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123 2ND AVE. S., SUITE 100
EDMONDS, WA 98020

The Generations Project: International Student Outreach Manual

Reaching out to future world leaders

Evangeline Weiner

JANUARY 14, 2008

The following document outlines the vision of the Generations Project to reach International Students within the United States with the gospel of Jesus Christ, through practical acts of kindness and strategic relationships with University campuses.

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Targeting International University Students

The Future Leaders of the Nations

Every university campus is filled with students who will one day become the leaders of society. Ninety-five percent of all world leaders will come from a University campus. It is said that the beliefs on a university campus will within 10 years become the beliefs of the society as a whole. When you reach the university campuses, you have the opportunity to effect major world change!

Currently, there are about 550,000 international students in the U.S.A. who come here for approximately 4 years. We have a window of opportunity to reach them while they are here and send them back to their nations as representatives for Christ. This is probably one of the simplest things you could do that has such a great impact!

When you reach International Students on campus, not only will you be an ambassador for Jesus, but also an ambassador for your country. How does the Bible say we should treat visitors? Matthew 25:35 says, "For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger (xenos = foreigner or international) and you welcomed me." In Hebrews 13:2 it says, "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it." In Deuteronomy 31:12, we see the reason we should reach them, "Assemble the alien who is in your town, in order that they may hear and learn and fear the Lord your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law."

Upon arriving in the United States, next to their education, international students say the main thing they want is an American friend! Unfortunately, most of these students never get that friend and often go back to their nations with a bad taste in their mouth towards America because of the way they were treated. The international students that are sent here are the future leaders of their countries.

They are not average students, rather, they are in the top 5% of their nations and will become the future presidents/prime ministers, business leaders, and heads of every area of society in their nation. A few examples of key leaders who attended college in the United States are Jacques Chirac, former President of France, Benjamin Netanyahu, the former Prime Minister of Israel, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the chief architect of the 9/11 attacks. Just imagine if someone had just reached one of these international students: History and the world would be different.

If you reach a university student you will influence a nation right from your doorstep!

For the Harvest,

Why Reach International Students?

Seven Reasons to Target the College Campus for Outreach

1. The university campuses are where the future leaders of the world are being educated.
2. The campus is where most of the great revivals in history have started. In 1903, Vladimir Lenin took seven university students and fashioned them into a movement. The rest is unfortunate history. Nearly every movement, good or bad, begins with the youth, and usually on the university campus.
3. Campus values will become the values of society within ten years.
4. The campus is where the most available and trainable masses of people are.
5. The campus is a small city. When we change the campus, we learn how to change the city, state, and nation. When Christian students learn how to assume leadership roles on the campus, they will be learning how to govern cities, states, and nations after they have graduated.
6. Education is not neutral. It will cause people to respect God and His principles, or to turn away from Him.
7. God promised to pour out His Spirit on all mankind and said that the sons and daughters would prophesy (Joel 2:28). These sons and daughters – many of whom are on the college campuses – will be the ones who will preach the Gospel and change society.

Five Reasons why it is important to minister to visiting International Students

1. Reaching visiting international students are a strategic means for penetrating “closed countries.”
2. They are destined to be the leaders in their societies. By loving and discipling them, the course of history can be altered.
3. Nothing can have more of a missionary impact than personal participation by Christians to internationals. It makes missions a reality in a direct way.
4. Those internationals that come to Christ and return to occupy professional positions in their own countries will become the future leaders and thereby gain

the respect of non-Christians and help to attract and retain the otherwise alienated educated members of society to the churches.

5. Returning internationals are welcomed home and not treated with the suspicion and distrust often given to foreign missionaries. Because they already know the language and customs they become natural missionaries.

World Statistics and Facts

Top Twenty-Five Countries with the Most Students in the United States*

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. India | 10.Thailand | 18.Nigeria |
| 2. China | 11.United Kingdom | 19.Pakistan |
| 3. Korea, Republic of | 12.Indonesia | 20.Malaysia |
| 4. Japan | 13.Columbia | 21.Venezuela |
| 5. Canada | 14.Brazil | 22.Russia |
| 6. Taiwan | 15.Hong Kong, China | 23.Nepal |
| 7. Mexico | 16.Kenya | 24.Jamaica |
| 8. Turkey | 17.France | 25.Singapore |
| 9. Germany | | |

