

## A DAILY "TO DO" LIST FOR A DIRECTOR IN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MINISTRY

**Dan Winter, Executive Director**

**Friendship House, Michigan State University**

**D**O YOU EVER WONDER what a day in the life of an ISM site director looks like? Let me give you a peek behind the curtain.

Each day, when I come into the office, I sit down to make my "To Do" list of things I need to do today. From my life in corporate America decades ago, I was trained to use a system for prioritizing my day. Tasks range from A1, most important, to C10, bottom of the list.

Here is an example of a recent day:



**A1: Planning and Solitude.** I do this first thing. The words come from my planning system. It is more prayer & meditation.

**A4: Classes.** Varies by day but on this day breaks down to:

- Technology setup: Prepare classroom with computers and cameras for the Zoom portion of our curriculum.
- Tom and Kathy's Conversational English Class
- Jan's Book of Romans Bible Study

**A3: Conversation Partner Follow up** which included:

- Recruit (New English speakers and students)
- Pair (English speakers with international students)

*(Continued on page 2 - see "daily")*

## FRIENDSHIP FAMILIES: LEARNING, PRAYING, BEING

**Sue Hasselbring, ISM Catalyst**  
**St. Louis, MO**

**W**HERE ARE YOU on the journey towards being a friendship family with an international student or scholar? The Jan/Feb and May/June Doorstep Newsletters have provided opportunities to learn about being a friendship family and have encouraged you to pray that more of us would become one. The new friendship family page,

[www.isminc.org/friendshipfamily](http://www.isminc.org/friendshipfamily), also offers ideas.

Angela Mueller says "Being a friendship family is easier than you think!"

But how to start? If you live near an ISM site, give the site director a call. Or you can search for "XXX University International student scholar office" (replacing the XXX with the name of the closest university. Call that office and say, "I would like to be a friendship family for an international student, getting together with them about once a month. How do I get connected?" July is a perfect time to call: it allows time for completing an interest questionnaire and a background check so that by mid-August every international student who hopes for an American friendship family can have one!

Where are you in your journey? Whether we are learning, praying or already being one, God is at work, molding us into the image of his Son and shining his light through us. †



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## THE IMPACT OF AN INTERN

**Marcus Huff**

**Saints Peter and Paul Lutheran Church, Houghton, MI**

**W**HAT WOULD BE THE VALUE of having an intern?" I was asked that when I first mentioned the possibility of hosting an ISM intern. I replied that internships can be beneficial in multiple ways: blessing the international students, benefiting the intern and increasing our members'

*(Continued on page 3 - see "impact")*

# ALL SAINTS IS FAMILY

August Mennell

Slippery Rock University (SRU), PA

ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN Church and Student Center is family to students. Akelah, a former SRU student from the British Virgin Islands, joined this church and had her two youngest children baptized here. Everyone helped Akelah feel she belonged, but Billie especially did. She offered to take her anywhere she needed to go, and regularly asked how Akelah was doing.

Students like Zuzel from Bolivia look forward to coming to All Saints. Zuzel enjoyed a student meal, and later lunch with me at the local Thai restaurant. While eating lunch together she said she would be at SRU for three more years. She expressed delight in how friendly and caring everyone is. She said she'd tell the international students that they should come and visit. She admitted that she knows only a little about the Christian faith, but because she feels so accepted, she is willing to learn more.

All Saints has not changed. A South Korean student felt close enough to ask if he could store two suitcases in our downstairs while he is home working in South Korea. He is not a Christian, but he feels like he is family.

We will continue to be family to students. We look forward to sharing our lives with SRU, Grove City College, and Westminster College students when they return in the fall. †



("daily" - continued from page 1)

- Individual (Multiple names) English Speaker and student follow up (new applications that need to be met with)

- A5: General Follow up on specific issues which included
- House Inspection prep for City Inspector
  - Credit Union visit to deposit financial gifts
  - Fundraising letter draft
  - Bicycles: follow up with our "Bike Guy" and/or students who need a bike, sometimes meaning I deliver the bikes to the students at their apartment.
  - Churches: Follow up with churches who could become partners with us in ministry
  - ISM: Write a news article for the Doorsteps newsletter
  - Fall: Begin recruiting teachers and schedule open house



B1: Summer: includes two agenda items:

- Cooking class/social gatherings
- Fields Trips

A2: Personal tasks which includes:

- Doctor's appointment
- Grocery store
- Church Council Meeting

They aren't in order because first I simply write down everything. Then I go back and prioritize what really matters.

