

# 2022-2023 Yearbook



**•IVEP**  
International Volunteer Exchange Program

**•SALT•**  
Serving And Learning Together

**•YAMEN!**  
Young Anabaptist Mennonite Exchange Network

**“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” – Lao Tzu**

This year of service with IVER, SALT or YAMEN began with taking a single step as you came prepared to share your talents, your enthusiasm, your desire to learn and your desire to serve. That very difficult first step became the beginning of a journey that has taken you miles outside of your comfort zone, or minimally outside of your familiar, with a variety of new “fellow journeyers” along the way. I can guarantee, this journey has not taken you on a linear, flat path.

Rather, it’s been a path with many ups and downs, as you sought to forge new friendships, overcome language barriers, learn new cultural traditions and deal with loneliness in relation to being away from your familiar. Along the way you were making new discoveries about yourself, experiencing grace and extending grace, even seeing your faith unfolding in a new and different way. This journey may even, at times, have taken you in a complete circle where you feel that you have ended up right back where you started with more questions to ponder than answers.

This, indeed, is all part of the “journeying” experience. There is no one step that defines the journey, but it is a cumulative experience (with all the joys and challenges of the path) that has stretched and changed you and will continue to do so as you travel onward.



In reading through this yearbook of “snapshot” moments, may you be encouraged by one another’s experiences, memories, insights and questions. However, even more, may this be a springboard to walk the next thousand or hundred thousand miles, seeking to put into practice things you have learned. May you continue to ask questions. May you seek new understandings, and most of all seek to embody your faith in meaningful and lifegiving ways, always extending Christ’s kindness and grace toward others, and toward yourself, on the journey.

*Sophie Tiessen-Eigbike*

*What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.  
– Micah 6:8 NIV*



# GLOBAL SERVICE LEARNING

## MCC Global Service Learning Department Staff



**Andrea Geiser Leaman** –  
IVEP and YAMEN Coordinator  
Interim Global Service Learning  
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**Global Service Learning (GSL) Department's purpose and mission is to develop and resource short-term, introductory service-learning opportunities within MCC with the aim of facilitating increased understanding and relationships among communities worldwide. Current programs include: SALT, IVEP, YAMEN, Seed and Seek. GSL also resources Work and Learn Teams and Learning Tours, SOOP (Canada), Summerbridge and Summer Service.**



# SALT participants



SALT orientation in Akron, Pennsylvania

Name .....	Pages
Isaac Alderfer.....	31, 32, 44, 47, 48
Elaine Brandenburg .....	31, 32, 44, 48, 49
Ezra Enns.....	31, 33, 43, 46, 49
Naomi Gertz.....	31, 34, 43, 47, 48
Sabrina Gilmore.....	31, 35, 44, 48
Katie Janzen.....	31, 36, 45, 47, 49
Jeremiah McCleary.....	31, 36, 43, 46, 48
Declan Moulden .....	31, 37, 43, 47, 49

Name .....	Pages
Ariana Perez Diener.....	31, 38, 43, 46, 49
Gillian Scott.....	31, 38, 45, 47, 49
Katrina Shenk .....	31, 39, 44, 46, 48
Jenna Stoneroad.....	31, 39, 44, 47
Evan Strong .....	31, 40, 43, 46, 49
Rebecca Yoo .....	31, 41, 44, 48
Beatrice Zorrilla.....	31, 42, 43, 46, 48

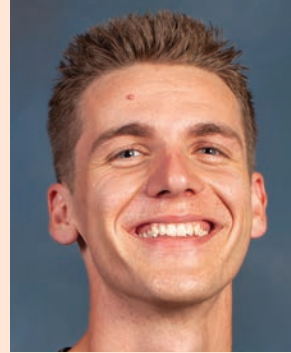
# SALT



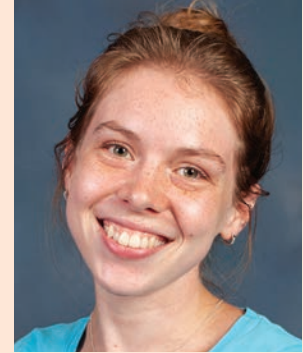
**Isaac Alderfer**



**Elaine Brandenburg**



**Ezra Enns**



**Naomi Gertz**



**Sabrina Gilmore**



**Katie Janzen**



**Jeremiah McCleary**



**Declan Moulden**



**Ariana Perez Diener**



**Gillian Scott**



**Katrina Shenk**



**Jenna Stoneroad**



**Evan Strong**



**Rebecca Yoo**



**Beatrice Zorrilla**



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**Isaac Alderfer** (U.S.)

Climate Change Resilience Assistant,  
Organization to Develop Our Villages (ODOV)  
Mesang, Cambodia



**First Impression or Differences:**

The way people interact with their neighbors and community in Cambodia is very different from my home community. Cambodia is not a planning culture, and most people don't officially plan anything more than a few days, hours or minutes ahead of time.

When I go to visit neighbors and relatives with my host family, we just show up unannounced and receive a royal welcome. Not only is this acceptable but expected. I feel comfortable here walking into someone's house who I don't know and joining them in whatever chore they are working on. Cambodians have a strong sense of communal well-being that transcends family ties, reflected in the way people address each other with honorifics such as brother, sister, uncle, aunt, etc., regardless of whether they are related or not.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** I was attending a wedding with my host family, and after eating dinner I was "encouraged" to join in the dancing. I was really struggling to figure out the rhythm of a particular song and feeling pretty awkward as I bumbled around the dance floor along with a fraction of the 1,000 or so dinner attendees. As the lone foreigner in this setting, I was grabbed and ushered up on stage right beside the man singing, to dance in view of the whole tent. I finished out that song, making eye contact with the surprised expressions of a few familiar faces in the crowd below. I got marginally better at finding the elusive rhythm over the next few minutes, and then returned to the dance floor with everyone else when the song ended.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** The organization I work with here specializes in developing programs to support some of the most vulnerable people in the local community. These are people with significant barriers to success and decent livelihood and who often struggle with a number of big problems like poverty, food insecurity, migration of family members and domestic abuse, among others. The work of this organization to empower these same people to support themselves and become among the most resilient and stable families in the community over just a few years has been powerful to witness.

**Faith Journey:** I really appreciated living with a Buddhist family and in a setting where most people were not Christians. One aspect of living in this setting where I was one of the only foreigners, English-speakers, Christians, etc., and where I did not have many

structured things to keep me busy, is that I had to become more comfortable with my own thoughts. This was often challenging, but also gave me the opportunity to get to know myself better.

