

BUILDING ON THIS FOUNDATION

BY: JIM ARNEBERG
FORMER BOARD PRESIDENT

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Tim Grunditz has served as the Executive Director of the Hospitality Center for the past eight years. He just recently transitioned out of his role on May 31st to move into the next chapter of his career.

We deeply appreciate the work Tim has done at The Hospitality Center. He has served and shaped the organization with energy and drive. The influence of the mission has been extended to include international students from many nations. Our footprint has expanded beyond our U of M St. Paul location to serve students on the East Bank at our 3300 University Avenue facility. **We have made tremendous progress during Tim's time here and he will be deeply missed.** In his parting, Tim shared these words:

"My passion is still for the mission and vision of the Hospitality Center, but my calling to serve the

Hospitality Center has run its course. I will ALWAYS be here for the mission, for the staff, for the students and donors, and for the board. You have all been there for me as life has handed me ups and downs, and **I will ALWAYS be grateful for you and the mission!** Thank you for serving alongside me and supporting me as we brought the love of Christ to the nations!"

The Hospitality Center Board of Directors is also pleased to announce that Josh Driver has been unanimously approved and appointed as the new Executive Director, effective June 1, 2022.

Josh is well-equipped to serve in this capacity. He has served as the Office Manager and has been involved in every facet of the ministry over the past twelve years.

Josh wrote in his initial greeting as the new Executive Director,

"As we enter the organization's 30th year of existence, I look forward to leading humbly—standing on the foundations that my predecessors built as they used their gifts. I am most grateful to God and ask for His strength and wisdom to participate in and **empower others in sharing Christ's love through hospitality to as many international students as we can**—both with excellence and authenticity."





ESTABLISHING CONNECTION

PROGRAM UPDATE

VOLUNTEER:



BY: JONATHAN NESVIG & KYLE MORRIS
PROGRAMMING TEAM

This last semester, we had incredible opportunities to build relationships with students! Even though COVID variants, like Omicron, have interrupted our labors and winter has been long and cold, God has been faithful. **Conversation Partners met for 15-weeks and as a result, multiple students attended a bible study or a church service.** Thirty students were hosted on Easter by our volunteer families.



Many of the volunteers and students told us how much they loved connecting with each other. On a recent hike, **we had a sudden influx of Latin American students, one of the populations we have been looking to reach more often —what a blessing!** On top of this are the 50+ students who meet regularly with a volunteer Friendship Match partner. We are hopeful that these relationships will continue to grow so that students have the ability to experience the love of Christ through us!

Now we are looking forward to the opportunities we will have this summer. We are launching two new programs, Hiking Club and Food with Friends. Students and volunteers will gather once a month for either a hike or a meal together. Summer is also a time when students begin to arrive for a new school year. As COVID is increasingly less worrisome, we are excited to resume ministry in full swing.

For example, we will be re-launching our Friendship Meals, which will now be called "Celebration Meals." These events will each have a theme of a cultural holiday and will be held at our new location on the East Bank of the U of M. We are able to host anywhere from 50–200 people there for a meal. **We look forward to YOU joining us and taking part in establishing connections with students this year!**

JOIN US THIS SUMMER

- Kayaking
- Food with Friends
- Hiking Club
- Friendship Match
- Furniture Donation
- Airport Pickups
- Short Term Hosting
- Welcome Picnic on August 27th

ARRIVAL ON THE HORIZON

WE NEED YOU!

BY: KIM SOLLIE
VOLUNTEER DIRECTOR

In the month of May, we had the opportunity to pick up 30 newly arriving students! These students began a program at the Carlson School of Business on June 1st. It was good to be reminded of how a simple act of kindness can mean a lot to the eager and excited students who are beginning their studies at the U of M.

