

“Internship” – the very word conjures up images of nervous college students heading off to their first “real” job experience, eager to please, not sure what to expect.

That “heading off” is what happens to new missionaries as they prepare to leave for the field. They are ready to experience their first “real” missions ministry experience, they desire to have it go well, but they have no idea what to expect.

That’s what we went through coming to Central America – unknowns, a little bit of fear, hopes, dreams, etc. But we came here with a very important piece – what we at OC call “Internship.” These five weeks in the summer months provide all future OC missionaries with tools and information that are invaluable to missionaries as they prepare to leave, as they arrive in a new country/area of ministry, and as they adapt to a different life (and much after!).



Luis and Dora Gilbert

You probably know by now that one of the things our team does here in Central America is promote missions – for Latin Americans to be missionaries. As a team, we are involved in encouraging churches to promote missions, helping to train, and helping to see people sent.

But did you know that one of the greatest reasons for early return (called missionary attrition) of Latin Americans from the field relates to inadequate pre-field training? Other reasons, as stated in a survey called “ReMAP” (Reducing Missionary Attrition Project), are:

- missionary children’s adjustment, education, health, or behavior
- relationship problems with field leaders and missionaries
- personal problems – self-esteem, stress, expectations, etc.
- poor adaptation to culture and living conditions
- marriage or family conflict, and
- immature spiritual life, unmet spiritual needs, among others (Taken from a book entitled, *Too Valuable to Lose*, edited by William D. Taylor; World Evangelical Fellowship, 1997.)

Did you know that many of these things can be avoided? We are committed to seeing Latin American missionaries around the world – but we want to see them well prepared, well supported, and well cared for when they are on the field.



Lopez family

This is one of the reasons that our WHOLE team will be involved with the first-ever Spanish-speaking OC Internship here in Guatemala October 29 till November 19.

We’re so excited that we’re going to have 17 adults and 16 children involved in an intensive orientation program. Some of the subjects we will address will be working in teams, spiritual life, the family in missions, cross-cultural adaptation, etc. We have experts in some of these areas coming in from other countries to help provide our missionaries with the very best pre-field training possible.



Arturo and Angie Jimenez

While some of our missionaries-in-training will be from Guatemala, we've decided to create as much of a retreat atmosphere as possible, so as to maximize learning without the distractions of life. Each of the missionary interns will be asked to abandon all other responsibilities during the Internship time. And, as a special time for real work on teamwork issues, we'll be taking the whole crew up to a retreat center in Panajachel (about two hours from Guatemala City), where we will work on team-building and other dynamics for a week.

When we return, we'll continue with a daily schedule for both adults and children, that will help us all better prepare to serve the Lord cross-culturally.

We'll have missionaries from many places with us at Internship: Colombia, Costa Rica, and Guatemala, representing various ministries. Plus, each one of us, the North American missionaries, will be part of the process. It's going to be an exciting time!

One of our desires as a team is to keep Internship as economically feasible as possible. To do such a big training event obviously requires money. We're charging each of our missionary families a minimum amount (\$500 per couple) to cover some of their expenses. But we are committed as a team to raise the difference. Funds for Internship will cover lodging and food expenses, training materials, and the children's program. We will need to find a location to hold all of our meetings in Guatemala City, as our office space is not adequate to hold so many adults plus the children's program. Please pray with us for God's provision for that space, and for the needed funds to cover that cost.



Jaime and Areli Rodriguez

Would you consider giving a special gift this month, above and beyond your normal gift, to help us cover the cost of Internship for our Latin American missionary teammates? With your gifts, we can help make this Internship possible for everyone. Your gifts will help to train missionaries to be better equipped for their cross-cultural ministries, to stay longer on the fields, and to better impact the world with the gospel. Thanks for praying about it. If you'd like to respond, please send in the enclosed card.

Thank you for praying with us for Internship. Please pray for each one to be involved:

- Hector and Patty Pivaral and their three children
- Jaime and Dora Lopez and their three children
- Willy and Amarillis Peralta and their four children
- Betty Mérida
- Arturo and Angie Jimenez
- Jaime and Areli Rodriguez
- Luis and Dora Gilbert and their three children
- Jesus and Mireya Londoño and their two daughters
- Francisco and Shirley Gross and their three children
- Julio and Graciela Bautista and their baby
- And all of us, the OC Central American Regional Team.