**New Perspectives:** As an environmentalist, it has been important for me to see such a different relationship between people and the environment here in Cambodia. So many people in Cambodia live in such proximity to and depend intimately on the environment to meet their daily needs. It was hard for me to grasp the realities of this type of human-environment relationship through my education, but being witness to that here for the past year has been important for my personal understanding of that relationship.

**Skill Development:** Being adaptable has not been a strong point for me my whole life, but living in a setting where I often am not aware of what to expect and having to go along with whatever is happening has helped me become more adaptable, flexible, patient and understanding. I have also improved my communication skills through learning to communicate primarily in another language that I have only a basic grasp of, body motions, facial expressions and other nonverbal cues. Self-care has been another important area for me this year. My mental health took a steep dive during my SALT assignment, and I was forced to really do some work to figure out how to keep myself on track and mentally healthy.

**Future Plans:** The first thing I'm doing when I get home is helping my mom make a big, greasy, cheesy casserole. After that is finished, then I'll work on the future plans portion. Two of my biggest learnings from my work experience this past year are that I love taking photos, and I love working in the field. Those are both things I was interested in before I did SALT, but this experience confirmed those suspicions by giving me real experience in both areas.

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**Elaine Brandenburg** (U.S.)

Mental Health Activities Coordinator, KOSHISH  
Lalitpur, Nepal



**First Impression or Differences:**

The first thing I noticed about Nepal was all the street dogs and street noises. On every street in Nepal there are around three to five wild street dogs. During my first few months, I was terrified of them but after a while, they have become like familiar friends to me. I can tell what street I'm on when I see certain dogs and most of them are just sleepy in the sunshine during the day. The sounds of Nepal are also unique – from different bus horns to the sounds of street vendors

yelling to sell vegetables to the sounds of bells at dusk from Hindu worship, there are so many unique sounds. Overall, all these sounds come together to form such a beautiful place that I have grown to love.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** SALTer Evan Strong and I took time off in October to go trekking near the Himalayas during a season where there shouldn't have been rain. However, the rains came early and suddenly we were trekking in pouring rain all day, every day. What we didn't know, however, was that when it rains in the jungles in Nepal, leeches come out of the ground. After a two-day trek, I had been bitten by 50 leeches that had attached themselves to my skin while we were trekking. The horror of pulling leeches off my skin while watching others crawl from the ground up my boots is a memory I'll never forget!

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** While working with MCC in Nepal, I have gotten to interact with numerous international nongovernment organizations (INGOs) and nongovernment organizations (NGOs). There are hundreds of INGOs/NGOs in Nepal, and I've witnessed both positive and negative models related to power dynamics, white savior syndrome and whether or not local populations are involved in development work. Overall, I think something I've come to learn and appreciate the most about MCC's work is its emphasis on doing work in a community, alongside a community. This includes empowering and employing mostly local Nepalis as well as giving space for Nepali NGOs to do direct work and planning.

**Faith Journey:** My faith has grown a lot during this year of service, and I've seen the Lord at work in so many different situations. If there's one thing I can say about the Lord, it is that He is faithful. In every change throughout this year, He has been with me, and He has blessed me. From giving me an incredible host family to bringing me into a strong church community and blessing me with new friendships, there hasn't been a day where I haven't experienced His blessings. I think sometimes I am too quick to think about what I do not have but this year has taught me to be thankful and to praise God for all that He's given me, especially in this new place.

**New Perspectives:** Developing new perspectives is both beautiful and challenging. Witnessing the Christian community in Nepal has been a privilege, and it has also challenged my perspective on what it means to be a Christian in the U.S. Coming from a country where Christianity is cultural and popular and moving to a country where Christians are marginalized has shown me what it truly means to be a follower of Christ, where the luxury of religious freedom and cultural acceptance doesn't exist. I hope to use what I've learned in my time here from the Nepali Christian church to encourage and challenge my church back home.

**Skill Development:** The list of skills I have learned and strengthened is quite long. Primarily, I would say this year has developed my confidence in my ability to work and live completely independently, while navigating a new country and new culture. My understanding of diversity and the importance of intercultural skills has grown, and it's influenced how I will travel in the future. Professionally, I have grown in my understanding of government systems as well as the nonprofit world, including marketing and donor relations. Overall, I would say the skills I have developed have prepared and inspired me to pursue international social work again in the future.

**Future Plans:** A month after returning from Nepal I will be pursuing my master's degree in social work at the Baltimore campus of the University of Maryland. I also plan to connect to local Nepali populations nearby and work toward building bridges between the immigrant Nepali population and police, specifically in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, where I interned at the District Attorney's Office.

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**Ezra Enns** *(Canada)*

Refugee Project Assistant, Mennonite Brethren Church Cali/Palmira, Colombia



**First Impression or Differences:**

One of the first things that struck me was the cultural diversity of Colombia. I had never known about all the regional differences in the way people talk, the different foods and how they're made or the music that they listen to. In Colombia, traveling for a couple of hours can land you in a completely different cultural landscape, unlike in the Canadian prairies. It was exciting to deepen my understanding of Colombia, which was superficial at best before the program.

The church environment of my host situation was also very different from all the churches I've been to in Canada. In my church in Cali, the polite thing to do before the service begins is to make sure you greet everyone you possibly can. People usually stay after the service to continue socializing as well, and since I lived with the pastor, I was always one of the last to leave. Those aspects of church gave me interesting perspective shifts on ways that church can be done.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** A couple of months into my placement, while getting into a car, I closed the door behind me with what I thought was a normal amount of force. The other passengers laughed and joked about whether the door was shut. I was confused, so they

graciously explained to a previously oblivious Canadian the very careful way that Colombians close doors (and put away plates). The acceptable noise threshold you can reach before people start to think you're angry is much lower in Colombia than it is in Canada. Several situations in the previous months suddenly made sense, and I started noticing it everywhere. Following this convention sometimes mean having to shut the car door up to three times for it to actually close, sometimes reaching a humorous level, but I love the consideration it shows.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** International-level problems express themselves in small communities. While working with the denomination's migrant project, I spoke with dozens of people, some of whom had had great success with their microenterprise projects, and some of whom had not, and the difference between them sometimes seemed arbitrary. It caused me to think about how delicate and changeable a community can be. I continue to be wary of accidentally causing harm, but I am now aware of the surprising transformations that can come out of simply beginning somewhere in a local context.

**Faith Journey:** One of the struggles that I had in my placement was how to express my faith process to people without alienating myself from them. I often thought about involvement in the church, but I am still unsure as to my beliefs about what the church is to me. Living in the church building, with pastors as my host family, unavoidably caused me to put pressure on myself to perform in the Christian environment. It was difficult to find spiritual nourishment that would also pull me closer to my immediate community. Still, I always looked forward to taking notes on the many thoughts that arose in response to the service.