Top Ten Colleges and Universities with the Largest Numbers of Foreign Students*

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. University of Southern California...6,846 | 6. Purdue University...4,921 |
| 2. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign...5,560 | 7. University of Michigan-Ann Arbor...4,432 |
| 3. University of Texas at Austin...5,333 | 8. Boston University...4,541 |
| 4. Columbia University...5,278 | 9. University of CA-Los Angeles...4,217 |
| 5. New York University...5,140 | 10. The Ohio State University Main Campus...4,14 |

Top Ten Number of Foreign Students by State*

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. California...75,032 | 6. Illinois...25,021 |
| 2. New York...61,944 | 7. Pennsylvania...22,773 |
| 3. Texas...47,367 | 8. Michigan...20,879 |
| 4. Massachusetts...27,985 | 9. Ohio...17,952 |
| 5. Florida...26,264 | 10.Maryland...13,439 |

*Source: Open Doors 2004/05: Report on International Exchange. Institute of International Education.

Examples of World Leaders who attended College in the United States *

- Gloria Arroyo, President of Philippines
- Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Jacques Chirac, former President of France
- King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein, the King of Jordan
- Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, mastermind of the 9/11 attacks
- Jose Napoleon Duarte, former President of El Salvador
- Corazon Aquino, former President of the Republic of the Philippines
- Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan
- Benjamin Netanyahu, former Prime Minister of Israel

*Source: David Barnett, Global Evangelization Movement & Campus Crusade for Christ-Ken and Amy Fifer.

The 10/40 Window

Almost two-thirds of today's international students are from the 10/40 window

Named the 10/40 Window in 1990 by Luis Bush, this term refers to those people who live between 10 degrees north and 40 degrees not of the equator, stretching from West Africa to Asia.

Greatest population density

- Most unreached people groups
- Greatest pockets of poverty
- Least evangelized countries—within the 10/40 Window are approx: 706 million Muslims, 717 million Hindus, and 153 million Buddhists

Valuable Insights into the lives of International Students

What International Students Say They Like About Americans

1. They sense Americans are friendly, open and kind.
2. They enjoy the casual lifestyle of Americans, wearing casual clothes. They feel comfortable in the informal setting of many American homes. They say such things as, "I can be myself."
3. They appreciate the courtesy and patience many American drivers show on the roads to other drivers and pedestrians. The organized traffic system and order on the roads is not usually found in other countries.
4. They appreciate and enjoy affectionate hugs from Americans (women with women, men with men), once they realize this is an American expression of caring. If this is not a part of their own culture, it is wise to be cautious and make sure they understand and will not be offended.

What International Students Say Offends Them about Americans

1. Some are aggressive, abrupt, pushy and loud.
2. Cursing, swearing and the use of foul language are offensive.
3. They receive an impression that many Americans are independent, individualistic, into themselves and hard to get to know. They feel Americans don't get to know their neighbors, are not interested in developing relationships, and don't like to chat. They say "Hi" fast and hurry by. They are work oriented, not relationships oriented.
4. They are shocked at the ignorance of most Americans regarding other countries and events outside their own nation. They react negatively to those Americans who consider them uneducated and backward because they come from another nation, failing to realize that many internationals are highly educated and live and dress according to western culture style, and that many of their societies are modern.
5. They feel rejected often when Americans are not polite, fail to show respect and seem unwilling to talk to or listen to a person from another country.

6. They are offended by American women who dress in a provocative and immodest manner. They are often alienated by the cold reception (including ethnic and racial slurs) they may receive from Americans.

How Do I Meet International Students?

Making Contact

Call the university's International Student Office or Student Activity Office

- Call, introduce yourself, make an appointment to meet them.
- Present yourself as an individual who wants to serve internationals rather than as part of a lighthouse.
- Ensure them of your desire to expose internationals to family/community life in America
- Find out the number of international students studying there.
- Ask about a specific need or niche that perhaps is not being filled.
- Sign up to be a friend/host family to an international.
- Communicate your depth of feeling for loving and blessing these international guests. Don't hide your Christianity, but alleviate any concerns that you will coerce a student into a religious experience.

Friendship Evangelism is KEY

The most effective way to reach people in general is to just be a friend! Even though our intentions are genuine and pure and we just want people to come to know the Love of Jesus, they understand it as having a "religious agenda," rather than simply getting to know them as friends.

It is important to establish friendships before sharing about Christ. Many international students must learn to trust a person and be assured of that friendship before they are willing to listen to a presentation of the Gospel. International students have said that if an American presents Christianity to them soon after contact, before establishing a friendship, they will back off with the impression, "He really doesn't care about me or want to be a friend. He just wants to convert me." The American Christian must *earn* the right to share the Gospel with them. "They won't care what you know until they know you care." Many international students are private people due to their culture, and do not like to disclose much information about themselves, so the worker needs to be sensitive about asking questions.

