

ISLCFM News: The Nexus Role of the ISLCFM

by Emily Lewis

Last September, the International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Mission hosted two Student Mission Forums in Denver, CO and Minneapolis, MN. Mission leaders there were Ralph D. Winter, Scott Moreau, Greg Parsons, Patrick Lai, Tim Lewis, John Ridgway, Carl Medearis, and Bob Blincoe, among others.

Mary Olson, one of the Minneapolis participants wrote:

...the forum was amazing! What an honor it was for us to spend a day with some of the foremost mission movers and shakers of our time. I'm still mulling over in my mind all that was shared. I remember you mentioned at the beginning of the day how you just wanted the day to have an impact for the kingdom. I believe that it was a watershed event for many of the young people present. I know that many connections were made that will likely last a lifetime. And God only knows the spiritual impact that will be made in the lives of Muslims, Buddhists, and others reached for Christ because of the paradigm shifts made in the minds of attendees on how to do 'missions.'

Because of introductions made at the Forum, Mary is now being mentored by a veteran missionary couple.

Similar connections were sparked for other participants. Through an ISLCFM Forum contact, one of the student participants is about to pour out some of his life in Pakistan with the urgent quake relief for the 2-3 million displaced and shelterless Himalayan families.

For some, the things spoken of at these forums turned on the electricity for their mission vision; for others, it was a flash of lightning in a dark night.

Stepping from today to tomorrow
In IJFM 22:3, I wrote about "...the few who sincerely desire their lives to be a part of God's greater plan for the nations and their passion is to give their entire lives to see the Gospel established among every tribe, tongue, and people." They are out there. We

met with some of them in a small room of the Minneapolis Marriott Hotel that rainy day in September. Others drove across multiple states and flew from the other side of the country to meet in Denver a week earlier. We saw the enthusiasm on their faces as people spoke of what is happening on the front lines of the kingdom, the "sea-change" in missions and how they can be a part. We saw them recognize as brothers and sisters those with the same passion to seek and save the lost.

But the time was short-lived, and when we had bid each other goodbye and each returned to our separate lives, the questions came back: "Where do I go from here?" And more importantly, "Who will go with me?" "Is there a group of people who meet during the week who are passionate about missions?" wrote one student. "Is anything happening in way of follow-up to the forum? ...I would like to connect with such a group."

We see the role of the ISLCFM as a sort of a nexus, a link between generations, a link across organizations and continents, a link for people both young and old with the same calling and passion. So we saw the convening of these forums not as an end in themselves but as one more means of facilitating these connections.

The Turning Tide: An Intergenerational Forum

Now for the next link in the chain, I'd like to tell you about TheTurningTide.net, a web forum founded by the ISLCFM for the purpose of establishing and fostering this kind of relationships, as well as keeping vision alive and encouraging purposeful moving forward in today's mission-driven young people.

Kevin B., co-founder of the

TheTurningTide.net, illustrates the four distinctives of the forum saying, "I believe they are without precedent in their combined niche on a global and localized, networked, and international stage..." Here, in his words, are those distinctives:

1. *Apostolic calling*: Simply, I mean Paul's burden "to proclaim the Gospel where Christ has not been named" (Romans 15:20). I don't believe God has given all people or even many to this function (frontier missions) to build up His One Body (Ephesians 4:11).
2. *Apostolic mentoring*: Paul's charge to Timothy for the next generation: "What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). I believe our generation has a starving desire for this sort of authentic interaction and input.
3. *Apostolic banding*: In the church at Antioch, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:1-3). Paul needed a band; I need a band. How can we, in our relative isolations, press forward with linked arms?
4. *Apostolic ideation*: Admittedly, this peculiar distinctive leans on the cerebral side. However, it is also this distinctive which gives rise to the forum and invites the other three distinctives to partake. God willing, it will be a harbinger for ongoing, cross organizational dialogue surrounding frontier missiology in the next generation.

It is my great privilege to invite you to be a part. If you visited www.TheTurningTide.net right now you'd find inspiring topics and discussion starters like *Insider Movements* and *Current Events*, with few posts under any topic and none under some. But those few posts that there are were written by young people anywhere from Upland, Indiana to Varanasi, India, looking for people to answer their questions or respond to their thinking. They're waiting.

To add your voice, go to www.TheTurningTide.net/forum