



# On the Journey

*"It is a peace program that works, not in a big sweep, but one small ripple at a time, each ripple enlarging with every expanding circle." ~ Doreen Harms*



## Coming up:

IVEP Year-end  
Conference:  
July 11-15, sessions  
July 16, all fly home

## Traveling together

*The International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP) is administered by Mennonite Central Committee in Canada and the U.S. This newsletter sets out to connect hosts, partner agencies and IVEPers in the U.S., creating space for the cross pollination of ideas and a greater sense of community.*

*Articles and new readers are welcome. Please email Helen Yocum at [HelenYocum@mcc.org](mailto:HelenYocum@mcc.org)*

## Staff insights: What will you take home?



It is the end of another IVEP year and the current group is hastily packing its bags. In a phenomenon common to the human condition, there is always more to take home than there was to bring a year ago. As participants pack souvenirs, gifts and memorabilia into their suitcases, they need to make choices regarding size and weight. There is a limit of how much they can take and they must make hard decisions about what needs to stay behind.

The things we carry in our hearts must take the same deliberations. What do we bring to a situation or relationship? What do we share? What do we take away in the end? What parts do we discard as out-of-date ideas or habits and what parts do we take in as new beliefs? Even as the IVEPers are exposed to many different ideas and ways of doing things during their assignments, we also can see a new perspective on life. God shows us glimpses of a time to come when there is "a new heaven and a new earth," (Rev 21:1) where what we thought was good is a mere shadow of the true element. May we all see new ways of doing things, taking the time to sort and evaluate.

*Andrea Geiser, IVEP U.S. Coordinator*

## Participant insights: God's love never fails!

This year has been a blessing for me. I can't imagine how this became a wonderful experience because at the beginning I wasn't sure how everything would work out, but I kept having the thought that faithfulness in Christ never ended useless.

My highlights started before departure, which wasn't a smooth process. My visa application got "pending" that caused my departure to be a month late. My service, being



David accompanying during the Fall Concert with Central Christian School

*"taking the time to sort and evaluate."  
~ Andrea Geiser*

## Who's Who?

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The International  
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surrounded with great people blessed me. Of course everything is different compared to my usual environment—struggling with differences sometimes becomes confusing and stressful, but we know the purpose of being at this program is to learn. Joy, depression, excitement, complications convinced me to be faithful in Jesus Christ in all.

Another highlight made me amazed with God's love. Last February 2013, in Mid-Year Conference I fell down, a face planted on the ice ended with a total of 12 stitches inside and outside near my left eyebrow. I had neither headache nor concussions. I was able to attend the conference next day without any medications.

I believe that joining this program makes me grow more and also improves my faith as a Christian. God's love never fails!

*David Kurniawan Hadiyanto, Indonesia—Central Christian School, Kidron, Ohio*

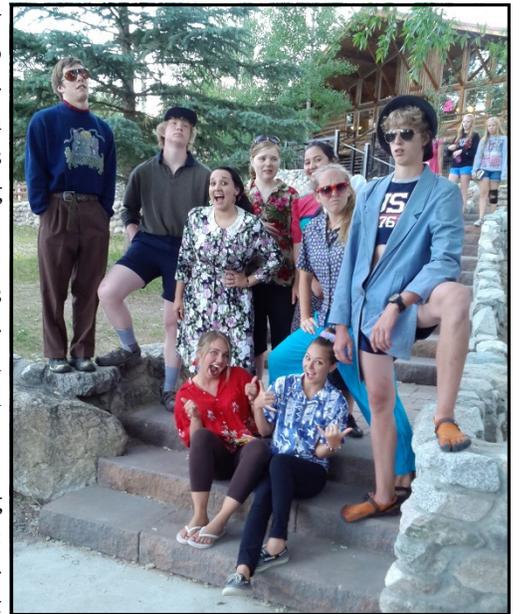
## Partner insights: (Camps are) part of the program

For over ten years Silver Cliff Ranch has been a part of the summer IVEP program and I must say it has been our privilege! The summer of 2013 was no exception. On May 10, we picked up at Colorado Springs airport late at night (11:30 pm) Brenda from Paraguay and Diana from Columbia and our 2013 summer of joy began. The girls were excited on the 2 hour drive back to camp to eat at Sonic Drive-in at midnight.

Brenda and Diana had a great summer, jeeping, swimming in the hot springs pool, river rafting, visiting the Denver zoo, attending a drive-in movie and, in between fun, actually working at camp. Diana was a great help cooking and is taking home some new recipes; however Brenda could not be trusted in the kitchen, because even though she speaks Spanish, she seemed to have trouble spelling even words like "salsa"!!

Both girls have fallen in love with mountains and got hooked on hiking. Brenda was always smiling and giggling. Diana became a reader of fiction—in English of course—and exhausted our library.