**New Perspectives:** It was hard for me to talk to people in Colombia about Canada, because Canada has deep-rooted problems, contrary to its international reputation. Many people have, when talking to me about a social problem in Colombia like homelessness, asked me casually if such and such a problem doesn't exist in Canada. While I dislike shattering the idyllic version of Canada they have in mind, I also feel deeply convicted to tell them about the injustices that Canada has committed in its past and present. On the other hand, Colombia has a lot of injustices to address as well, and its history is perhaps even more convoluted than Canada's. I'm learning not to compare the two countries lightly.

**Skill Development:** Thanks to my experiences teaching in the school support program, I feel much more secure in my decision to focus on teaching later-year students. I spent time teaching children from kindergarten to middle school age, and I found a very natural dynamic with the older students. On a personal level, I have grown significantly in my social skills. I have a newfound appreciation for simple conversations and the act of

expressing care for each other, regardless of the actual words used. I now have more practice changing plans spontaneously and contacting people directly with calls and voice messages.

**Future Plans:** I have applied for a number of university programs to continue my education in language studies, pedagogy, and interpretation and translation. I plan to continue exploring the intersection of those fields of study, as well as possible integrations of my varied passions including food justice and fine arts.

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**Naomi Gertz** (U.S.)

Executive Assistant, Nasijona, in Nazareth, and Teacher and Librarian Assistant, Rawdat El-Zuhr, East Jerusalem Palestine and Israel



**First Impression or Differences:**

As I switched SALT assignments halfway through my term, I was blessed with the opportunity to live in two different cities with two different host families. I began in Nazareth, Israel, and in February, I moved to Occupied Palestine in East Jerusalem. While the women

in my two host families are polar opposites in their personalities, they share one thing in common which I have had to adjust to – caring about when I come home and caring that I eat the right food. As someone in my early twenties, it has been an adjustment letting go of my newly found independence and accepting the extra care from people I only just met. But it has also been a blessing, and I can't ignore the part of me that loves having someone to look out for me, even as an adult.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** On my first day at the school, I found myself in the courtyard during recess as all the students were leaving the building for their break. Before I could process what was happening, I was surrounded by a crowd of curious children who launched question after question at me, desperate to understand why this foreigner was in their midst. My naturally shy self was at the mercy of my young fans, and I felt like a newly minted celebrity, overwhelmed by the attention. But I answered what I could while laughing and tried to keep the younger kids from being squashed in the excitement. To this day, I still receive my share of hugs in the hallways and am blessed by their unconditional love.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** Peacemaking to me has looked like reaching out to the people around me and finding ways to connect. It has meant finding similarities between us and celebrating our differences, laughing over miscommunications and bonding over shared joy or pain. Peacemaking has everything to do



with recognizing each other's humanity and coming to care about people on a personal level. Once you can picture a face, their features clear and distinct in the window of your mind, you are personally invested in that person's life, and subsequently in their longing for peace in a land torn by occupation.

**Faith Journey:** My journey in strengthening my faith had a rough start when I discovered that there were no English-speaking churches in Nazareth. Disconnected and spiritually starved, I subconsciously began looking for Jesus in places other than church – Palestine's breathtaking nature. I found a little walking path that wound its way above a valley, and as I watched the sun sink below the hills every evening, I felt assured that Jesus was hugging me and wishing me goodnight, traces of His glory among the violet streaks in the sky. Allowing myself to feel Jesus in unexpected places challenged me to find other ways of connecting with Him and strengthened my personal relationship with Him. It also paved the way for returning to Jerusalem and re-joining my previous church and its new and flourishing community.

**New Perspectives:** I see myself as a capable person now, able to take the hardest situations and find a way through – even if it's while leaning on the shoulder of a friend. This year demonstrated just how important it is to have a strong community and people you can rely on, and I've been encouraged by how many people have reached out to me while I was struggling. I think we're all more capable than we think we are, but it is still comforting to know that someone cares about you and is willing to lend that extra hand if you need it.

**Skill Development:** Some skills that I've been working on are communication, flexibility and self-awareness/self-care, all of which I've found crucial while living and serving overseas. Relationships can be strained when there is a lack of communication; little can be accomplished when you refuse to be flexible; and your mental sanity will deteriorate if you fail to recognize and acknowledge when you need to step back and breathe. We can best serve others once we have cared for our own needs, whether that means getting adequate sleep, being intentional about spending time outside or reaching out to a counselor *before* reaching your breaking point. And in an unfamiliar, challenging context like living alone in a foreign country, self-care has been essential in keeping me afloat.

**Future Plans:** I plan to complete my bachelor's degree upon returning to the U.S., and while I have yet to decide on my major, I'm interested in peace and justice studies and plan to incorporate it into my work. Work and studies aside, I have been deeply touched by how hospitable Palestinians have been to me, and I hope to reflect that generosity to the people around me, inviting more people over for meals, reaching out often and focusing on developing our relationships.

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**Sabrina Gilmore** (U.S.)

Communication and Partnership Officer,  
Women Peace Makers  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia



**First Impression or Differences:** In the U.S., we have a saying that, "Time is money," and therefore in our work culture we try to be as efficient as possible. They do not have that same idea here and make sure they take time to cover everything possible in meetings.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** My little sister in my host family is the funniest person. When my dad was visiting us for a week, the only thing she could say to him was, "You're so tall." Then tonight after taking some medicine, she challenged me to a thumb war, lost and then said, "Oh the medicine made me too strong so I lost."

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** Human to human interactions are the key to creating solidarity and global peace. Only through such interactions can we learn about power dynamics and privilege between ourselves and others.

**Faith Journey:** My faith has grown more in these past eight months than it had in the other 21 years of my life. Raising money to pay for this experience was very difficult for me, but God showed up to fill my weakness. Being alone so much in a foreign country has been very challenging, but God has never left my side even for a second.

**New Perspectives:** I feel like a very different person from who I was in the U.S. I can better appreciate the life that I lived there while also being envious of the wonderful life that people here get to live.

**Skill Development:** I have learned so much so far. How to write reports and proposals, intercultural communication, gender analysis and even how to make jokes in two languages.

**Future Plans:** My current plan, God willing, is to stay with the organization I am working with for a few more years and continue to learn about intersectional peacebuilding.

