

REACHING OUT

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MINDSET OF LOVE

The horrors of September 11 became not only an attack on our nation and thousands of innocents but on our capacity as individuals to exercise balanced judgment. This reality applies where the presence of international students as well as other non-U.S. citizens is concerned.

For many American Christians these days our souls have sometimes bounced from compassion to hyper-suspicion, then back again as we consider the hundreds of thousands of foreign students on the campuses of our coun-

try. On the one hand we continue interceding for and extending our lives in friendship toward the "stranger living among us," then occasionally catch ourselves weighing the possible motives and intentions of some we befriend and serve.

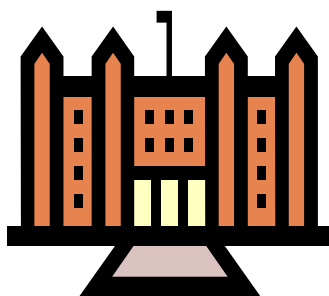
Of course it is appropriate for us to realize that indeed a different kind of "normal" is emerging throughout our great but hurting land. We're being rightly coached by our leaders to exercise a new alertness to the environment around us, conscious of possible dangers lurking.

Nevertheless, as followers of Jesus Christ who "set his face toward Jerusalem" in the face of ultimate risk, we bear his mandate to "Go!" and proclaim him among the nations. Interestingly, it was that same Jerusalem a few weeks later to which crowds from many nations came and received the mighty gospel on the day

of Pentecost (first century counterparts of "international students").

We feel the best possible response to Satan's religion-cloaked efforts to paralyze the church through terror is for devoted Christians all across the land to counterattack with the most powerful weapon of all, the aggressively passionate love of God in Christ. Indeed, who knows when the next Saul of Tarsus might unwittingly start down their surprise-laden Damascus Road. In the wake of that encounter long ago the Roman Empire's "normal" state was also forever altered and (ponder this) you are likely a believer as a result!

So pray. Fan the flame of friendship evangelism. The fields of harvest are yet with us, precious internationals for whom Christ died. Let's reach.—and keep reaching—out.



WHAT'S BEEN COOKING?

Most American college students headed home during summer break while most internationals, especially grad students, remained on campus throughout. Great opportunities abounded to do fun stuff with them on those lazy, hazy, crazy days. International COOKOUTS are great ways to express God's love through the Christian community.

One family got a head start by hosting an Easter Sunday cookout (in Oklahoma this can work).

Other fun stuff included soccer, badminton, croquet, hanging out in lawn chairs, bible discussions under the trees, and just getting acquainted with wonderfully diverse folks from all over.

Beyond the "burgers and dogs" action, summertime

also meant the exciting expansion of the campus ministry. The International Student Ministry Council, spearheaded by seriously committed Christian students of various nationalities, is now up and running. Jerry serves in an advisory role. Teddy (Angola), Paul (China), and Janet (India) serve as officers.

Please pray for the team as a number of outreaches are underway and others soon

THE DIRECTOR'S DESKTOP

allenges? To put it another way, what single ingredient awakens within us a fresh sense of hope? The almost buoyant term that packages such thoughts for me is the simple word: **Encouragement**.

In our present world people are keenly in need of and responsive to the simplest expressions of genuine encouragement. Last Spring a friend of this ministry valiantly made it to the finish line of the Boston Marathon. I use

the word valiantly because this gentleman and I happen to be around the same age—of grandpa vintage.

Whether you are a homemaker, business professional, pastor, or another kind of “investor-in-people,” as you read Dr. Ron Meyer’s account of his exhilarating experience in Boston, consider a couple of ways you can be someone’s breath of fresh air, an encourager, today—and beyond.

JERRY LOU

A question to consider. What English word carries with it that quality which would give a person a better-than-average chance of “making it” in the face of chal-

ICO Executive Board

- Jerry Lou
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- Dr. Ron Meyers
- James “Skip” Nichols
- Jim Stovall

ICO exists to meet spiritual and practical needs of international students through acts of service and through the proclamation of the gospel of the Lord

THE POWER OF ENCOURAGEMENT

By Ron Meyers

I ran my first marathon at age fifty-five and eventually qualified for the Boston Marathon.

On race morning I rested and waited with 15,605 racers. Helicopters buzzed overhead, airplanes pulled advertising streamers, and TV monitors showed different sites along the 26.219-mile course. Excitement was in the air.

My race began when the electronic chip on my right foot crossed the starting line.

I never realized so many things would encourage me up and down the hills and over the miles. The cheering crowd, cameras, bands, people at the water stations, the runners’ colors, and occasional recognition of the ORU uniform my university gave me to wear were part of it.

Char and our friends cheered at miles 9, 19 and 25. The screaming students at Wellesley College and loud crowds the last two miles created a euphoric, highly emotional and exciting experience. It made the marathon pain in

my legs, chest, and arms more endurable.

During our wedding I experienced tears of joy when Char walked down the aisle. I was emotional when our sons graduated from the Air Force Academy and ORU.

But I did not know that this side of heaven such pure excitement and joy could be sustained for a three hour forty-three minute run.