In closing, let me share with you the going away dinner Brenda and Diana chose: mashed potatoes, pizza, corn dogs, fruit salad, pies for dessert with Dr. Pepper and root beer.



Brenda and Diana being silly with the camp staff

Thank you for letting us be a part of the program.

*Leta Dahlberg, Director of Food Services, Silver Cliff Ranch, Colorado*

## Host insights: Friends, though more like sisters

When signing up for a year of service with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), young adults Christa Hoover and Clivia Avila Molina never envisioned how their paths might cross and that through this cultural exchange their worldviews would expand along with their understandings of family and peacemaking.

*“Friends, though more like sisters, through the MCC young adult programs SALT and IVEP.”*

*~ Kim Dyer*

*“... that year . . . still inspires me for my life of commitment with God and the others.”*

*~ Maria-Isabel Calderón*

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**IVEP**

Growing up in the Mennonite Church as the daughter of parents who'd spent time in Haiti with MCC, service was always something on the forefront of Christa Hoover's mind. In 2011 Christa accepted a one year assignment through the MCC Serving and Learning Together [SALT] program and found herself serving in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, working for an after school program in a Mennonite Church. Through this assignment she met Clivia, the young woman who'd later live with Christa and her family in Harrisonburg, VA.

Born in the small town of San Esteban, Clivia Avila Molina and her family later moved to San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Third generation Mennonite, Clivia learned about MCC and the International Volunteer Exchange Program [IVEP] through an aunt who'd participated in the program in 1990. For Clivia, deciding to apply to the program was exciting as it would allow her the 'opportunity to interact with other cultures...promoting peace and reconciliation' and eventually end up in Harrisonburg, VA where she would serve as a Spanish language assistant in the Language department at Eastern Mennonite University.

Clivia began her IVEP assignment and the Hoover family became her host family.

“I thought things would be more difficult to me, but my host family makes me feel part of the family...” shares Clivia. “I feel that I'm growing with each experience I have and my skills for connecting with other people are growing also.”

“The broader lessons of living abroad universally help one's ability to relate to foreigners, refugees, and travelers in one's own country. In extreme disorientation, you remember with intense gratitude the ways that people made you comfortable,” comments Christa. She has been able to relate to Clivia as a friend, family member and cultural interpreter.

Friends, though more like sisters, through the MCC young adult programs SALT and IVEP, these two young women have learned much about peacemaking, relationships and cross cultural communication, while coming to realize that family extends far beyond familial lines, across borders and beyond language and culture.

*Condensed from an article written by Kim Dyer, East coast coordinator Christa Hoover and family, Harrisonburg, Virginia, hosted Clivia Avila Molina, Honduras*



From left to right: Christa, her parents and Clivia



Maria-Isabel Calderón

## Alumni insights: IVEP 1984 -1985

The first semester I went to Ohio, I served with IVEP in the Walnut Hills Nursing Home and my host was Ethel Mumaw in Apple Creek. The second semester I served in Kansas in the Et Cetera Shop of Hutchinson and my hosts were Ted and Marge Pankratz (South Hutchinson).

When I participated in the IVEP program, I had just recently committed myself in the Spanish Immigrant Mennonite Church in Brussels (Belgium). I was looking for orientation for my life and wanted to discover what the Lord wanted for me.

During the year I participated in IVEP there were three ele-

## Pray for . . .

*\* the IVEPers as they return home.*

*\* the new IVEPers to get their visas and work permits granted.*

*\* the new host families and partner agencies as they prepare a place for someone new.*

*\* MCC staff as they lead sessions at the year end conference and the upcoming orientations.*

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# IVEP

ments that helped me for my future:

- Meeting people from different cultures has helped me to appreciate the richness of the Mennonite diversity.
- The vision of service of MCC, the people and the churches that I met inspired me to work back in Spain with the most needy people.
- The message of peace of MCC and the Mennonite churches marked me deeply.

All this allowed me to refocus my job in Barcelona (Spain). Before I served with IVEP, I worked as a secretary at an embassy, but after my experience I studied social work and currently I work with a Christian organization who receive people in risk of social exclusion (immigrants, women, young people...)

Thirty years after my IVEP experience, I appreciate greatly all the things I lived during that year which still inspire me for my life of commitment with God and the others. Thanks to MCC and all the people I met during that year.

*Maria-Isabel Calderón, Barcelona*

## IVEPers in action

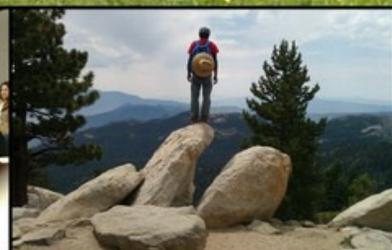


Chanmary made a quilt

Keo cooks dinner



East coast IVEPers are excited



Nalinh plays violin in church

Linet observes a court session

James admires the view