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**Katie Janzen** *(Canada)*

Capacity Building and Peace Libraries Assistant,  
Transformational Leadership Centre (TLC)  
Kigali, Rwanda



**First Impression or Differences:** One of the biggest differences which I first noticed was how direct people are in Rwanda. If they have a question they want to ask, they will ask it no matter how personal it is. The same goes for pointing out errors and correcting other people. This was an adjustment for me,

and I had to learn how to set aside my Canadian and indirect communication style.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** My host family had a rat problem in our attic. The family's solution was to borrow the neighbor's cat and put it in our ceiling for a full week. I would wake up hearing the cat meowing wanting to come out. This was a recurring situation that whenever the rats came back, the neighbor would arrive with their cat in a box which we would release in the ceiling. I felt badly for the cat, but he did a great job at (temporarily) solving our problem.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** I have learned how many people and how much time it takes to have a peacebuilding organization that can help its community. The small partner organization I was working with had people in different cities and countries all working together to make sure the projects could be impactful. This organization showed me that working for peace means that you need to work together with others to help your community.

**Faith Journey:** People in Rwanda love to pray and will go to church or friend's homes frequently to pray together for hours. This was a new experience for me, especially since the prayers were in Kinyarwanda. The church services are also very long compared to what I am used to. Services can be three to four hours long, which was a challenge for me considering that I was unable to understand much of what was being said. I was able to learn and observe how the Rwandan culture views faith, even if I was unable to understand their words.

**New Perspectives:** This experience has opened my eyes to an international perception of Canada. Everyone was so interested in what my life was like back in Canada, and I quickly learned about the common misconceptions of Canada that they learned from the media. I realized that having the chance to live in a different culture and learn from people there firsthand is a privilege that not everyone gets in their lifetime.

**Skill Development:** This experience has strengthened my communication skills. When living and working with a different culture, there are inevitably conflicts and miscommunications. Having to navigate these challenges improved my communication and taught me more about Rwandan communication methods and expectations.

**Future Plans:** I will go back home and finish my last year of my undergraduate degree in peace and conflict studies. The experiences and lessons that I have learned in the past year will give me new insights and a new perspective as I finish my degree. After graduation, I hope to either become a teacher or work for a community building organization.

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**Jeremiah McCleary** *(Canada)*

Intellectual Disabilities Caregiver,  
Al-Malath Charitable Society  
Beit Sahour, Palestine



**First Impression or Differences:**

People here depend on each other so much; they really embrace each other's company and put so much emphasis on family. At home you're expected to move out sometime shortly after 19 (after you're in your 20s people start to ask questions), and there's so much societal pressure on independence and making it yourself. Here you're super weird if you move out in your 20s, unless you're married or going to school overseas. People get together and have huge family meals here like weekly, and they're very involved in each other's lives, which exists in stark contrast to the culture I grew up in.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** When I first started learning the language I confused the term "deer ballack" (be careful) with "oos koot" (shut up). And I take care of people with disabilities, so I was always telling the people I support to "oos koot," or to shut up, especially after they tripped or something. I probably came across as so mean and was horrified when I found out.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** It's been exceptionally powerful to put names and faces to the stories you hear about from Palestine, and I've developed a real appetite for spreading the word about the injustices I've been witnessing. I've also been happy to discover the true blessing of living somewhere that aligns with my values, along with doing meaningful work. Though there are day-to-day difficulties with living in Palestine that I wouldn't experience if I were living in Israel, every day I'm grateful to be living where the need is.

**Faith Journey:** The church I've been attending with my host parents is Arabic speaking, and my Arabic is not quite up to snuff to catch what the pastor is saying, so I haven't gained too much from that, aside from community-wise. I would say I've felt distanced from my spiritual side; I think living here has honestly increased my skepticism toward religion and faith-based practices, as it's hard to be constantly hearing about all the terrible acts that are routinely carried out here in the name of religion.

**New Perspectives:** Man. I've learned so darn much from the people here. From how tightknit their family units and communities are to how much value they put on hospitality and relationships, and how that's reflected in everyone I meet here. I've been especially impressed with the local kids around here. Back home we try to get local kids involved in jobs and activities and it's challenging, but here, through the tremendous adversity they face, kids seem to be approaching life with an eagerness and a sense of gratitude. It's been so wild to witness the people here, who have struggles I could never fully understand, really attempt to make the most out of what little opportunities they have.

**Skill Development:** I think I've gotten better at the practice of being alone. I've always been scared to be alone, but living here has helped me face that a bit, and it's caused me to appreciate it when it happens. I also think I've improved in the field I've been working in as an intellectual disabilities caregiver; working with different people who have very different approaches than me has taught me things I hadn't previously considered about the job. I've also finally learned how to hold a simple conversation in another language and that feels amazing to have accomplished.

**Future Plans:** Well the first thing I'm going to do is spend some time at my parents' and rest; I think I'll appreciate that. I've also heard a little bit about some Palestinian advocacy I could maybe get involved with back at home, which is something I think I'd absolutely love to be a part of. Jobwise, man . . . I think I want to enter a new field and switch things up. LOL, we'll see what that is.

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**Declan Moulden** *(Canada)*

Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Builder,  
MCC Burkina Faso  
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso



**First Impression or Differences:** I'd heard before coming that Burkina Faso was hot. Still, the heat radiating off the tarmac hit like a punch in the gut. Leaving the airport, Ouagadougou was red and dusty, and plastic waste littered the streets and carpeted the gutters. And I remember being struck by

how city life here seemed like city life anywhere: bustling, grimy and rather alienated.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** Gillian, Johana and I were on a late-afternoon walk during our first week in Ouagadougou when we said, "Bonsoir," to a young shopkeeper lounging with a friend in front of his shop. He called out to us, something that to my then-awful ear for French sounded a bit like "Where are you from?" so I chanced the reply, "We're from Canada and she's from Indonesia." He laughed – I'd guessed right – and, eyes glinting impishly, replied, "That's good, Canadians are all right. But if you were French" – he clacked his fingers together for emphasis – "we'd hit you!" I laughed, though it was a bit unsettling, and I wondered if I would look back on this months from now and see it as a sign of what was to come. Well, exactly one month later, the country experienced its second military coup in eight months. Crucial to the success of the coup were the thousands of civilian supporters who descended on the capital, waving Russian flags and chanting anti-French slogans. I still wonder whether the young shopkeeper was among them.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** I think I now generally seek first to be in relationship with others rather than serve. I've found when serving becomes the end itself, I'm more concerned with serving than the other person. But in relationship, if I'm listening well, opportunities to serve will present themselves. This year has brought up many difficult questions that I struggle to answer. I've grown more skeptical of development, even elements which I'd considered less controversial like education (at least when we take education to mean Western-style schooling). It all seems to encourage a lot of the same anxieties and shame and dislocation that we in the West now spend millions on fixing in our own communities.

