

Visas, Passports, Culture and Customs; Ministry to International Students

By Lynn Davis

Many scriptural mandates: Deut. 31:12; Lev. 19:34; Is. 60:3-4

VISION: Participate in the unique opportunity to develop friendships and share Christ with the thousands of international students working in our resort areas.

Goals:

1. Find and develop relationships with individual international students.
2. Minister to the needs of international visitors
3. As internationals return to their own countries, they return with a Biblical knowledge of Christ, an understanding of God's love for them and hopefully a personal commitment to Jesus as their personal Savior....and become witnesses to their families and people.
4. Network with others also attempting to care for and disciple International students: missionaries, campus ministers/ministries and churches

Possible Ministries:

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Coffeehouse | Game Nights | Dinners |
| ESL | Community Service Location | Crisis Intervention |
| Bible Distribution | Bible Studies | Trips: Shopping/tourists |
| Home visit/meals | Recipe booklets | Pictures |
| Downloaded Language Bibles | Ultimate Questions | Sport/Fitness Activities |
| Language Partners | Bus /Airport greeters | Assist with camps,etc. |
| Ultimate Questions | Morning prayers/devotions | Bible Studies |
| Computer availability | Health kits/gifts | Apologetics: Ultimate Questions |

Remember:

1. Keep it basic: most will have no Christian background; (Many international students working and being educated in the USA are from countries which do not allow missionaries (examples:China, Indonesia and India).
2. Don't "Americanize" Christ or Christianity
3. Learn and enjoy apologetics; you will spend hours in discussions with interested students
4. Continue relationships when they return home; email, wedding gifts, announcements
5. Respect their dietary restrictions
6. Expect and be careful with misunderstanding in English words/ translations
7. Learn to pronounce their names and countries correctly
8. Ask thoughtful questions...be concerned about their life, home, unmet expectations of USA
9. Be careful with corrections as you develop trust and a relationships (slogans on t-shirts)
10. Some consider this to be the most effective means given to us by God for world evangelism...as we receive the top 5% of the nation's youth
11. Offer friendship....many are lonely

Many internet resources: Intersivarsity, Navigators; International Student Ministries

Build an International Ministry Team: locals, Associational churches. Mission teams, summer missionaries