- Contact leaders of campus International Student Clubs and Fellowships
- Contact university professors and deans and ask for student referrals
- Hold an on-campus event – a banquet, tea, seminar, etc. or an off-campus tour, holiday dinner, or trip
- Visit International Houses, dorms, and attend open international activities and special events
- Ask church members and local students who attend your church if they know any internationals
- Prayer walk the campus and ask the Lord to guide you to internationals

The Felt Needs of International Students Include

Arrival/orientation needs

Physical needs

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Academic needs
Cultural adjustment needs
Language/conversation needs

Social/hospitality/community needs
Development needs
Spiritual needs

Guidelines Regarding Outreach to International Students

Planning

The lighthouse or Area Leadership Team Ministry needs to have a plan for contacting new international students.

An initial step is to recruit volunteers to be on a team, whose purpose will be to make contacts, relate to, and follow up with the students.

These volunteers should believe the Lord is calling them to this specific type of outreach. Also, there needs to be a meeting, with the volunteers, to discuss cross-cultural relationships. College students who attend that lighthouse or their local church would be good workers for making contacts, since they are already involved on the campus and may be in touch with internationals. If there is a Christian group established on that campus, the Aglow group can work with those group members, who can reach out to internationals. One of the ways to meet students is to set up a book table on campus in a highly concentrated spot and have information, brochures, free food, surveys, a raffle, and/or anything else you can think of. Definitely have something to give away—food and/or drinks is always a good choice.

The lighthouse should/can download and add their information in our pre-made brochures, which could be given to any international student in a first encounter.

This brochure would contain brief information on special events planned, services available to the student, and contact name, address, and phone number. Any leaflet or brochure for this purpose can contain the information of the lighthouse, but should mainly provide a contact for a student interested in friendship and receiving help with needs. Presentation of the Gospel can be done at another time.

Questionnaire forms can also be downloaded and should also be changed to include only the services that your lighthouse is planning to provide. This is prepared for the use of the team workers to obtain information from the student. If the student is responsive and would like to be contacted again, or is interested in help in certain areas, the worker can record the name, address, phone number, country, school, and areas in which the student is interested.

Relating to the College

Before taking steps to contact international students on the college campus, it is important to find out what the policies of that college are regarding international students. This can be done by approaching the Information Desk at the college to obtain a handbook or brochures. Also, colleges usually have a Web site on the Internet that describes their policies. Some colleges require a group to sign a statement agreeing to these policies if that group is allowed to function on campus.

We want to have integrity. You are representing Jesus and Aglow and it is important to know that both reputations are at stake. Biblical principles need to be followed in relating to the administrative personnel at the college. Respect must be given to the rules and guidelines established. Officials must consider all the students and their backgrounds and cannot show partiality to any group, so respect must be shown for the position that the college takes.

- Friction between the college and the local fellowship should be minimized. Matthew 10:16 says “Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.” Wisdom, gentleness, and tact are needed when relating on a college campus.
- Sometimes there are personnel at the college who are very open to having Christians assist with the needs of international students. They may even supply names and contact the fellowship for help; however, other schools may be more closed to offering cooperation. The International Students Office at the college may be a good contact. Those in this office may be willing to supply a list of the names of international students, or allow flyers to be left for distribution.
- **Take steps to make friends with the faculty and staff members at the college which could create an opportunity for more impact and influence.**

Investigation needs to be made concerning where the international students “hang out” on that college campus, to know where to go to make contacts. Some of the possible places would be: the Student Union or Student Center, social rooms in the academic buildings, lounges, snack bars, dormitories, international student housing, married student housing (for international student families), cafeterias, dining halls, athletic events, social events put on by the college (picnics, movies, lectures, dances, concerts, etc.), and new student orientation sessions.

In preparation for going out to make contacts, time should be spent in prayer. Ask the Lord for divine encounters with international students, especially ones who are open and seeking the truth. Pray for wisdom in conversations. Pray for Him to lead you to international students who are Christians and need fellowship. They could also introduce other international students to the workers. **If one international student responds to the effort of the workers, other students will likely flock in with him.** When

making contact with a student, a good approach is to introduce yourself, the organization you represent and offer friendship and help.

Contacting

The best time to contact international students is when they first arrive to the U.S. and in the beginning of the school year.