**Faith Journey:** I've struggled a bit with seeing the role the church played in colonialism and reading stories by African authors on the subject, questions I still haven't resolved.

**New Perspectives:** My host father, a gregarious talker, tells me about the rich social life growing up in the village – how every morning they would greet each neighbor, how the elderly looked after the children while the adults worked together in the fields, how each evening the women sang songs and told stories while grinding corn or millet to make tô. He laments that the depth of these connections is lost in the city. Church and social visits can't quite make up the difference. Reflecting on my home country, I see this too – so much time spent working, studying, cooking, cleaning and child-rearing alone or, perhaps, with one other person. I've wondered at the connection between this and deaths of despair that are growing at home.



**Skill Development:** I've learned some basics of mapping software and data visualization software. I'm also continuing to explore pedagogy and lesson-planning. And a new morning habit of going for a run around sunrise and then reading outside seems to start the day off right. However, I believe the most significant skill will be in empathizing with those trying to get by in a new culture. I remember early on feeling such deep frustration because, while I didn't think of myself as a slow and rather stupid person, I saw that I was coming across as one with my language struggles. People talking too quickly was frustrating. People who talked slowly but rather patronizingly was even more so (and reinforced the sense that others viewed me as slower than I was). And I can't count the number of times I've had an insight or joke to share and either watched the moment pass in silence or struggled to share it and then gave up halfway through when it was clear my discussion partner wasn't following.

**Future Plans:** I haven't thought much about what I'll do after SALT, to be honest. Considering grad school for 2024. But at the very least, I want to put far more emphasis on my relationships than before.

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**Ariana Perez Diener** (U.S.)  
Agriculture Assistant, Maasai Integrated  
Development Initiatives  
Ngong, Kenya



**First Impression or Differences:** My first impression of my host community is the resilience of the people living here despite the many hardships that they face. I have seen how people are self-reliant on their livelihoods like pastoralism as opposed to being employed like in the U.S. I really have enjoyed the differences in how people worship. People wear their best clothes and beads to worship God. People also are very active while they sing, praising God with their whole being.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** A memorable experience was celebrating my birthday with two of my host siblings who also had birthdays in October. I planned a party, and all of the cousins came to eat food and cut cake together. I learned the tradition of feeding everyone cake starting with the oldest people in the room. It was a lot of fun feeding cake to each other and dancing to music.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** I have learned how climate change affects all aspects of life including peace. Where I live, there is an extreme drought raising prices of food, making people food insecure. This increases crime, and violence is a ready response in people's hands. I have been challenged to try and explain my pacifist

views in the context of a different culture and language. I have seen firsthand how my life in the U.S., with a high carbon footprint, is affecting the peace in other places in the world.

**Faith Journey:** I have had many struggles and difficulties in my faith journey. This past year I have experienced and seen much loss. I am continuing to grapple with how God lives amongst this loss and pain.

**New Perspectives:** Before coming to Kenya, I never fully appreciated how the education system in the U.S. is completely free. I underestimated the significance of an education. Here, parents must pay for all their children's fees, uniforms and books. I take for granted the education that I have received for free.

**Skill Development:** I've learned how to identify people's different footprints when walking on the dirt paths around home. This practice helps me reflect and slow down when I am hurrying to get somewhere. It makes me think about who has come before me and how I am leaving my mark on the path. I have been continuing to try and slow down and be present where I am.

**Future Plans:** I am hoping to go to graduate school to study the ecosystem that I am living in currently: semi-arid grasslands. I want to keep understanding on an ecological level the effects of prolonged drought due to climate change and how humans can keep tending the land in a way that is healthy.

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**Gillian Scott** (Canada)  
Communications Assistant, MCC Burkina Faso  
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso



**First Impression or Differences:** I first noticed that people dressed so colorfully! And that the puddles on the dirt roads were orange! I also loved seeing all the many animals in the city streets: dogs, cats, chickens, goats, horses and donkeys.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** One time I helped my host family take four chickens from being alive to complete dismemberment. Feeling little affinity for chickens, I was surprised to find myself, knife in my hand, absolutely crying my eyes out, weeping even. Life to death just like that. I felt very alive and human in that moment.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** I would say that my thoughts on serving others have changed, as I've met many other NGO workers throughout my year, all with different reasons for wanting to serve. And hopefully we

choose to serve for the right reasons. It's something I'm still thinking about.

**Faith Journey:** Living in a country facing insecurity, I witnessed the local people keeping hope and good courage despite everything. Acknowledging the trouble for what it is, and moments later, laughing with a friend. Living with both suffering and joy in the same breath is something that will remain with me.

**New Perspectives:** I've come to see how adaptable we are as humans. Going from disliking temperatures above 25 degrees Celsius (77 Fahrenheit) to not minding 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) too much, is one example that has shown me just how much we can change if we give ourselves permission to do so.

**Skill Development:** A skill I have picked up is that of napping. Around 12 to 2 p.m. in Burkina is considered resting time. I have fully adopted this practice and am never going back.

**Future Plans:** I'm hoping to keep making videos and interviewing people because it makes them feel special.

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**Katrina Shenk** (U.S.)

Migrant Shelter Support Worker, Migrant House  
Guatemala City, Guatemala



**First Impression or Differences:**

I was surprised to see many U.S. restaurant chains in the city. The many bright colors on houses, buses and clothing caught my attention. I learned to appreciate common phrases that show respect for others: “permiso” when entering someone’s home or car,

“buen provecho” as gratitude before and after a meal, etc.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** During one of my first days serving at a reception center for deported Guatemalans, I saw a man wearing a T-shirt from my home community. Although I do not know this person’s story, his shirt was a physical reminder that communities in the U.S. and Guatemala are closely linked together.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** I am more aware of injustices and power imbalances that permeate our global society. My actions are a small piece of God’s larger work of restoration. As God leads us in this work, I can trust God, even when peace and justice seem slow or unreachable.

**Faith Journey:** The faith of people I met here inspires me. Many people migrating north believe that God is with them on their journeys. I met people who were deported who thank God for preserving their lives and trust that God will help them in their next steps. My host family, church family and colleagues put God first in their conversations (“primero Dios,” “gracias a Dios”), committing their plans to God and thanking God for each day. The questions raised by people in the face of injustices also challenge my faith.

**New Perspectives:** Living in Guatemala helped me see Guatemalans and migrants as my neighbors. When I started serving with Casa del Migrante, I viewed migrants and returnees with a combination of compassion and unfamiliarity. After months of riding public buses, walking in the city, traveling throughout the country, hearing people’s stories and getting to know my neighbors, I see returnees and migrants as my neighbors.

