

October 2011

Nurses Christian Fellowship

A ministry of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship



Engaging students and nurses with the Good News of Jesus Christ to bring God's love and healing to nursing and healthcare.

Greetings from Grace

Service Learning

The vision statement for InterVarsity is: *Students and Faculty Transformed; Campuses Renewed; World Changers Developed.* It's a pretty big vision and there are many ways in which we can whittle away at making it a reality.

This summer I approached them about serving as resource team for the Urbana 12 Student Missions Convention seminars' focus on health. I was overwhelmed by their enthusiastic response and some of the great ideas they are proposing for Urbana 12.

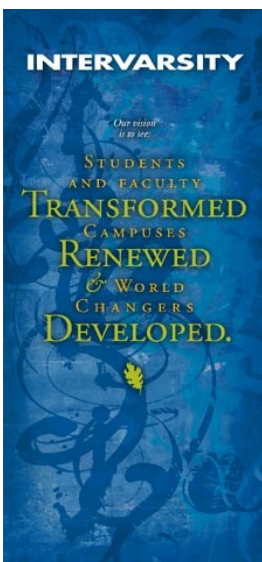
As the Missions Director for NCF who is trying to serve nursing students and nurses across the country, I have chosen to work with a number of Christian organizations involved in healthcare missions. They share an interest in encouraging healthcare students and professionals in the area of healthcare missions. The list requires a directory for the acronyms:

- * Christian Community Health Fellowship (CCHF),
- * Christian Connections for International Health (CCIH),
- * Global Health Outreach (GHO), the short term missions arm of
- * Christian Medical & Dental Associations (CMDA),
- * Global Health Missions Conference (GMHC) in Louisville, KY and the
- * West Coast Healthcare Missions and Ministry Conference (WCHMMC) (soon to be shortened to (HMC) Healthcare Missions Conference) at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, CA; and
- * The Center for the Study of Health in Missions (CSHIM)

We have also come together on other topics such as Best Practices in Healthcare Missions. One of our concerns has been in the area of service learning programs that many colleges and universities are providing students. Our desire is that students are provided learning experiences that not only meet their educational goals and objectives but also contribute to the well-being of the people and the health programming of the host countries.

Last year, NCF was able to take nine nursing students on a Global Project to Uganda. We learned how much time, effort and resources goes into planning and implementing a quality project. In our evaluation, I considered that many more students might be served if we worked with academic institutions who are involved in service learning to strengthen their efforts to provide quality programming. If we are to transform students and faculty, renew campuses and develop world changers, and if service learning programs are a means to achieving that vision, then we need to promote excellence in service learning programs.

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Praise and Prayer

Praise — Thank God for:

- Good meetings in August and September. My presentations at the West Coast Healthcare Missions and Ministry Conference at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena were well received. The Christian Community Health Fellowship Board meeting in Portland, OR went well provided opportunities to visit with the NCF group at University of Portland and the faculty at Seattle Pacific University
- A restorative vacation in Northern CA, swimming in Lake Tahoe, visiting Gold Country, and enjoying the Giant Sequoias.
- The willingness of the health resource team to assist in the planning for seminars at Urbana 12.
- Health and safety while travelling.

Prayer — Ask God to:

- Give wisdom on the topic of service learning programs. Pray those who receive the survey, would return it and give helpful information. Connie Jarlsberg and I would like to present this topic at the Innovations in Faith-Based Nursing Conference next June.
- Use the gathering of church and mission leaders and healthcare professionals and students at the Global Missions Health Conference in Louisville, KY in November to appreciate the part that health has in God's mission.
- Provide the necessary financial resources for the work in healthcare missions. If you are able to give a year end gift to NCF, it would be greatly appreciated.

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This has not been an easy task. We are surveying Christian nursing programs to learn what the current state of the art is. Through our repeated asking some of the ethical and moral questions related to service learning programming, we are beginning to create an awareness of the issues surrounding them.

There are times when I wonder if it is worth the effort. But recently God has shown me that we are making progress. This gave me encouragement to continue. I decided to share this encouragement with my colleagues in an e-mail. This is what I wrote to them.

"I was reading my new issue of the *Journal of Christian Nursing* last night. One of the articles, 'Service-Learning: Education with a Mission Focus', was written by a nursing professor at Loma Linda. As a peer reviewer, I recognized the article as one that had undergone some major revision. The effort was worth it. It provides a good description of a service learning program that is seeking to employ best practices. It cites Soderling, M., Butler, P., and Yorgin P.'s consensus document on partnership on the best practices website! Thank you Mike, Paul, and Peter for taking the time to write it and Arne for maintaining the website. To Connie's and my delight, they indicate that the faculty is licensed in country! It correctly identifies the impact of service learning as the change that occurs in the student and gives several examples of how this experience changed the lives and practice of students.

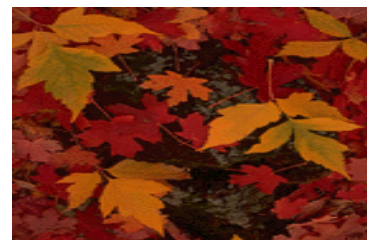
I just wrote a review of a book *Volunteering at Home and Abroad*, published by Sigma Theta Tau, the Honor Society of Nursing in which the accomplished authors dedicated an entire chapter and Appendix to the topic of Service Learning. In it they note that 'currently there are neither standards for global health experience for nursing students nor clear outcome expectations.' It is a topic that the honor society is taking a look at. When they do, they will do a literature search and find this article. Thank you to Kathy for working with the author to publish this important work and making it a contribution to the literature. We may never know the true impact of *JCN*; but God does and will use it for His Kingdom purposes.

The thing that brings joy to my soul is that it is an example of how God uses all of us and our talents to bring about his Kingdom purposes. Peter, your work with the West Coast Conference brought the Best Practices issue to the forefront. You nurtured it, wrote passionately, and supported it. Some of the nursing faculty from Loma Linda, with whom you were affiliated for a time, came and we discussed their service learning programs. I was able to encourage them to write up their experience for *JCN*. Mike, your emphasis on partnerships is beginning to take hold. We are beginning to distinguish between sponsorship and partnership. It is now being recognized as a core value for service learning programs in the literature. God orchestrated this. Our part was to be obedient in His leading and calling.

I'm hopeful that as other faculty read this article, they will get a vision for what a quality service learning program looks like, value the partnerships with our brothers and sisters abroad in nursing education, and seek to replicate it and improve on it. The desired result is that the lives of students, both here and abroad, are impacted by such programs and that the health, *shalom*, of communities worldwide would be improved."

To my donors, partners in ministry, family and friends, I want you to know that this work cannot go forward without your support. Your prayers and financial gifts keep me going. Thank you so much!

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Winter Calendar
November 10-12, 2011
Global Missions Health Conference
Southeast Christian Church, Louisville, KY
December 2& 3, 2011
Medical Education International Advisory Committee
Deerfield, IL
January 13-15, 2011
Global Health Outreach Advisory Committee Meeting
Bristol, TN

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