

RALEIGH, NC, May 17, 2014 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- For most of us, it's hard to imagine a lamp being a thing of luxury. It's just one of those "little things" we take for granted. Yet for many children in developing countries, a little thing like a light can make a huge difference in their lives.

This month, I've had the pleasure of working with Pegasus Lighting on a unique 15th Anniversary campaign called "Bring the Light," which is aimed to help make a man named Mark Malangko's dream come true. Pegasus Lighting has partnered with Unite to Light to bring individual solar-powered LED lights to a village in upper Ghana near Charikpong, where Malangko grew up. Here, children who need to study after dark have no choice but to burn unhealthy fuels like kerosene for light.

Sixty years ago, Malangko was one of these young children, a six-year old going to Charikpong Elementary School, using an oil lamp rigged out of a rusty sardine can he dug out of the trash. He'd fill the tin with shea butter oil, harvested from the nearby Karite trees, and do his homework in a smoky glow that burned his eyes. Over the years, the cumulative strain led to very poor vision.

Despite these obstacles, Malangko had the tenacity to earn two bachelors degrees, two masters degrees, and a PhD in Educational Leadership. Without a doubt, this is someone who takes education seriously.

"I see education as the great equalizer," he says. "It's like that old saying 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.' I think this is the vital thing about providing these solar lamps to kids in developing countries; it's a tool that helps them help themselves."

Malangko's combined experiences with poor lighting and struggling to get an education eventually fueled his desire to look for solutions. When he visited his childhood village in 2010, he experienced a disturbing case of déjà vu. "I'd watch my nieces study at night, and they were lying flat on their bellies on their mats with their oil lamps, doing their homework. It just hit me. This is what I did 60 years ago when I started school. It's the same thing, all over again."

As if by fate, when Manlangko arrived back in the States, he ended up doing graduate work at the University of California in Santa Barbara where he met Dr. Bowers, the inventor of Unite to Light's solar lamp. In the process, he befriended Dawn O'Bar, President of the non-profit. It was

a huge turning point in Malangko's life - a great weight lifted from his shoulders.

"I tell you, after I talked with them, I literally danced! All of a sudden, here was this little gadget! And if I could somehow get it into the hands of the boys and girls who need it, they wouldn't have to go through what I went through. These lights will improve their learning - and out of that, who knows what they can become," he says.

When asked what drives him to work so tirelessly towards this cause, Malangko says, "It's not about me, it's about those people who are going through the same thing that I did, 60 years ago - that's my motivation. And I appreciate every person and every organization--like Pegasus Lighting--who is putting their money towards helping to put these lights into the hands of the children that need them."

As for Pegasus Lighting founder, Tom Farin, education is an issue near and dear to his heart as well. Farin has a Doctorate degree in Educational Administration and worked in the education field for over 20 years--five years in public education and 16 in private education--before getting into the light business.

"I am extremely pleased and proud that our Bring-the-Light campaign in Ghana will assist young minds in growing and making a positive difference in their daily lives," Farin says. "Light is the first element of learning; without it, there can be no growth in understanding, inspiration, or creativity."

Unite to Light President Dawn O'Bar adds that while there is plenty of awareness about the importance of education, we often forget about providing the necessary tools. Tools cost money, and even the relatively inexpensive lamps at \$15 can be cost-prohibitive for families in developing countries, which is why the Pegasus Lighting campaign can have such an impact.

"It is wonderful (and necessary) for our non-profit to have corporate sponsors like Pegasus Lighting. When I was asked to suggest a project for their fundraising efforts, it was a challenge to offer only three from which to choose. There are so many needs. We are very thankful that children in rural area of northern Ghana will now have the opportunity to read and study with the use of the small Unite to Light solar lamps," she says.

Pegasus Lighting "Bring the Light" Campaign: The Little Solar Light That Makes A Big Difference

Written by Australian Business

"It takes people like you to make things happen," Malangko told me after our interview. "We've never met, but every person that gets a light, you'll be part of it."

It's a thought that hadn't occurred to me. It seems like a small thing, writing a short article. Yet the same could be said for each and every person that participates in the Pegasus Lighting "Bring the Light" campaign and donates a light. It's the little things that make the biggest difference!

Pegasus Lighting is an online lighting retailer with headquarters in Beaver Falls, PA and an office in Raleigh, NC. The company's month-long "Bring The Light" campaign began with Pegasus Lighting providing a \$1,500 donation of solar powered personal lights with USB charger to the village. The solar powered lights are also available on Pegasus Lighting's website throughout the month for customers to purchase and directly donate to the village. For every 15 customers that join Pegasus Lighting in donating lights, the company will donate one additional light. The company's goal is to have 100 lights donated by their customers in addition to the 50 donated by the company. For more information on the "Bring The Light" campaign, visit <http://www.pegasuslighting.com/bringthelight>.