**Skill Development:** As a social worker, I feel more confident offering psychosocial first aid, as I have a deepened understanding of which interventions can support people with their immediate needs and which can do harm. I also improved my ability to communicate clearly and consistently with work supervisors, social supports and community connections to benefit my own well-being and the people we serve. Asking clarifying questions is especially helpful. Other skills include cooking, hand-washing clothes and bartering for transportation and market goods.

**Future Plans:** I am still not sure where I will go or what I will do after SALT. I anticipate serving internationally or at least interculturally in some social work context, likely with migrant/immigrant/refugee populations. The skills, perspectives and relationships I gained this year will shape future work and relationships.

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**Jenna Stonerod** (U.S.)

Project Assistant, San Jose Parish Social Center  
Montero, Bolivia



**First Impression or Differences:**

My first impression of Bolivia was the dust, not just literal but metaphorical. I arrived in South America to a whirlwind of dust that coated my eyes and made it hard to see. The same way that I arrived here with thoughts of

home, making it difficult to see the reality in front of me. Luckily after a few weeks, the dust cleared and so did the metaphorical whirlwind. Once seeing truly for the first time, I came to realize that my country of

assignment is not very different from the U.S. as I came to know the incredible diversity and culture of Bolivia.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** My most memorable experience was traveling during New Year's Eve and spending the night on the beach in Copacabana surrounded by fireworks and the night lit by campfires. That night, as we were traveling and confused on what to do for the night, it began to pour rain and we sheltered with another Bolivian family from Cochabamba. They adopted us as their own, giving us fake money, grapes to eat at midnight, and sparklers. In this moment, I never felt more at home with a group of strangers who opened their hearts to two random girls traveling their country. It was an experience I will never forget because of their kindness.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** At times, I have felt helpless when listening to the stories of the children and women that enter my work. They bring so much joy to my life, yet I can't help but feel angered that I cannot do more to help them. I've learned through this that social justice and the privilege that I have can be used in good ways but it is not through big gestures. To care for and support the communities that require our help is about showing up, being there each day to communicate and listen. I find myself longing to go to work and for my children to ask where I am if absent, and the truth is, in a few short months, I will be absent once again. However, despite this upcoming change, showing up, listening and caring for them has made the biggest impact on them and myself, and I will continue to tell their stories to incite change.

**Faith Journey:** I can adamantly say that the church has made me question my faith during my time. This is not a bad thing, however; I have come to realize what is important in my spiritual journey along with the morals that I hold myself. Many churches' messages focus on the wrongdoing of mankind, that if we do certain things, we are bad people, and while yes, this is true to an extent, it is not the whole story of Christianity. At this time, I'm attempting to figure out what my story is.

**New Perspectives:** The Perfect Life. I have been told I have the perfect life numerous times during my year of service. My life *must* be perfect because I live in the U.S. While they are correct that I have privileges because of where I was born and because of my family, it has been far from the perfect life. I've been reflecting a lot on this recently, on my life going forward and on the attitudes of people outside of the U.S. Despite explaining my hardships in life, I still have the perfect life and that is what is seen. However, I have come to see myself now and let others see me how they will because my life is not perfect, but I have come to accept myself and others, flaws and all.

**Skill Development:** Throughout my time, I have dedicated time for self-care and learned to truly love the person that I am and become more excited each day for my future endeavors, something 13-year-old me would have never thought. I am excited to learn more Spanish and grateful for how far I have come during this time as well as my abilities to teach. I cannot wait to use my newfound skills in the future to educate Spanish-speaking communities on public health protocol.

**Future Plans:** Just one week after returning home, I will be moving across the country to attend medical school with a focus on public health initiatives. This is one of the scariest things that I have ever faced, and I know the difficulties that will come with leaving my family again just seven days after seeing them. I'm hoping my experiences will benefit those I will be working with in school and in my time working at the free clinics for immigrants that my medical school offers.

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**Evan Strong** (U.S.)

Climate Change Researcher, Rural Institution for Community Development (RICOD)  
Lalitpur, Nepal



**First Impression or Differences:** I have witnessed extremely welcoming and open-hearted people. Nepalis have been so patient with me when I am learning to speak their language, eating Nepali food (spicy!) and adjusting to their cultures – their grace is never-ending! The Nepali mindsets towards life/work/family/success are different in indescribable ways, I don't even know where to start . . . I guess you'll have to come to Nepal to see for yourself! I am astounded daily by the traffic, kindness and amount of white rice.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** One day I was walking home from my placement, when I heard loud noises coming from our town's main road. I rushed to see what's going on: a large group of Newari people were processing in the middle of traffic, carrying a local idol through the streets, with others playing traditional instruments and many onlookers. My host dad comes next to me and says this happens once every couple of decades – I was SO surprised to stumble across this tradition by coincidence. Then he turns to tell me that our family is going to a *bhoj* (Newari feast) in five minutes! This *bhoj* was in honor of my host cousin turning two years old – a very big deal in this culture. All the family members gathered on the roof, sitting on woven straw mats, and ate many rounds of absolutely delicious food: beaten rice, spicy buffalo or mushroom



rub, sour bamboo soup, thick delicious lentil soup, fresh carrots and radishes, five different kinds of Nepali chutney, sweet curd and dough balls – the *bhoj* kept going! That evening, and many other times here, I have felt showered with coincidence, spontaneity and cultural richness. I carry this story as a reminder to always keep my eyes, ears and mind open to the whirlwind of culture and experiences around me.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** My research is with farmers in rural areas, asking about climate change, its effects and how people adapt their farms to it. Climate change here has direct, large impacts on these people – witnessing this firsthand compels me to continue to work for climate justice in Nepal and elsewhere. There is no way of turning my back to this work. In our field, we need people from all disciplines to address the multi-dimensional, complex realities of mitigating and adapting to climate change. To me, peacemaking means securing a future where natural devastation is prevented and climate change’s menacing effects don’t fall harshly on anyone, especially socioeconomically disadvantaged people.

**Faith Journey:** The religious/spiritual richness in Nepal is unmatched by anything in the U.S. – Hinduism and Buddhism go hand in hand, with temples, blessed rocks, festivals, clothing, ceremonies and food swirling together into daily practiced lifestyles. I have gained a deep respect for these religions, learning through conversations with coworkers, living in my local community and asking lots of questions. While following my own Christian practices, my interfaith views of religion have blossomed, and I see the crucial importance of honoring different religious practices.

