



International
FRIENDSHIPS

Annual Report

2016 - 2017



LETTER FROM RICH MENDOLA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Redemptive history, as recorded in Holy Scripture, is marked by God working through the lives of internationals. Today, the story is continuing through the lives of internationals touched by God as they study in the United States.

Many major figures in the Old Testament who were a significant part of the fulfillment of God's promise to bless the nations through Christ were internationals (people who moved from their country - think of Abraham!). This pattern continues in the New Testament, through stories of internationals in the book of Acts, including those saved on Pentecost, Cornelius, the Ethiopian, Lydia, and Paul.

Now the story is continuing through internationals whom God is touching while they are students in the United States. IFI is a vital part of that story. Through thousands of IFI volunteers, thousands of internationals are experiencing Christian hospitality, hundreds are engaged in Bible discussion groups, and an average of one student per week is coming to Christ. Discipleship groups are training international students to become disciple-makers. And those returning to their countries are having an impact for Jesus and becoming a blessing to their nation.

The importance and potential of this ministry is captured by this note written to me after a student from Saudi Arabia stayed the weekend with a Christian family:

"I am so grateful to have this chance! I see God's hands in planning this weekend for me to discover a lot of things in Americans' lives. I learned so many things including things about myself. This is the thing we have to focus on in order to build bridges between cultures! I needed this weekend to see the real beautiful face of Christian and

American life! They became my own family here in America! If I have a high position in future in my country, I will insure that other cultures know how great America is and how beautiful Christianity is! I LOVE these people and I can't thank you enough for giving me this chance and healing my homesickness with a very fantastic weekend!"

A major development this year was the launch of our "Startup Kit" – an online video training accompanied by personal coaching created to help launch IFI ministries in new locations. Four new locations are piloting the Kit this year across Texas, Illinois and Ohio, with more to come.

With the appointment of Estera Piroasca as National Field Director and Jason Pinschenat as our Director of National Expansion, God is answering our prayers for having a bigger impact in the years to come.

I am also excited by the four internationals currently in ISEED, our intensive 10-month training program, each with great potential for extending God's blessings.

Thank you for partnering with IFI to extend the blessings of God among the nations through current and former international students trained as disciple-makers.



Rich Mendola, Executive Director



**International
FRIENDSHIPS**

**We serve internationals and partner with them to
make Christ known among the nations.**

The Need & Opportunity

A large percent of the world's population has little or no exposure to the good news about Jesus.

What's the most strategic way to tell them?

God has provided a remarkable opportunity to reach the world, without ever getting on a plane.

Some of the finest students from all over the world – many from hard to reach parts of the globe – come to the United States to prepare for their future. IFI is working to show these students the love of Christ and equip them to carry His hope with them as they return home.

A decorative brushstroke at the bottom of the slide, featuring a mix of blue, teal, orange, and green colors.

IFI's Strategic Approach to Our Mission

MOBILIZE

and equip believers in the context of the local church

SERVE

international students, scholars, and their families with the unconditional love of Christ through hospitality and friendship