Bear in mind that this list doesn't account for unplanned events, for example, when two middle eastern sisters come to the house to inquire about English as Second Language (ESL) classes and you give them a tour of the house.

I give thanks for this full regimen of tasks I am blessed to work on each day. I am also thankful for the many interruptions that occur during the course of the day in service to our international students. This is the ministry the Lord has laid out before me and I am glad to be here. †

## SUBMIT YOUR ISM-RELATED PRAYERS

You are always welcome to submit prayers via email to: [prayer@isminc.org](mailto:prayer@isminc.org). However, for an organization as spread out as ISM is, organization can become a challenge. We encourage you to use the Prayer Request Form you can find at: <https://tinyurl.com/ismincprayer>

*Why not bookmark the form and send off a prayer request whenever the Spirit moves you?*

(“impact” - continued from page 1)

awareness of and attention to ministry opportunities. The members of Saints Peter and Paul Lutheran Church initially focused on supporting our intern, Alec, but as they supported him, they grew in awareness of ministry to internationals and their willingness to be involved.

Alec had special challenges in connecting with international students and scholars because the COVID-19 pandemic was in full swing when he began. He proactively connected with international student groups from several countries. Basically, he would introduce himself via email, start engaging through social media, and then ask if he could join them in their gatherings and learn more about their culture. I worked with him on how to share the Gospel and how to bring it up in regular conversations.

Although the internship was short — only three months — Alec learned a lot and gained valuable experience. Alec lived with five other university students in our campus ministry house and engaged in the Bible study and other aspects of campus ministry there. He formed really neat relationships with several students.

Before Alec came, Marie, a member of our congregation, was kind of a grandma to the Indian population at Michigan Technical University. She had worked in Chicago and coordinated transportation for incoming international students who were transiting to MTU. She made a point of greeting them in the way that they expected to be greeted based on their culture. When she retired, she moved near our congregation. She already had the trust of the international community so when she introduced Alec to some of her Indian contacts, he was immediately welcomed.

Some months after Alec left, the Indian students wanted to hold an outdoor tea as a way to gather together and meet members of our congregation. We agreed and they hosted it at our church. It was great. It was basically a mixer to connect and talk. They were very particular about the numbers of Americans and Indians. They wanted one American couple with so many students. They made traditional chai tea and they set up everything just perfectly. Since that first tea, we have hosted a few outdoor gatherings with the Indian community.

Now more Indians are spending time at our church and one joined our intramural softball team. We have given them tours of our worship space and have explained what happens in the different areas. Members of our church have invited some of the international students to their homes for dinner. I think 40 people from our congregation now mix with the Indian community on a regular basis.

Much of the desire for connection came from the Indian community growing from their connection with Alec. And then the church realized: there's a group that maybe we can connect with! Coming through COVID, the Indian students were so isolated in their small apartments that they really desired relationship and connection.

Our congregation is now much more comfortable relating to people of other cultures and is more aware of the opportunity for ministry. Every semester we do a forum with university faculty, staff, and students where they share what it means to be a Christian on campus. Having Alec as an ISM intern surely raised awareness of and interest in ministry to international students and scholars in our congregation. †

## A SILVER LINING TO MEETING ONLINE

Marcia Mittwede

Austin, TX

FOR MANY YEARS we have gathered our volunteer teachers at the beginning of the school year for a “get-together” time of sharing, learning and reviewing why we’re doing what we’re doing, as well as going over the calendar for the school year ahead. This has been a good time to learn from each other as well as to have prayer and a meal together as we start a new year.

When COVID-19 entered our world, many things changed for us! One good change was that now we were meeting online for English Conversation with students who would not otherwise be able to join us due to geography - they were in other states and even in other countries. The online meetings actually made it easier for some of our volunteer teachers too, since now they didn’t have to plan a sometimes long commute to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Austin, where we meet for many of our English classes.