**New Perspectives:** I have watched myself become an adult in the past seven months. Never would I have imagined myself being brave and capable of getting a taxi-motorbike to the Nepal Ministry of Education and then the Immigration Office to apply for my visa, or traveling to nearby villages and talking with farmers all in Nepali to conduct research. I see myself now as a capable, flexible and resilient person, able to navigate the world and be acutely aware of my privilege. I am also more aware of the comforts my home and U.S. life have and have a much harsher view of the luxuriously unnecessary things that we tell ourselves we need. I have unrooted my U.S. normative mind and accepted Nepal’s as a different, equally valid and beautiful way of life.

**Skill Development:** I have become much more comfortable with the unknown: sitting in church understanding almost nothing for hours, being brought on various trips and explorations with very little planning, working under a time crunch with the power out, etc. I have become a better communicator of expectations and planning, and I have learned much more about the balance between engaging deeply with a culture (saying yes) and protecting my well-being (sometimes saying no).

**Future Plans:** Short answer: I don’t know! At this moment, I feel called to continue my climate change path. While my bachelor’s degree provided me with a technical and critical thinking toolbox, I now have a wider lens of where my journey can go – into advocacy, research and social development work as much as into technical positions. I can speak deeply to what I’ve witnessed in Nepal and continue that momentum with my home communities, inspiring others to work for climate justice.

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**Rebecca Yoo** (U.S.)  
WASH Program Assistant, YAPI-SRD  
Kasese, Uganda



**First Impression or Differences:** I was first impressed by the amount of diversity in Uganda. Uganda has 56 tribes, each with its own language and customs. I was surprised with the gentle fun people have about diversity rather than animosity about differences. I also noticed that people easily make jokes and laugh about almost anything and everything.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:** One of my favorite experiences was encountering kids in town who swarmed me because my light skin is locally synonymous with money. In the midst of their requests, I took advantage of the Lukonzo (local language) I’d been learning and asked them what their names were and where they were going. They were amazed that a *Muzungu* (foreigner) could speak Lukonzo and their requests for money transformed into them shouting, “*Wow, this Muzungu speaks Lukonzo!*” Our conversation of “Sir, give me money,” also turned into a mini-English session where I jokingly asked if I look like a man or a woman and made them all laugh.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** I’ve been learning that peacemaking starts with how I treat people, rather than professing a certain philosophy or starting an organized project. The day-to-day practices of peacemaking are rather difficult because it looks like yielding to others, whether it may be physically, emotionally or logically. Even if it can seem like the community may be oppressing others, I need to keep in mind that my perception may not be accurate, while also recognizing that each community must find its own way toward anti-oppression from within.

**Faith Journey:** God has been amazing me with his response to my prayers and reminders of what he desires. Throughout my time in Uganda, my prayers, small and big, have been mysteriously responded to, and I’m in awe, still asking God: “Is that really you?!” I’ve also

been humbled by how God continually reminds me that his desire is simply for me to be with him. Sometimes, I think that “God” would want me to “do the right thing” but whenever I spend time with God, he reminds me that he’s always around me and wants to be more involved in my life.

**New Perspectives:** I’ve grown a greater awareness of my level of privilege as a Korean and as a U.S. citizen. I’ve grown more curious about the history of economic development in South Korea and am appreciative toward my grandparents’ hard work. I’ve also realized what a political and economic privilege it is to be a U.S. citizen and recognize I’m ignorant of its level of power. One interesting thought I’d like to add is the privilege of speaking English from the U.S. I’m able to understand a wealth of written information and enjoy novels simply because I know the politically dominating language from a politically dominating country.

**Skill Development:** I’ve grown my leadership, intercultural communication and project management skills. I’ve led the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) group in planning and implementing projects while training my coworkers in skills such as monitoring and evaluation and grant writing. I’m especially happy about growing my confidence in presenting, which I was able to improve through low-pressure opportunities to speak slowly in front of groups.

**Future Plans:** I hope to pursue a post graduate degree to continue my career in global WASH. My SALT experience will undoubtedly inform my future work, whether it be research, consulting or project implementation. I also hope to integrate my growth by finding opportunities to volunteer with under-represented groups of people, whether it may be mentoring those who are under-represented or visiting with displaced peoples.

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**Beatrice Zorrilla** (U.S.)

Digital Design Assistant,  
IDARE for Sustainable Development  
Amman, Jordan



**First Impression or Differences:**

My first impression of Jordan was the community-focused mindset. Decisions are frequently made in groups. Time is not the focus, and deadlines are not as important as the team members’ collectiveness.

**Memorable or Funny Experience:**

I had the opportunity to travel to Aqaba, a city by the Red Sea, with my team members for a beach clean-up event in partnership with other local and international partners. Being one of the event photographers and bonding with team members was a memorable experience.

**Global Citizenship and Peacemaking:** People need reliable, sustainable income to thrive in life and make lasting impact in the development of a community. The privilege to experiment and explore alternative careers is something I now don’t take for granted.

**Faith Journey:** Having a plethora of time to reflect on my own has aided my shift in world perspective. I now process actions around me through the lens of a deep conviction of peace.

**New Perspectives:** Living in Amman has helped me let go of my western productivity mindset.

**Skill Development:** I have learned how to live in the moment and focus more on the present and people around me.

**Future Plans:** I plan to continue developing my design skills while studying Arabic and the Palestine and Israel conflict.

## **Arborescent**

My year living and working in Amman has developed and grown my worldview, hope, faith and awareness like a growing tree, slowly growing, daily growing and expanding.

(Beatrice Zorrilla, U.S. to Jordan)

## **Bumbling**

Whether it's language studies, new skills, exploring questions with friends, navigating a different culture or whatever else, the year has involved a lot of experimentation and mistakes. It's been awkward, slow and difficult at times, but ultimately I've learned a lot, not least patience with new experiences.

(Declan Moulden, Canada to Burkina Faso)

## **Growth**

This year has stretched me in ways unimaginable, from introducing me to solo living, to giving me the opportunity to navigate various workplaces and cultural differences. I've traveled on my own, learned how to take the initiative when building relationships and have grown in confidence through navigating a stressful home environment. I know I will return to the U.S. as a very different person – hopefully more capable and confident in my choices.

(Naomi Gertz, U.S. to Palestine and Israel)

## **Kaleidoscopic**

An adventure through a twisting prism. Sometimes delightful, sometimes disorienting, sometimes unexpectedly changing form, but always providing a new perspective.

(Ezra Enns, Canada to Colombia)

## **Inspired**

Seeing how the community I'm a part of handles the horrors of oppression is inspiring every single day. The kindness and hospitality they exhibit throughout their daily lives is something that I find endlessly inspirational and will not soon forget.

