



# FINISHING STRONG EXHAUSTED YET NOT SHAKEN

Changing the world is hard, and I am exhausted! **The needs of 10,000 students a year are continually before those of us at The Hospitality Center.** The feeling of always needing to do more weighs heavy on me and the staff.

We have seen staff move on to new employment chapters of their lives. We have valiantly expanded programming to reach over 50 nationalities per year across nearly a dozen campuses. We survived COVID-19 running through our team. We pivoted on a dime as COVID-19 shut down in-person events. We adapted operations as the inflow of Chinese students nearly came to a standstill.

We have negotiated the purchase of the other half of our facility on the St. Paul UMN campus for \$250,000. After nearly a year of discussion, we have solidified a 5-year lease for our second facility on the East Bank of the UMN for \$150,000.

We put in countless hours on construction projects at our new East Bank facility, which is within walking distance of nearly half of all international students in the entire Twin Cities. Staff, board, donors, and volunteers have given so much!

**YET, as I write this, tears begin to well up in my eyes, IT IS WORTH IT!**

The Twin Cities continue to be a massive melting pot for the nations. International students continue to come from every corner of the world to our beautiful cities. **Some of the poorest, most oppressed,**

**and unreached nations still send their future leaders to our backyard!** The Hospitality Center's mission is to share the love of Christ through hospitality with international students, scholars, and their families is more necessary now than ever!

**Our goal of reaching EVERY SINGLE international student in the Twin Cities with genuine love and hospitality is obtainable.**

Please remain unshaken with me. Do not grow weary of doing good. We WILL continue to reap a harvest of global impact... if we do not give up. Please join me in sacrificing your time, energy, and resources to fulfill this great mission!

Changing the World Together,

Tim Gruditz,  
Executive Director





# 3300 GRAND OPENING

## APPROACHING THE FINISH LINE



*longtime partners &  
board members celebrate*



We are almost there! On Saturday, October 30th, we held an open house to welcome all those who have partnered with The Hospitality Center to see our new facility on the East Bank of the UMN.

This office and event space has been over a year in the making. Our Executive Director, Tim, began the remodeling process in January 2021, along with assistance from staff and volunteers. **We want to thank Tim for the incredible sacrifices he has made to meet the construction deadlines** necessary to receive rent credit with the facility owners, River of Hope Church.

Its location is such that students can walk or take the light rail directly from their apartments.

**This is an incredible opportunity we have never had before!** We are looking forward to the ability to be a part of students' lives on a daily basis.

We hope to be fully settled into our office space and begin hosting events there at the beginning of January 2022! This is an exciting time and **we are so thankful to be a part of touching the lives of international students from many nations in the next years!**

### JOIN US IN 2022

- Friendship Match
- Friendship Meals
- Skiing
- Tubing
- Fat Biking
- Game Nights
- Painting
- Hot Pot Dinners



scan to watch  
2 min. virtual  
tour and recap

# MOVING FORWARD IN FRIENDSHIP

BY KIM SOLLIE

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR

During the past two years, our **Friendship Match program has connected 320 international students with Hospitality Center volunteers.**

Partners seek to connect twice a month for conversation and fun activities. Volunteers often have the opportunity to be a sounding board for questions about career choices, family struggles, the purpose of life, and God. During this fall semester, we did not have enough volunteers to connect with 15 young men who signed up.

**Would you consider being a Friendship Match Partner in 2022?**

The following stories from our friendship match volunteers give a glimpse into how these friendships develop and grow.

**"We haven't had too many new spiritual conversations, but I have shared many stories about how God is working in my life. When I was sharing one story about God moving in my life, she said, "that's God!" before I even mentioned God."**  
- Hannah

**"As I got to know my friend, I realized that there are so many international students who are wandering around confused in the midst of this hard time. My heart has been stirred to share God's love and bring hope to students."**  
- John

**"My international student was so excited to talk to me today! She has been struggling with being away from family, and so we chatted about anything and everything for an hour today! She also told me that she is typically a shy person, but that was not evident at all in our conversation".**  
- Kayla

## PERSEVERANCE IN PARTNERSHIP

BY HEATHER HOLBROOK

VOLUNTEER & BOARD MEMBER

Our church has enjoyed our partnership with The Hospitality Center! In 2019, we hosted a Friendsgiving event at our facility. **We provided the food and community environment. The Hospitality Center advertised to the international students and allowed us to use their vans.** Through that event, we connected with several international students and scholars. We were then able to invite them to gatherings we hosted on our own. Many of these included: Christmas caroling, a Chinese New Year party, and volunteering at Feed My Starving Children.

One young lady that we met at our Friendsgiving began to participate regularly and eventually decided to become a Christian. This was because of the relationships she was able to make with my community and with other Christians in the Twin Cities.

When COVID-19 hit, we were able to keep our relationships going by meeting together via Zoom. We met virtually with those back in their countries, those in other states in the US, and even some here in Minnesota. We had great times watching movies together, doing crafts, singing, praying, talking, and celebrating major holidays together! One of our international friends said



that even though she couldn't always attend, she felt supported just knowing there was a group of people who loved her and were available to connect.

We now enjoy in-person events again, but continue to connect virtually with those, not in Minnesota. **Our church has truly loved the partnership we've had with The Hospitality Center!**



## THE HOSPITALITY CENTER FOR CHINESE

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NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2021

The Hospitality Center is a nonprofit organization that is sharing the Love of Christ through hospitality with international students and scholars.



Help us reach our \$50,000 Match Campaign goal by December 31st. Multiply your gift and partner with us in our mission to reach all 10,000 students in the Twin Cities with genuine love and hospitality!

# RELATIONSHIP LEADING TO LEADERSHIP

## STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

**BY JONATHAN NESVIG  
LEAD PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

Jerrin first arrived from Pune, India to Minnesota in the fall of 2019 to begin his master's degree in Mechanical Engineering. His first two events were cricket and a trip to Taylors Falls. This was where **he met volunteers who have now become like his home away from home.** For Jerrin, The Hospitality Center has become a place to find lasting relationships and assistance for basic needs. When Jerrin first arrived, one of our Hospitality Center volunteers picked him up at the airport and offered to host him that week.

Through his time in Minnesota and participation in Hospitality Center events, **Jerrin has also had opportunities to grow as a leader.** His first time to MC an event was at our annual Welcome Picnic in August. Jerrin is now the board president of the Chateau Student Housing Co-Op. And more recently, he's stepped into an internship role at River of Hope Church. These have been opportunities for Jerrin to grow in confidence, learn to work within a team, and lead others to achieve desired outcomes.

He credits his connection with God as helping him remain calm,



not tense, as he juggles school and all of these responsibilities.

**We seek to "set the table" through our events so that international students can begin meaningful friendships with volunteers who can provide emotional and spiritual support to students.** Many international students, like Jerrin, have experienced genuine love from our volunteers and church partners and are now sharing this love with others as they lead.