I understand heaven a little better. Hebrews 12:1 says, “...Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders...and run

with perseverance the race marked out for us.”

God will bring us “into his glorious presence with mighty shouts of everlasting joy.” (Jude 25 Living Bible) These are good reasons to run God’s marathon well. The stakes are higher and the prize more enduring. You have the power to cheer me on and I can do the same for you.

It has been said that when a cow calves, other cows “moo” long and loud giving encouragement. If cows and Boston crowds can encourage, then surely we should encourage each other. We too can “...encourage one another and build each other up...” (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Encouragement from others makes marathons fun. “Atta boy. Keep up the good work. Looking good. Keep the pace. Finish strong. You’re almost there. You can make it.” This is what I hear from crowds and runners. They fit God’s marathon too. Keep up the good work.



BEAR TRAP 2001-02 PROJECT

Here's your opportunity to make a big difference. Please read on!

Jerry Lout has been asked to serve this year as program director for InterVarsity's International Student New Year's Houseparty. This annual week-long event gives students from a number of North American campuses a chance to spend New Years week at Bear Trap Ranch.

Speakers challenge students to consider the claims of the Christian faith. Students are assigned to family groups for activities and discussion.

Sponsoring organizations provide program staff and family group leaders. Winter sports and a New Year's Eve party provide welcome fun and social opportunities for the international students.

The ranch is located in a secluded mountain valley above Colorado Springs at about

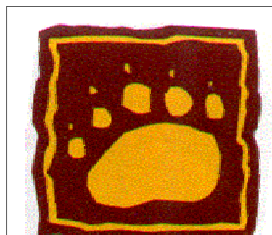
9,000 feet. Most of the students who attend are not Christians. Usually at least one or two students make a decision for Christ at each House Party.

Student feedback shows that at least 80% of all students who attend return home, attend Bible studies, join in Christian-sponsored activities, or indicate that they are more inclined to consider the claims of Christ.

Jerry and other program staffers have taken students to the New Year's House Party over the last seven years.

Costs have increased for this ministry outreach and sponsorships are necessary to make it possible for students to participate.

Any gift you can contribute in any size will be very much appreciated and will serve as a valuable investment in the lives of students in need of



the gospel of Christ.

To sponsor one or more students and program staff please use the following guidelines:

One student—\$360

Five students – \$1,800

Ten students – \$3,600

Please make all checks payable to I.C.O. The enclosed envelope may serve for either this project or for the necessary operating expenses of ICO.

All contributions are tax deductible.

NETWORK NUGGETS

Maybe a modern paraphrase of Jesus' high-priestly prayer of John 17 could include, "May they network together in oneness." At any rate, it is the kind of objective that is certainly being realized within the ranks of the yet-evolving International Student Ministry Network (ISMN).

The ISMN began forming about three years ago as various ministries in the Tulsa area became aware of opportunities for teaming up in outreach to international students. The common dream: bring students, through loving acts of service, to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

A real excitement is generated whenever fruit is pro-

duced through such community dynamics, especially when seekers come to Christ.

Through various friendships the hearts of a married student couple from Asia had been bending ever forward in the direction of the gospel. A Bible study on campus one Friday prompted serious soul-searching as the topic of forgiveness was discussed. Minutes later the young

husband indicated he wanted to receive God's forgiveness in his life. Two campus ministries and a Christian businessman took part in the Bible

discussion and in leading the student to salvation.

Meanwhile, the ethnic church the new convert had been attending near campus was instrumental the same week in bringing another Asian student to the Lord. This church, the businessman and the two campus organizations, all part of the ISMN, all were involved in seeing these dear students won to Christ. How beautiful. To

the triune God be the glory!



International Community Outreach

PO BOX 50223
TULSA OK 74150

Phone: 918-749-3035
Fax: 918-584-1741
Email: loutj@aol.com

**Reaching the
world at our
doorstep!**



ICO ACTIVITIES

Fall & Spring New Student Orientation

Friendship Partners

English Corner

Exploring the Christian Faith

Holiday House Parties

Sunday Evening Chapel

Practical Services

- Buying and maintaining a car
- Driving lessons
- Moving assistance
- Used furniture purchases
- Banking assistance
- Help with legal requirements

Bible Study

Cultural Opportunities

Support & Encouragement

INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY NETWORK

ICO coordinates a fellowship of more than a dozen churches in ministry to the international community.

PRAY WITH US

ANSWERED PRAYER

Last issue we asked for prayer for "M". This Middle Eastern student who had received Christ has stayed in the states for a time. This student now has more opportunities to be disciplined in the faith before returning home to a possibly hostile environment. Thanks for praying!

OTHER PRAYER NEEDS

In October ICO sponsored a trip to Branson, MO where eleven Indian and Chinese students saw *The Promise*, a musical stage production on the life of Jesus. They were all strongly affected by the production and meaningful discussion followed. Pray with us that spiritual fruit will come from this powerful witness.

A Chinese student recently shared that after her received Christ last year she began sharing the gospel with his family back home. His mother and brother now are followers of Jesus! Believe with us that more and more converted students will be bold to proclaim their new, joyous faith.