(Jeremiah McCleary, Canada to Palestine and Israel)

## **Jam!**

This is Nepali for “Let's go!” – I probably say or hear this 20 times a day, and it reflects both my frequent explorations and internal growth in my Nepali life.

(Evan Strong, U.S. to Nepal)

## **Laughter**

This year for me has been filled with laughter with my host family, my friends and my work colleagues. When I think about my time here, I remember so many times where I have just been laughing and hearing others laughing.

(Ariana Perez Diener, U.S. to Kenya)



## **Love**

Such a basic word but I have found so much love during my time, love for others, for myself, for another language, for another country, for another culture and most importantly love for my life.

(Jenna Stoneroad, U.S. to Bolivia)

## **Matokebeans**

Okay, it's not technically one word or totally English, but I think it's appropriate. We volunteers have brought some comic relief to eating matoke (boiled green bananas) and beans every day, as well as other challenges of living in a new context, by chanting "Matokebeans! Matokebeans!" whenever we want to complain while also laughing at our own complaints.

As I have mentioned before, it's a very Ugandan thing to do!

(Rebecca Yoo, U.S. to Uganda)

## **Real**

I feel fully alive and more aware of everyone around me. This experience has given me a new perspective on reality, so what better word to use, than REAL.

(Sabrina Gilmore, U.S. to Cambodia)

## **Selah**

Every year I choose a new word to focus on in relation to my relationship with God. In this new year, "Selah," a Hebrew word that means to "pause, reflect and exalt," is the perfect word to describe my SALT term. As I take time to pause and reflect on this year, all I want to do is exalt Jesus, who has been so faithful to me in this new season and new place. Praise be to God!

(Elaine Brandenburg, U.S. to Nepal)

## **Transplanting**

As plants sown in seedbeds are transplanted to where they have space to grow, I have been challenged and grown stronger roots by moving to a different community. This process was enabled by loving hands and rich nutrients in the soil here, rather than being a process I could have done on my own.

(Katrina Shenk, U.S. to Guatemala)

## **Unknowns**

In my life outside of my SALT experience, I generally have a pretty good understanding of my surroundings, but for the past year I have had to adapt to the fact that I often did not fully know what was happening, plans for the day (or the hour) or what people were talking about. This experience was an extended practice of adaptability and patience that I could appreciate on the good days, and that sometimes frustrated me on the others.

(Isaac Alderfer, U.S. to Cambodia)

## **Unpredictable**

The culture here is very spontaneous, which meant that every day was a surprise and adventure.

While at times this was frustrating, it also led to some amazing opportunities  
and experiences coming my way.

(Katie Janzen, Canada to Rwanda)

## **Yellow**

A color warm and friendly, just like the climate and people of Burkina Faso, respectively.

However, historically, yellow has not been my favorite color, but one may be surprised  
by the things one comes to love.

(Gillian Scott, Canada to Burkina Faso)



Ariana Perez Diener in Kenya with host uncles (from left) Jackson and Steven Kinayia at an important cultural celebration.



Jeremiah McCleary at his workplace Al-Malath Charitable Society in Beit Sahour, Palestine, with program participants (left to right) Lujane Afifi, Mustafa Afifi, Jeremiah and Marwan Afifi.



Beatrice Zorrilla, serving in Amman, Jordan, learns the art of arc welding.



Katrina Shenk together with the Casa del Migrante team serving at the Air Force Reception Center for Returnees in Guatemala City, Guatemala.



Evan Strong interviews Chandra Bahadur Jimba, a grain farmer from the village of Ikudol, Nepal, about climate change and his perceptions and adaptation methods.



Ezra Enns at the famous Gato del Río, a bronze monument to highlight the importance of caring for the Río Cali in Cali, Colombia.



# SALT



In Palestine, Naomi Gertz, right, joined MCC colleagues Ikhlas Siriani (left) and James Alty (center) for the Bethlehem Marathon.



Gillian Scott takes photos in Parc Bangr Weogo in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, for MCC's annual outing with its partners from across the country.



Isaac Alderfer hangs out with host cousins Sarith Butheara (orange shirt) and Tung Nimole (blue shirt) in a rice field near his home in Mesang, Cambodia.



Jenna Stoneroad celebrates Día de las Comadres with co-workers (from left to right) Maria Luz Masias Figueroa, Vera Crespo Balcazar and Claudia Suarez at Comedor de Niños Etta Turner in Montero, Bolivia.



Katie Janzen reads a story to the students at the Children's Peace Library in Kigali, Rwanda.



Declan Moulden together with some university friends following a friendly soccer match between the University English Club and the Catholic English Club in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.





Elaine Brandenburg pictured with Nepali friends in the village of Lithi, Nepal, where she visited a sister village church during a major Hindu festival.



Rebecca Yoo on her front porch in Kasese, Uganda, with just a fraction of her host family (from left to right Leonardi, Bridget, Rebecca, Rachel, Miyeri and, in front of Rebecca, Brian).



Sabrina Gilmore together with colleagues from Women Peace Makers and other local organizations at the "Close Your Eyes and See" exhibition in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



Isaac Alderfer picks rice in one of his family's rice paddies near his home in Mesang, Cambodia.



Jordan, Palestine and Israel SALTERs Naomi Gertz, Jeremiah McCleary, Beatrice Zorrilla, Iklas Siriani (MCC staff) and Allison Shelley celebrate Christmas in East Jerusalem.



Katrina Shenk learns to make fiambre, a typical Guatemalan dish for All Saints' Day with her host family, Milagro de Jesus Mayorga and Monica Figueroa.



# SALT



Elaine Brandenburg, wearing traditional Newari clothing, pictured with her host parents (left to right) Narayan Khadkka and Sabita Khadkka on Christmas Day at the Chandragiri Shalom Church in Nepal.



Ezra Enns, Juan Pablo Forero Vargas (center, connecting people's coordinator for MCC Colombia) and Uziel Zambrana Hurtado (YAMENER from Bolivia) in Bogotá's el Parque Bolívar during in-country orientation.



Katie Janzen in Rwanda with her friend, Naomi Mugabekazi, and her parents Jeanne and Albert after spending an afternoon cooking together.



Ariana Diener Perez provides direction to a community on collecting food in relation to an MCC emergency food relief project in the village of Nyonyori, Kenya.



SALTers Declan Moulden and Gillian Scott together with YAMENER Johana Christiani (center) during their orientation to MCC Burkina Faso in Ouagadougou.



Evan Strong together with host siblings Sion Deshar (left) and Simeon Deshar (right) visit Boudhanath Stupa, the largest Buddhist stupa in Nepal.





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