Welcome To PFO

June 2016

Dear Colleague,

I want to take this opportunity to extend a personal welcome to you. I’m excited about the occasion of our being together during these next two weeks. I’m looking forward with great anticipation to this time that we have to learn together and to grow in our relationship with God and each other. I’m glad that you have joined us.

The staff and I recognize that these are busy days for you as you make your final preparations to travel to your new place of ministry. We trust that you will find time to relax just a little and draw strength from our time together.

We also anticipate that this time will be a chance for you to stretch just a little bit more toward unleashing the tremendous potential that God has given you for an effective ministry to TCKs. God has blessed you with a rich background of experiences, a unique set of understandings and insights, and special training in preparation for your future ministry to TCKs. Our desire is that the richness of your background will be enhanced through our time together.

We want you to take with you the skills and strategies that will help you reach your full potential in the new areas of ministry to which God has called you. The staff is here to serve you. We want this experience to be the most positive part of your transition. Please make your concerns and needs known.

For the staff, in service to the TCK community,

Daniel J. Egeler, Ed.D.
ACSI President

Continue reading on how to get the most out of your PFO experience
Program Objectives

We invite you to become an active member of the PFO learning community. The program is designed with a variety of learning opportunities that will require your active participation and considered reflection. By sharing your personal growth with others, you will help them grow as they help you. Thus the issues of focus in the program will be personally more meaningful to you.

Participants will be given an opportunity to:

1. Assess, clarify, and refine interpersonal skills and attitudes that will enhance your future ministry with the children of missionaries and multi-national students.
2. Examine individual strengths, limitations, and professional backgrounds relating to the uniqueness of the multicultural MK and International Christian School.
3. Identify significant characteristics of the MK, the MK and International Christian School, the missionary family and community and the multinational international community.
5. Understand the basics of effective cultural entry and cultural differences.
6. Value the importance of integrating Biblical knowledge and personal faith into daily life and ministry within the multicultural school setting.

There are also times to build community and a worldwide network through praise & worship times, dialogue in small group activities, be involved in interactive panels with MKs, TCKs, and expatriate kids, professional development opportunities, a talent show, participant-led recreational activities, and free time.
Advice from PFO Alumni

The following excerpts from previous PFO participants were received as part of a follow-up evaluation after their first six months on the field. We asked them to share some thoughts with you from their experiences at PFO and their initial adjustment to their new area of ministry. We trust you will find them encouraging.

Allow PFO to enlarge your vision for your ministry with MKs. You will focus on the particular needs of MKs and their families in some of the sessions—let God use that to challenge you in your new ministry. The information you will receive about transition into a new culture and ministry is invaluable. It will help you to be patient with yourself as you adjust after arriving at your place of service! Allow the personality tests and counseling to help you learn more about yourself. Be open to learning about yourself and the ministry you’re about to enter.
Kris Hansen, Ecuador

Pray that God will open your heart to what He has for you throughout your time at PFO. Try to allow the busyness of the summer to fade from your mind and focus on what God is laying on your heart. Take time to self-reflect each day (you may be surprised how much you end up learning about yourself...even more so than learning about what is to come). Make new friends, they are a great support to have as you are all embarking on the same sort of journey! It’s great to have brothers and sisters in Christ whom you can call friends living worldwide doing the same thing you are doing—sharing the love of Jesus Christ!
Elisa Klump, Taiwan

We had been involved with missions and missionaries for many years and thought we had reasonable knowledge about some of the issues we would be facing with TCK’s on the mission field ourselves. We were looking forward to some new information that would assist us with our responsibilities. The fact of the matter is, we were completely overwhelmed by the amount and depth of material and the professional presentation of it all. It was like trying to get a sip of water out of Niagara Falls. The blast was refreshing and overwhelming at the same time. So what would we tell them—sit back, relax, hold on, enjoy, learn, participate and then go out to do what God has called you to do with enthusiasm.
Nels & Sandi Pitotti, Austria

I struggled with being the spouse following a teacher. But all of the information will be just as important to you. You are a partner in ministry and God has called you, too. TCKs need your care and involvement, too. God will show you your place as you trust and obey.
Tara Cooper, Taiwan

I was uniquely different from the rest of the students, since I was a veteran missionary with 4 terms—17 years under my belt. So much of the information I knew and had experienced, but to see it put down in black and white was most beneficial. To talk with the staff added to the richness of learning.

ACSI-PFO
Maryella Minor, Canada

When I arrived at the TCK-PFO conference in 2002, I could not imagine what could be more important that my being at home to finish packing. It did not take long to figure out that the conference was a tremendous source of needed information.

Lynne Hultquist, Germany
Program Outline

Understanding the Third Culture Kid (TCK)

- TCK Profile
  - The Third Culture Syndrome
- Developing and Releasing the Potential of the TCK
- Dealing with Differences
- The Transition Experience
  - Understanding Challenges of the TCK
- The Missionary Family and the MK/TCK

Understanding ministry issues

- The MK and International Christian School Community
- Personal Inventory/Impact for Service
- Individual Differences in Interpersonal Relationships
- Trust, Self-Esteem, Communication, Conflict

Understanding cultural differences

- Developing Attitudes and Skills for Effective Entry
- The Host Country Culture
- The Mission Subculture
- Living with Daily Cultural Stressors

Understanding the task

- Issues in Curriculum and Instruction
  - A Spiritual Dimension/An International Dimension
- Cultural Differences in Education
- Professional Challenges in the New Setting
  - Adaptation Skills
- Relationships in the Boarding Home
- Resources for Boarding Home Parents
- Parenting Skills
Program Assumptions

1. While the adaptation process for all those appointed to an international assignment follows general principles and stages that require basic perspectives and skills, the specific cross-cultural professional orientation of overseas personnel enhances their ability to serve effectively in the international school, mission, and host communities.

2. Teacher participants in this program have the prerequisite training and experience as professionals for their teaching assignment. Therefore, the orientation program will focus on the interaction of cultural, interpersonal, and professional issues in the overseas teaching assignment within the multi-cultural international school context.

3. Expectations of boarding parent participants are usually different from those of teachers since formal training for boarding parents has not been defined. Therefore, it is essential that clearly articulated principles of successful boarding be identified and discussed during the job-alike sessions. The interaction of cultural, interpersonal, and professional issues with the house parent responsibilities will be explored so they can respond to the unique needs of TCKs in the multi-cultural boarding situation.

4. Teachers and boarding parents have significant impact on the students with whom they work. Therefore, it is appropriate to provide evaluative feedback to each participant. In cases where there is reasonable doubt concerning the match of the individual learner and the assigned overseas task, feedback will be provided to the participant’s mission agency (and/or school).

5. Self-assessment is a valuable part of the personal growth process and will be part of the TCK personnel orientation program.

6. The program is designed to introduce participants to those basic skills and attitudes that will help them be effective in their future cross-cultural environment. It is not intended to provide the culture-specific information that can only be acquired through observation and experience in a field setting.

7. This program is not a substitute, but a bridge for the on-site orientation and development of the learner as a professional member of the school community and as an active participant in the cross-cultural community.