Another good thing we began doing is that after the online English Conversation class was over, the volunteer teachers would stay online for a few minutes so that we could debrief from the class. Teachers were given the opportunity to share something they learned, something they struggled with, a question about the lesson, etc. These times have proven to be helpful for all of us! The lesson was fresh in our mind, so we could comment on what worked or didn’t work in the lesson. We could also tell something special we learned from one of the internationals. Suggestions and ideas were shared quite freely and we could all learn from each other. This has been a silver-lining

to what could have otherwise been quite negative, since we all do miss meeting in-person with the students. But now that is beginning to change, and more and more students

are coming back to in-person classes. Thanks to God! †



**ISM inc. continues to accept applications from young people who desire to serve as an ISM Inc. Intern during the fall semester. Encourage young people you know to apply at [www.isminc.org/internships](http://www.isminc.org/internships)**

### ESL Conversation Group

#### Trinity, Norman, OK

- Praise God for the persistent attendance of three long-time attendees at the ESL Conversation group (and one at the Bible study) each Saturday morning who have continued to meet with us via Zoom.
- Praise God for Emily Schuster's faithful work to keep things going and for her great ideas for how to do it.
- Pray for wisdom about how to launch in-person meetings this fall.
- Pray that more members of Trinity would be moved to be regular volunteers – beyond the occasional culture presentation.

### Lutheran Chapel

#### Mark Meyer, Lincoln, NE

- Pray that God would give Mark and Leanna wisdom, encouragement and peace during a time of transition at the chapel.
- Pray that God would draw international students to small groups or one-on-one meetings where they can hear the gospel.
- Pray that God would raise up new volunteers to invest in international students.

### Connecting International Communities

#### Sharon Owens, Tempe Arizona

- Praise God for the tremendous growth He gave.
- Praise God for the student leadership team's vision in planning events, dedication to growing the student organization, and the willingness to serve their peers even in the midst of their busy schedules.
- Praise God for ASU's support of religious organizations on campus.
- Pray that we make good use of the less stressful summer schedule and continue building our relationships.
- Pray for us as we plan summer activities for students who are still here, especially on the 4th of July.
- Pray for us as we set goals and start planning for the fall semester.

- Pray that we can find creative ways not to lose the focus of relationships as we continue to grow.
- Pray that the leadership team and volunteers would feel supported, appreciated, and part of a bigger plan.

### University Lutheran Church

#### Marcia Mittwede, Austin TX

- Thank the Lord for a good and relaxing time away for Pastor Richard and me as we celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary at sea.
- Pray for "M" (a Muslim student in India, who has come to our classes and met with volunteer, Mark). He is ill and has requested prayers. Ask Jesus to meet him in his need and draw him to Himself. Pray also for J (China) and A (Japan) who have attended Bible classes.
- Pray that the Lord would fill Betty, Nancy, John, Al, Donna, Liz, Pastor Richard, and Marcia with the Holy Spirit as we interact with students in the Bible and English classes, book club and painting classes this summer.
- Pray for the Lord to guide new international students to us, according to His will.

### Connections at LCMS Youth Gathering

- Pray that the 20,000 youth attending the LCMS Youth Gathering July 9-13 will grow in their faith, and in their desire to share Christ's love with others "in all things".
- Pray that the youth who visit the ISM exhibit would reflect on what it would be like if they were an international student in another country, and that those going to university would be willing to be friends with one international student.
- Pray that many youth would engage in the follow-up zoom calls in late July which will help take steps toward being an international friend.
- Pray for grace and stamina for Sue Hasselbring, Rev. Larry and Sally Krueger, Bessie Fick, Evelyn Crowe, Rev Paul Hoemann, and Julie Meissner as they engage with these youth.

### ISM Inc. Board meeting

- Praise God for Rev. Bill Jensen and Wittenberg Lutheran Center which is hosting the July 21-23 Board meeting.
- Pray for wisdom for Rev. JJ Voelker, board president, and board members Wayne Weiss, Kate Cole, Weina Qin, Sharon Owens, Ken Bickel and Glenn Gerber along with Ministry Catalyst Sue Hasselbring as they review the progress of ISM Inc and set goals for the future.

### Internships

- Praise God that two possible internship host sites have completed the internship plan. Pray that they will submit their plans soon. Pray that other congregations which are considering hosting would also complete the plan.
- Pray for God to lead young people attending the LCMS youth gathering to apply to serve as an intern.
- Pray for wisdom for the internship committee as they prayerfully consider intern applications and internship plans, interview potential interns and hosts, and assign interns to both active ISM sites for 2-3 weeks of orientation and the host site all by mid-August.