I had the opportunity to pick up Howard. His flight arrived at 5:30 AM but his apartment did not open

until 9:30 AM. So, that morning, we went to breakfast and then spent some time in our Minneapolis office where he got to meet a couple more staff members. When we left to go to his new apartment, **he whispered to me, "Are all people here this kind?"** Our prayer and hope is that 100s of acts of kindness this summer will open the door for new relationships and the sharing of God's love with the new students who will be arriving. We expect to receive 150 or more



requests for airport pickups, primarily in August. We hope you will be a part of our Arrival Season Team. You can sign up to do **airport pickups, host students for up to 5 days, donate gently used furniture, or help out with our Welcome Picnic.** Go to our Volunteer webpage or scan the Volunteer QR code on the left.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT



CHRISTINE CHOW
VOLUNTEER FOR 12 YEARS

Over the years, I've befriended several international students. Recently, I met one of them at the ESL conversation circle. I've had her over in my home and it's been a really sweet friendship. I invited her to church a while back. When I asked her about what she understood in the sermon, it prompted a really meaningful conversation.

She talked about the purpose of religion—that it makes you feel better, and you become a better person and that's good. I responded by saying that instead of just

religion, I think of Christianity in terms of a relationship to God—knowing him, knowing who he is and is not. I shared an example of a relationship between me and her and asked if she would want me to really know her, see her, and know what is true of her heart. **That made sense to her and so she began a quest, a thirst to find out if God really exists.** The next week, she told me she was so curious about whether God exists or who he is that she asked a Christian Chinese friend of hers to read the bible in Chinese with her. After that, we went out to dinner and I was bombarded with questions. Her journey to find out more is still ongoing. It's very exciting and a great joy to me!

The Hospitality Center's ministry is a **catalyst for many who are building meaningful, authentic, life-giving, and eternal friendships** with international students.



THANKS TO BOARD MEMBERS

We want to say thank you to **Jim Arneberg and Tim Kowalik for their service to the Hospitality Center as board members** over the past 3 and 6 years, respectively. Tim was a long-time member of the Personnel Committee of the board, vetting new board members and supporting Hospitality Center staff. Jim served as Board President for the past two years, bringing us through the purchase of the second half of our St. Paul building, rental of space in Minneapolis, and transitioning to a new Executive Director. We will miss them as board members, but they have left the ministry in a great place!



THE HOSPITALITY CENTER FOR CHINESE

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NEWSLETTER | SUMMER 2022

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

SAVE THE DATE

FRIENDRAISER 2023
THURSDAY, APRIL 20TH




FRIENDRAISER UPDATE

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

We had an incredible Friendraiser this year on May 14th. Many who have volunteered and donated over the years came together to celebrate the victories and look forward to what's ahead. Students shared the impact the Hospitality Center has had on them. You can read their highlights below.

BRIAN FROM SOUTH KOREA

"I was in Friendship Match with Kevin since last year and regularly had conversations. Now he is my mentor whom I can contact whenever I have any issues or doubt in any area. A few weeks ago, I had a hard time managing conflict during a team project and asked for some advice

from Kevin. From his extensive work experience in 3M, he gave me a valuable lesson on how to deal with such a problem."

RYUTO FROM OSAKA, JAPAN

"Since the pandemic began, everything went online, and we weren't able to meet anyone, literally anyone. Hospitality Center provided the students opportunities to get connected with others through outdoor events and so on. The first friendship meal that I joined was the first public event since the pandemic started. You can tell how appreciative I was. Hospitality Center really helped and supported us—international students like me."

JERRIN FROM PUNE, INDIA

"I met a volunteer, Dana during a hike to the Interstate Park and also her husband Alex, who is a pastor at one of the partner churches, River of Hope. They invited me to their church, and I started going there.

Coming from a Catholic background, it was not very uncommon for me to visit churches. But, going there really made me understand God more. The conversations I had with Alex helped me grow in my faith. I think that was a very fulfilling experience for me. In order to give back, I try and help out the church with their tech stuff, and I also volunteer and help out the Hospitality Center as much as I can."