PROVIDE

students opportunities to learn about Jesus

INVITE

students who are interested to make a decision to follow Jesus

DISCIPLE

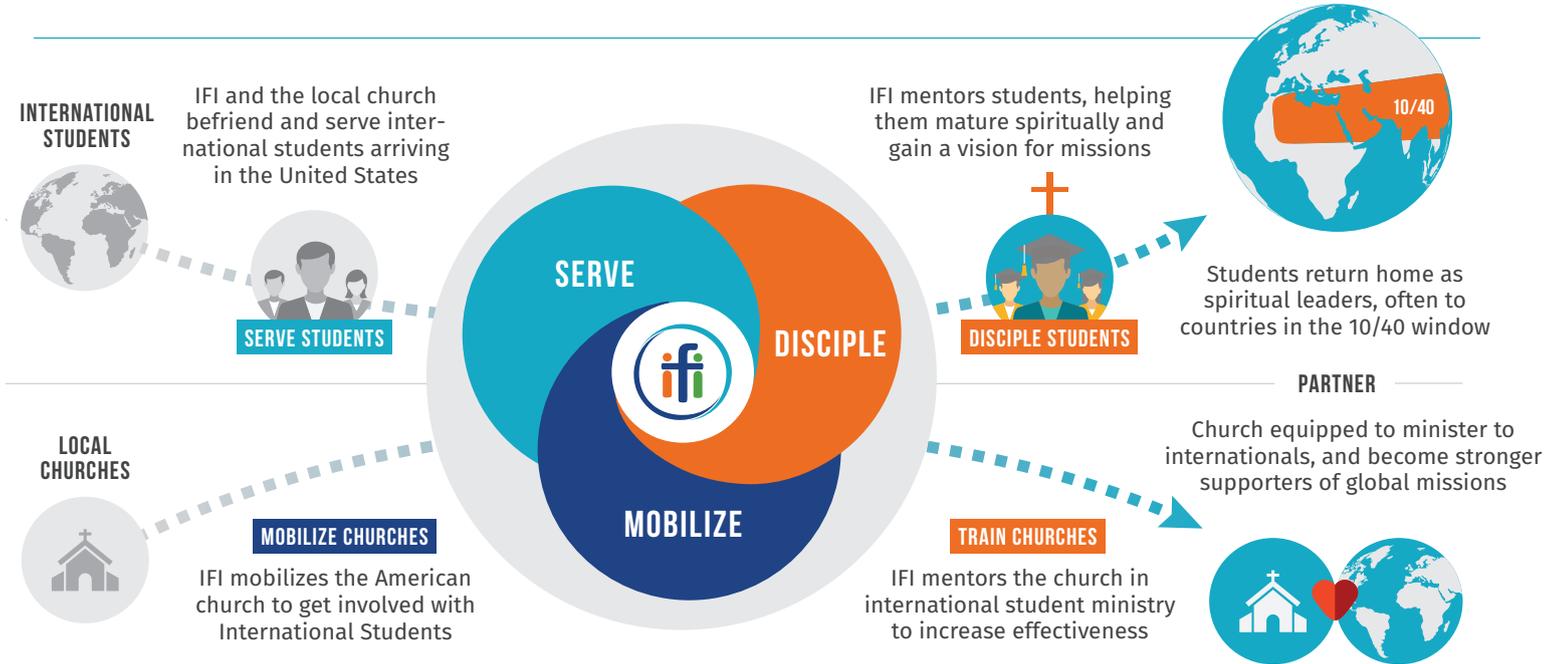
students to obey Jesus and become disciple-makers

PARTNER

with current and former students to extend the Kingdom of God to their people and throughout the world

Vision

The Kingdom of God extended throughout the nations through current and former international students equipped as disciple-makers.



2017 Student Impact: By the Numbers

As IFI continued to work to expand its reach nationally, we had the privilege of serving thousands of students across seven states in 2017.

In addition to nine existing IFI locations primarily in the Midwest, IFI is helping new locations establish international student ministries in places like Texas and Illinois, and continues to support staff serving internationals in locations ranging from Virginia to Oregon.

4,625

Total Students Served

29

Universities Served

597

Total Students in Bible Studies

MINISTRY LOCATIONS

Ministry Locations are actively building a team (volunteers, staff, partnering churches) to establish or grow an IFI ministry location at one or more campuses in their city.

OHIO

Cincinnati

 **600**  **140**

University of Cincinnati

Cleveland

 **250**  **35**

Case Western Reserve University | Cleveland State University
Baldwin Wallace College | Lorain County Community College

Columbus

 **2,280**  **240**

The Ohio State University
Ohio Dominican University

Dayton

 **530**  **50**

Wright State University | University of Dayton
Sinclair Community College | Cedarville University

Urbana

 **41**  **14**

Urbana University

Wooster

 **70**  **7**

OSU Ohio Agricultural Research
and Development Center

TEXAS

Houston

 **12**  **12**

University of Houston | Rice University
Houston Community College

MICHIGAN

East Lansing

 **300**  **10**

Michigan State University

ILLINOIS

East Peoria

 **25**  **0**

Illinois Central College

PREPARING MINISTRY LOCATIONS

Preparing Ministry Locations are involved in international student ministry and are preparing to start the process of building a full IFI team. These locations are typically building initial financial support and partnerships.