Publicity

Publicity concerning who you are and what you represent is very important, especially at the beginning of the college semester. Be committed to getting the word out. Various methods can be used, and need to be repeated often because students have very busy schedules and need to be reminded. Trust the Lord to use these methods to reach the students He wants to bring to you. **It is essential to obtain the proper permission for placing posters, flyers, and other materials around the campus.** Comply with the campus authorities regarding their rules and restrictions, which could pertain to the size of posters, placement, etc.

Possible Places to put Posters, Banners or Brochures could include

1. On the dorm floors
2. In lobbies
3. In academic building classrooms and halls
4. In the Student Union or Center
5. In the library
6. In the snack bars
7. At bus stops
8. In lounges

Posters should be attention getting, simple, non-offensive and contain only a few words. Facts about the event or service need to be displayed, but presentation of the Gospel is not appropriate for a poster. Flood the campus with posters: Replace ones that are taken down or written on. Have plenty of posters and brochures on hand to replenish what was discarded. **Visibility is vital in effective publicity.**

Other Possible Methods for Publicity

1. Putting flyers on dining room tables
2. Stuffing mailboxes
3. Putting notices about special events or services in college newspapers. Find out which papers are widely read by students. Make note of the deadlines for submitting material to the newspaper; include essential details in the notice.
4. Announcements can be made on radio stations
5. Flyers can be handed out door to door
6. Phone calls can be made if a list of international students is available
7. “Word of mouth” from one person to another has proven to be the best publicity
8. Sidewalk chalk—this is simply writing information on the sidewalk.

How to share about the Lord with an International Student

When sharing about the Lord with an international student who is not a believer, it is best to focus on Christ and how to have relationship with Him. When witnessing, it would be best not to emphasize the church, or try to get the student to church services too fast. If your local church has a different form of worship than what the student is familiar with, he may have very negative reaction that will turn him away from the Lord. A Christian may spend a long time with an international student building a relationship of trust before that student would even agree to attend a church service. Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is the point of concentration. Exalt Christ!

Better to Win a Friend than an Argument

When discussing spiritual matters with an international student, maintain truth, but don't argue. It is better to win a friend than an argument (2 Timothy 2:24-26). In addition, when using religious terminology, there needs to be a lot of interaction to explain the words. International students from a materialistic society or other culture will misunderstand the meaning of words, so the Christian needs to question the student frequently regarding his interpretation of what is being said (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Supply Bibles, Christian literature, and videos in the language of the international student if he seems open to receiving them. In God's timing, discussion can follow. Most international students will be open to a Christian praying with them and for them regarding matters that concern them. Pray in the name of Jesus.

A family setting is one of the best for sharing the Gospel. International students feel more at ease and may be more apt to listen when with a family. Since they want to learn about American life, it is an opportunity to share how faith in Christ is a part of family life.

If an international student accepts an invitation to attend a church service as an observer, explain what will happen: when to sit or stand, how to read the music, etc.

Some American Christians are known to have an overly confrontational style in sharing the Gospel. This alienates international students immediately and may leave them with a negative impression of Christianity, hindering the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. One can sensitively inquire about their spiritual state to find out what they believe, then use tact and wisdom in sharing. Giving one's own personal testimony is a good witness, as it does not require a response from the student (Colossians 4:6). It is good to remember that it is the work of the Holy Spirit (not ours) to "convert" a person to Christ.

If the response of an international student is strongly negative toward the Gospel of Christ, it is wise to show Christian love and assure that person that you are a friend whether he accepts Christ or not.

If the student is open to learning about the Christian faith but not ready to take a step of commitment, build bridges in relationship and occasionally suggest attending events where there are Christians, but do not be assertive. Give the Holy Spirit time to work in that person's life. At this point it is wise to make sure the student knows that to follow Christ is to reject all other gods.

If the international student makes a decision to receive Christ, immediate, daily and intense follow-up is recommended. There needs to be a plan to fill him with the Word of God and involve him with other Christian students and the local church. International students who are Christians should be strongly encouraged to attend Christian groups on campus and also a local church of their choice where they can grow in Christ and have Christian fellowship. If they are Christians when they arrive, they will probably be looking for a place to worship.

