

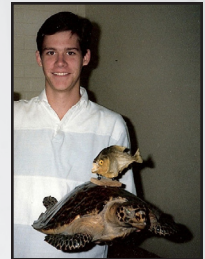


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The Philippines ... twenty-two years later

I remember standing in line at freshman orientation at Biola University in 1987. It was the day that I met my friend John Van Meter, OC missionary kid from the Philippines. We became fast friends, even though we had come from vastly different places.

I graduated from Chico High School in Northern California, John graduated from Faith Academy in Manila. John grew up speaking a few different languages, I thought learning Spanish was a stretch. Helping John unpack, I realized something was very different about where he had come from. Not many freshmen at Biola had a stuffed piranha and sea turtle in their luggage!



Manila skyline taken from Faith Academy.

That year John and I hoped to travel together to the Philippines, but it didn't work out. In May 2009, after a 22-year delay, I flew to Manila.

Manila was an amazing historical moment for our mission and the progress of the nations being reached with the good news of Jesus. In a time when OC is growing exponentially around the world, our leadership and structure needed change.

Today, 45 percent of OC's missionaries are not of U.S. origin. Brazil, Philippines, Colombia, and India (to name a few) are sending out the new leaders of the harvest. The U.S. Mobilization Center is now one of many.

Therefore, in Manila, we determined to move from a U.S.-centric organization to a circle of missions-sending bases. With multiple sending countries, OC has a new face. Canada plans to start a team in Hungary, Brazil is opening a team in Portugal, and Colombia sent a missionary to Peru.

I am not the only Personnel Director in OC anymore. I have colleagues in Canada, Brazil, and the Philippines. As the church grows around the world, it will fulfill the Great Commission, and our desire is to partner with all nations in the advancement of the gospel.

Many of you know that Nell and I have spent most of our years in missions encouraging and training missionaries from Latin America and the U.S. We rejoice as we witness part of how God is doing this in and through OC.



OC mission leaders meeting in Manila.

Twenty-two years ago I wanted to travel to the Philippines; who knew that I someday would, and in such a time as this?

From the President...

WINDOW ON OC'S WORLD

Every month I have the joy of reading reports from our field teams about the impact of OC's worldwide ministry. This month I thought I would share with you some highlights from recent reports.



*Greg Gripenotrog
OC President*

ARGENTINA – EQUIPPING A NEW GENERATION OF YOUTH LEADERS

What does it take to build from scratch a seminary training program for youth ministry leaders? For the past year, that's exactly what Tim and Annette Gulick have been learning firsthand. The institute for youth leaders they have been asked to establish now has a director, a location, professors, a Web site, and online registration. The institute, which will be training youth workers from throughout all of Latin America, is scheduled to be launched later this summer in Buenos Aires.

FORMER SOVIET UNION – USING CAMPING TO REACH YOUTH FOR CHRIST

For over 10 years now, Bob and Sharon Hiltz have been training Christian camp leaders throughout the former Soviet Union. Early on, their emphasis was on evangelism and basic camp leadership training. But as the leaders have matured over the years, Bob and Sharon now focus more on mentoring, counseling, and encouraging these leaders as their ministries continue to develop. Bob and Sharon's ministry now covers nine countries, representing several hundred Christian camps which each year reach tens of thousands of youth with the gospel. Last month they begin conducting training seminars in Mongolia.

PHILIPPINES – ASSISTING DENOMINATIONS IN HEALTHY GROWTH

For several years now, Dave White has been offering seminars in Natural Church Development for local churches. This involves teaching church leaders about the eight qualities that growing churches have, based on worldwide research data, and how to test their level of success in each of these areas. Recently, a large denomination in the country got so excited about this that they decided to implement it in each of their 1,700 churches throughout the country! As of now, 14 different Philippines denominations have adopted the Natural Church Development plan for their churches.

URUGUAY – PREPARING THE CHURCH FOR A SPIRITUAL HARVEST

Uruguay is known as the most secular country in Latin America—a fact its people are proud of. But gradually God is preparing a spiritual harvest in Uruguay. Edwin Martinez has been privileged to help churches in this country prepare for this harvest by training more than 7,000 believers in how to share their faith with their friends and neighbors. The opportunity to put this training to good use came earlier this year in connection with a Franklin Graham festival that saw several thousand people come to Christ.

These are just a few examples of the many kinds of diverse ministries that our OC missionaries are carrying out in more than 90 countries of the world. Thank you for your partnership with OC which is helping to make possible these strategic ministries.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Gripenotrog".

Did You Know?
Uruguay is known
as the most
secular country
in Latin America.

Our Vision
Healthy
churches
working
together to
disciple all
nations.



OC *One Challenge.
Reaching the world together.*

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