Champaign, IL

 **65**  **50**

University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign

Lubbock, TX

 **17**  **0**

Texas Tech University | Wayland Baptist
University Lubbock Christian University

STAFF IN OTHER LOCATIONS



ARKANSAS

Arkadelphia
Ouachita Baptist University

MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids
Grand Valley State University

OREGON

Portland
Portland State University

OHIO

Marietta
Marietta College

Athens
Ohio University

VIRGINIA

Charlottesville
University of Virginia

Total Students
Served Through
Staff In Other
Locations:

 **435**  **39**

A Year of Ministry Expansion

God opened doors to new ministry initiatives on a variety of fronts in 2017, expanded the scope of IFI's work and influence across the country – and, God willing, across the world. Here are some highlights:

THE IFI STARTUP KIT

Drawing on 38 years of outreach in Columbus, Ohio, IFI developed an online e-learning platform to plant new IFI ministries and train new teams to befriend internationals and bless nations. This online tool provides essential resources and enables IFI to ensure that new locations start on the right foot and develop a healthy ministry.

INCREASED SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS FOR IFI'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Because of the growth of IFI's national team, IFI's Executive Director now has the freedom to travel nationally and speak at conferences, training events and churches about God's work among international students. This is a key factor in raising up future co-workers in ministry.

NEW RETURNEE MINISTRY

As IFI has grown in numbers, we are increasing our focus on helping returning international students to re-enter their countries and bring God's blessings. IFI has appointed a Returnee Ministry Director to lead the way in building a training curriculum for both returning students and the volunteers who befriend them.

STAFF & PARTNERSHIPS

47

Campus
Ministry Staff

17

Administrative
Staff

3,300

Active
Volunteers

147

Church
Partners

1,900

Financial
Partners

Conversation Partner Story

A Chinese researcher saw the emptiness of career and money, but didn't know where to turn for answers. A connection with IFI led him on a remarkable spiritual journey.



Robb and Haichen

When Haichen arrived in the United States from China in early 2017, it was evident to Christians who met him that God had been preparing his heart to hear about Christ. “I know there’s more to life than education and money. I want to know truth,” he said on a number of occasions.

Haichen was connected with an IFI Bible Study, and then with an IFI conversation partner in July. He began peppering his conversation partner with probing questions about the Bible. His conversation partner eventually connected Haichen to a Christian couple, Robb and Holly, who spoke Chinese and were able to address Haichen’s questions in his native language.

As Haichen began attending small

group Bible studies with Robb, he experienced a love and patience from Christians, which touched him deeply.

“Haichen was acutely aware of the relational vacuum created by increasing materialism in China, and sensed something was missing. When he experienced Christian community combined with the faithful prayer of Christians, I think it made a big impact,” says Robb.

Robb and Haichen began meeting weekly to read the Bible, beginning with Genesis and Exodus, where Robb used the story of the Passover to show God’s rescue plan. They then jumped into John’s gospel, where Robb helped Haichen see that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Passover lamb.

By the time they reached John 3, Haichen was ready to receive Christ’s forgiveness and asked Jesus to enter his life! Robb is now encouraging Haichen to share his new faith with others and prepping him for the spiritual challenges of returning to China.

Haichen’s story is a strong reminder of the multi-faceted approach God uses to draw people to Himself. The internal conviction of the Holy Spirit, the impact of authentic Christian community, reading Scripture, and consistent intercessory prayer all played a role in Haichen finding Christ. Haichen needs prayer as much as ever as he begins his spiritual journey and learns to share his story with his countrymen back home.



IFI's Vision Fulfilled in Indonesia

Thirty years ago, a Ph.D. student came to know Jesus through IFI. Today, God is using him and his wife to love Buddhists and Muslims in his native Indonesia.

Jane and Roesdiman

Roesdiman studied in Columbus, Ohio for his Ph.D. from 1986-1993. During that time, he was befriended by volunteers with IFI and he opened his heart to Christ. Immediately, Roesdiman had a vision to serve other Indonesians studying in the United States.

He began to invite Indonesians to study the Bible in his house. Many responded and a regular Bible study group was established. Out of that Bible study group was birthed the Indonesian Christian Fellowship (ICF), which continues to this day. Through ICF, not only have Christian students from Indonesia come and been encouraged in their faith, but many non-Christian Indonesians, especially those coming from a Buddhist background, have come to Christ. Even some Indonesian

Muslims have joined them and started to follow Jesus!