### General

- Pray for future international students and scholars around the world as they pack their suitcases, say farewells and travel to the U.S.
- Look at the back side of this page (page 5) and pray through the "Getting Ready for International Students and Scholars" article for sites you know and for all ISM sites in general.
- Pray for times of refreshment for each ISM Staff and volunteer during the summer months. †



# GETTING READY FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS

Sue Hasselbring

ISM Ministry Catalyst, St. Louis, MO

Over 80 congregations across the US are preparing for new international students and scholars to arrive in August. They may be deepening their relationships with the university's office of international scholars and students, the leaders of international student organizations, and Christian international students and scholars with whom they already have contact. They also encourage more people to consider becoming volunteers. They contact members of their own congregation, people in neighboring congregations and Lutheran university students.

Prayer is a key component of intentional ministry among internationals. Getting ready for August may mean forming a prayer team or setting up a system to notify existing prayer chains of needs, as well as writing up and sharing prayer requests.

Different sites take different steps to help their volunteers be ready. These include:

- Speaking at different congregations to invite more to join as volunteers.
- Having current volunteers share about their experiences and tell how God has worked in them and in those they minister among.
- Holding a training for volunteers, perhaps one specifically for LCMS students.
- Invite people to help with one specific "easy step" such as providing a ride or cooking for a dinner.
- Learning about the specific interests and strengths of potential volunteers and finding ways for them to use those as they minister among internationals.

Leaders and volunteers also prepare for a variety of activities that either happen or start in August:

- Hold an open house, welcome dinner or welcome picnic.
- Host a furniture give away.
- Volunteer at the university's office of international student services.
- Attend the university's International Student Orientation.
- Attend university sponsored events for international students (meals, socials, cultural, etc.)

- Encourage international students and scholars to invite others.
- Request students' names and contact information, either at a welcome event or from the university
- Ask international students to share with you the dates and times of events on campus which it might be good for you to attend.
- Get all of the volunteers on the same page.

Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

PROVERBS 16:3

ESV

They prepare to provide specific services to international students and scholars such as:

- Picking students or scholars up from the airport
- Taking students to another city for visa matters

Related to these, are many logistics matters

- Develop a handout sharing date and location of each event for the 22-23 school year.
- Inform the Office of International students about the ISM events.
- Ask LCMS-U student leaders to include ISM events on the communications they post and share.

Whew!

Getting ready for a good start in August is not easy. Of course, no site does all of these, each one does the ones that fits their context. How might you help the site nearest you to get ready for August? Please ask God to guide each of the 80 ISM sites to prepare well. Perhaps you can pray through this list once a week until the end of August. Please ask God to open doors for sharing God's love and hope with each student and scholar. †

*(The information in this article is derived from the zoom discussion site leaders had in later April where they learned from each other and shared ideas about getting ready for August. If you are interested in being part of these zoom calls, contact Sue@isminc.org)*



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## *Doorstep***News**

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# *We want to hear from you!*

We've been hearing amazing ways that people are connecting  
international students and scholars with the love of Christ. Please  
send in your articles, pictures and especially your prayer requests.

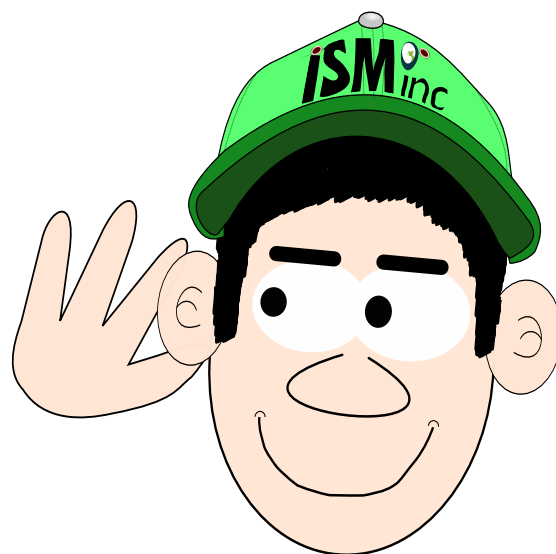
Please send your submissions for the September/October issue  
by email. The deadline is July 29, 2022. Send your submissions  
to [doorstep@isminc.org](mailto:doorstep@isminc.org).

- See our privacy policy on our website
- Send your submission as a Word document and images as separate files.
- Please include your name, your role, and the ministry and/or campus you serve.

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