Activities to plan with International Students

- Airport pick-up and temporary lodging
- Assist with apartment search, moving in, finding a doctor, bank, grocery store, post office, malls, etc.
- Tour of local area attractions/community orientation
- Weekend stay at your house
- Evening dinners with your family
- Holiday dinners, dramas, and events sponsored by your church
- International Student Banquets
- Tutor in English; be a conversation partner
- Teach English/Literature with the Bible/ESL classes
- Regional tours and trips
- A trip to the beach, theme park, movie theater with your family
- Host a weekly cell group
- Book a Christian speaker and host a seminar in business, communications, etc. for internationals
- Give advice and assistance on buying and maintaining a new car
- Form a global discussion group and discuss a culturally relevant topic
- Minister to spouses and children of international students
- Friday night fellowship meetings with food and fellowship and workshop rooms offering Bible study, English classes, or small group discussion forums for seekers
- Garage giveaways (like a garage sale, but free) – give away furniture, clothes, kitchen items, etc.
- Provide transportation to malls, grocery store, doctors appointments

- Clothing closet
- Professional mentoring – for example, pairing a Christian engineer to network with an international student studying engineering
- Cooking classes; art classes; house decorating classes
- Free baby-sitting
- Edit/proofread academic papers
- Take the student to ethnic groceries where they can purchase food and then have them cook a native dish in your kitchen
- Explain the city transit system
- Take your student out to dinner for his or her birthday
- Bake cookies and drop them off
- Stop by campus for a quick lunch/coffee with your student
- Provide newspaper clippings of his country
- Take pictures of your student and yourself and others on outings and activities and give him or her copies to send back home
- Treat your student like a family member
- View the Jesus film with your student and some friends
- Send notes, emails, or call your student between visits
- Pray for your student and tell him or her that you are praying for them; ask for prayer requests (good grades, favor with professors, family members back home, etc.)

Note: Keep in mind, the first priority of international students is their studies; be sensitive to their schedules, especially during exam times.

What are a few Do's & Don'ts?

- Be the initiator; meet at least once a month or more
- Learn how to clearly say your student's name; practice it with him/her
- Ask your student by what name they desire to be called
- Advise your student they can call you by your first name, if that is acceptable
- Speak clearly and slower than usual but don't yell loudly
- Do not use slang, jargon, idioms
- Learn common expressions, "hi," "goodbye," "how are you," in the student's language
- Exchange addresses, phone numbers, e-mails, etc.
- Let them know how long each activity/event will last and if they can bring their roommate/spouse/family
- Make sure the student understands you clearly and vice-versa. Clarify, repeat if necessary
- Follow up verbal invitations with a written note to avoid confusion
- Ask the student if he or she needs transportation to/from the meeting place
- Be punctual, but don't always expect your student to be on time
- Be sensitive to their time constraints; international students are busy people!
- When offering refreshments/food, offer it several times, as some cultures decline the first few offers
- Be sure to ask the student about any dietary restrictions. Avoid pork for Jewish students and Muslims. Fish, lamb, and chicken are usually acceptable

- Don't be surprised if your student has different table manners or is non-talkative during dinner
- Do not refuse small gifts; be willing to return the favor
- Send a note, e-mail, or make a phone call between visits
- Obtain the school calendar and be aware of crunch times: exams, and study weeks
- Be loving and hospitable and build a relationship
- Watch personal space, it varies between cultures, avoid excessive physical contact; some students may avoid direct eye contact with members of the opposite sex
- Other than group activities, if you are single, consider ministering to your same sex
- Have your children also share in the relationship, internationals generally like to meet children as it may remind them of their family
- Be aware the some internationals may be afraid of certain pets
- Learn about the student's family, hobbies, interests
- Be respectful of their future, social, political, and religious beliefs; never criticize
- Listen and learn!
- Take time to do some reading on your student's country, culture, customs
- Do not treat them as inferior
- Do not loan money to your student, but help him/her to learn how to find good shopping deals and to stretch their money
- Be willing to receive hospitality and visit with them in their home or on campus
- Don't be afraid to warmly and casually share your testimony, beliefs (avoid Christian jargon), say grace before meals, and tell them you are praying for them.

- Be a real friend, love them whether or not they are interested
- Invite them to your church or Bible study or cell group and make them feel accepted
- Love them with Christ's love
- Be sensitive to the Spirit regarding when to ask them if they would like to accept Christ.

Conclusion

This outreach manual points to the various methods and considerations necessary when reaching out to International Students. Through this dynamic and integral ministry, the Generations Project hopes to reach out to those visiting students within the United States who are in need of quality friendships, influences and the love of Jesus Christ.

It is our hope that you will rise up and take on the call of this ministry. Remember, to all those Jesus calls, He gives the same promise of harvest that He gave to His disciples over 2000 years ago, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men!" Our prayer for you is that you will rise up in the power of the Holy Spirit and answer Christ's call.

Through reaching these people in our own neighborhoods, the world's future leaders could be indelibly impacted and history may forever be changed.

For more information, please visit www.aglow.org or contact Evangeline Weiner, Generations Director for Aglow International at evangelineweiner@aglow.org.