Roesdiman and Jane returned to Indonesia with a heart to use his training to help build a more prosperous nation, both economically and spiritually.

His initial impact included design work for a skyscraper being built in Jakarta. Later, he became a professor at a university where he used his position to invite special Christian guest speakers to discuss topics that led to spiritual sharing. This was a sensitive way to deal with the restrictions on sharing the good news in the largest Muslim country in the world. Eventually, he began a small group Bible study in his home. A number of Muslims have begun to follow Jesus

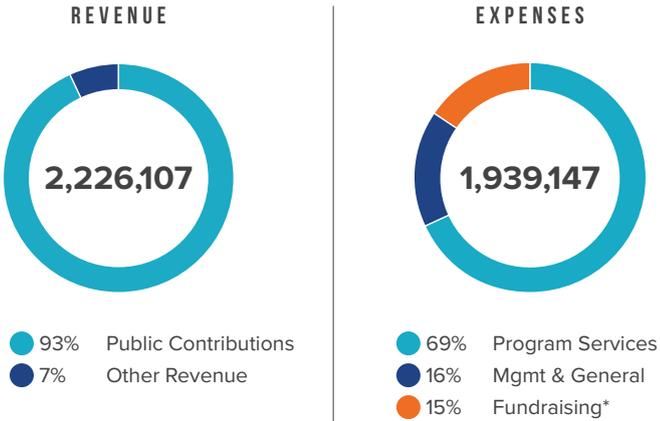
through that Bible study and are experiencing new life.

Roesdiman eventually became the president of a university in Indonesia. As president, he was able to introduce changes that exposed students to the good news, such as re-establishing Christmas celebrations, which previously had been forbidden. Such celebrations open the door for spiritual conversations about Jesus.

We can praise God for the stories of people such as Roesdiman and Jane, whom God is using to extend His blessings in Indonesia. It is through internationals like them that the vision of IFI to extend the kingdom of God among the nations is being fulfilled.

Financials

Thanks to your support and God’s provision, more and more international students across the United States are experiencing the love and hospitality of Jesus.



* The increase in the fundraising line item relative to 2015-16 is reflective of a strong year of staff expansion in 2017. During the support-raising phase, expenses of new staff members are designated as fundraising expenses until the staff member is sufficiently supported to engage in full-time ministry.

	2016-17	2015-16
Donations & Net Assets		
Public Support Contributions	2,077,280	1,857,215
Other Revenue	148,727	145,472
Total Public Support and Revenue	2,226,107	2,002,687
Net Investment in Property	1,065,262	1,062,368
Net Assets Available for Ministry	394,492	110,426
Total Net Assets at Year End	1,459,754	1,172,794
Expenses		
Program Services	1,323,307	1,451,217
Management & General	315,480	256,738
Fundraising	300,360	75,518
Total Expenses	1,939,147	1,783,473

Stewardship

IFI is committed to the highest standards of financial integrity. We take seriously the stewardship of God's resources entrusted to us through you.



Learn more at ifipartners.org/accountability

IFI BOARD (August 2017)

James Trzcinski (Board chair)

Director, Office of Administration & Planning,
The Ohio State University

Harry Anderson (Board Treasurer)

Retired Assistant Professor, Cedarville University

Mindy Lambert (Board Secretary)

Retired

Sophia Chang

Magistrate, Court of Claims Ohio

Rafael E. Villalobos, DO

Owner/President Mid Ohio Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

Rod Crane

President/CEO MedFlight (Retired)

Richard Mendola, Executive Director, IFI

“I cannot think of a more strategic ministry in the Lord’s work today.”

BILLY GRAHAM ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MINISTRY

Three ways to **get involved** today:

1

PRAY

Join others in praying for God to transform lives of students and bless entire nations. Sign up to pray for a specific Bible discussion group at ifipartners.org/pray.

2

SERVE

Your hospitality can impact nations! Sign up to be a Conversation Partner, pick students up from the airport, provide food for Bible studies and more at ifipartners.org/volunteer.

3

GIVE

Online
ifipartners.org/give

By Phone
(614) 294-2434

By Mail
IFI, PO Box 82416
Columbus, OH 43202

Contact Staff Directly
Don Hayes, x209
Chief Financial Officer
don@ifipartners.org

Nancy Baier
Director of Development
n.baier@ifipartners.org



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