to UL Boys: 15 Hours

# of Boys who entered the UL Transitional Housing Project: 18 Boys
# of Boys who received emergency Housing: 10 Boys

EDUCATION

HEALTH

HOUSING
**EMPLOYMENT**

- # of Boys that received life skills training: 83 Boys
- # of Boys that received vocational training: 82 Boys
- # of Boys that got a job: 30 Boys

**OUTREACH**

- # of outreach locations: 12 Locations
- # of hours spent conducting outreach: 260 Hours
- # of Boys reached during outreach: 265 Boys
- # of Boys who were referred out to other services: 12 Boys
- # of condoms distributed: 7,720 Condoms
- # of health kits distributed during outreach: 144 Health Kits
- # of visits to jail, juvenile detention: 29 Visits
- # of hot meals served at outreach: 2,493 Meals
COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- # of Urban Light satellite centers: 4 Centers
- # of life skills workshops provided during community outreach: 38
- # of children (0 – 18) that received services: 162 Children
- # of families that received services: 153 Families

PREVENTION/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- # of community & village chats/trainings: 22 Chats
- # of elders + parents that participated in community chats: 307 Elders
- # of youth that participated in youth programs: 65 Youth

AWARENESS + ADVOCACY
- # of Thailand speaking engagement: 25 Engagements
- # of Global speaking engagements: Thai (6), USA (12)
- # of Travel & Tourism Trainings on Child Protection: 2 Trainings
- # of followers reached on social media: Reaches (83,259), Clicks (6,013)
- # of people reached via speaking engagements: Thai (3,098), USA (1,760)
CHALLENGE #1: TRAFFICKING IN NARROWLY DEFINED TO ONLY TO CONFRONT TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN LEAVING MEN OUT OF THE EQUATION

CHALLENGE #2: SHRINKING BUDGETS

CHALLENGE #3: SILO'D NON-PROFITS CREATING DISCONNECT WITHIN THE SECTOR LEADING TO LIMITING OUR IMPACT
2019 was the first year that Urban Light saw two of its clients entering University. One of those clients was Rong. This is his story, of what he has overcome and how he got to where he is today.

Rong is 20 years old. His home town is in Chiang Dao district of Chiang Mai a two hour motorbike ride from Chiang Mai city. He is Lahu (an ethnic minority group in Thailand), and has 3 siblings. Both of Rong’s parents died when he was very young, leaving him and his siblings alone, parentless, and stateless. Being stateless, Rong still lacks citizenship, but holds an ‘O’ card which allows him a few benefits such as access to education and the ability to travel internally within Chiang Mai.

Continued on next page >>
Rong’s family left Myanmar as refugees before he was born. Rong was born and raised in Thailand, and as such is entitled to Thai citizenship. However, his birth was not registered, and so to this day he remains stateless or invisible. When he was about 2 years old Rong was first taken into the care of an orphanage, and he bounced around different care homes until the age of thirteen. From this point onward, Rong went to live with friends on the street, in the area of a local fresh-market, and worked in a warehouse. His job was lifting and moving boxes of flowers from 5AM to 10PM, for which he received around 150 Baht per day or $4.78USD (half of the national minimum wage in Thailand).

Living on the streets and trying to survive, Rong was living in an extremely high-risk environment. That was until he met one of Urban Light’s officers, who was able to help him in many ways, including providing healthcare, education, housing and counseling. Since he has attended formal schooling, he has also benefited from Urban Light’s Transitional Housing Project, with a safe place to live and regular visits from the Urban Light team. Over time his way of thinking shifted and his quality of life drastically improved.

In 2019, Rong completed his 3rd and final year at Vocational Technical College – learning to be a certified electronics technician. Thanks to an ongoing scholarship with Urban Light, Rong is now in his first year studying Sports Science and Health Promotion at University of Chiang Mai. He is on his well on his way to achieving his dream of becoming a sports coach in the future!

In addition to his studies, and after passing his driver’s license test with support from Urban Light, Rong has also taken on a part time job as a driver for Grab Food. His goal for the time being is to complete his bachelor’s degree, so that he can find work that is stable in the future, and even gain Thai citizenship. According to Thai law, stateless citizens can only apply for their citizenship if and when they complete their University Education.

Of the last year, Rong added: “I feel like everything is going well. Going to University, having somewhere to live, everything’s okay. I feel grateful because if I didn’t have Urban Light, I wouldn’t get to have an education like this, I wouldn’t have a place to sleep.”

“I feel more like an adult now. I used to be a little kid, I used to only think about myself, and I used to let my feelings get in the way, but now I feel like I’m going in the right direction.”

We asked if he felt proud of himself since he started studying at University, “Well, not yet” he answered with a smile - “I’m not finished yet!”

Keep it up Rong* – Eyes on the Prize!
The identity and privacy of all Urban Light Boys is strictly enforced by the Urban Light Child Protection Policy which is strictly enforced and followed by all staff, visitors and partners. The word "Boy(s)" is used to describe our male clients, however Urban Light also serves adult men who are included in the annual numbers.