

GKCPTP Chapter Bulletin: July 2013

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President’s Letter

Dear Friends,

It’s a busy time for our chapter. Highlights of current or recent activities and initiatives include:

- * A board retreat was held on May 18 in order to conduct strategic planning and give board members a chance to think carefully about issues and express their ideas and concerns.
- * We adopted of a new set of priorities for the upcoming year, based on discussions during the retreat and other planning sessions.
- * A new class of international military students (IMS) arrived in June.
- * The Great Decisions program was announced.
- * An attractive Kansas City Chiefs football tickets discount program was offered to our members.
- * A docent-guided tour of the Frida Kahlo – Diego Rivera Exhibit at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art was offered to our members.

You will find information on some of the above topics elsewhere in this bulletin. I would like to briefly discuss the major chapter priorities for the year.

Effective committees

Effective committees are a key to the performance of any non-profit. To that end, the board has given the development of effective committees a priority for the upcoming year. We will be asking the members of the chapter at-large to serve on committees. If you have an interest in working on finance, membership, programming, administration or in other areas, please contact me and I will put you

in touch with the right people. We need your help to make the chapter as effective as possible.

Membership

Recruiting new chapter members will always be a priority, not just members who will sponsor, but members who have an interest in international issues at-large. I have tasked myself to use our younger members to help recruit a new generation of members who will be available to take over leadership of the chapter for years to come. Please keep your eyes out for new members and "Recruit Just One."

Programming

One of our priorities is to create programs and plan events that allow GKCPTP members to have enriching experiences and get to know each other better. The Great Decisions program, discussed elsewhere in the bulletin, is an example of a program aimed at members who do not sponsor an international military student, as well as those who do.

IMS Sponsorship

The sponsorship of international military students is our cornerstone program. We will continue to support it to make sure each officer and his/her family has a rewarding experience with their GKCPTP sponsors. If you do sponsor an international military student and your situation changes, due to health or other reasons, and you cannot fulfill your duties as a sponsor, please contact Sharon Valasek (<mailto:svalasek@kc.rr.com?subject=IMS%20sponsorship>) , Sonia Eichenwald (<mailto:seichenwald@aol.com?subject=IMS%20sponsorship>) , or another member of the military committee. We can reassign your student to another person or persons. It may be the best option for all parties in such circumstances.

In conclusion, thank you for all your support. You make the chapter the success it is.

Warm regards,

Larry Dolci

PS: The Deanna Rose Children's Farmstead event for international military students, their families and sponsors has just been scheduled for September 22. Mark your calendars and watch for more details.

Great Decisions - A New Program

GKCPTP will be offering an opportunity to participate in small group discussions on significant issues facing the international community. This program will use materials provided by the Foreign Policy Association. For more information check out the website at www.fpa.org.

Topic areas will be chosen from the Great Decisions 2013 briefing book including:

- * Future of the Euro by Erik Jones
- * Egypt by Bruce Rutherford
- * NATO by Mark Webber
- * Myanmar and Southeast Asia by Barbara Crossette
- * Humanitarian intervention by Thomas Weiss
- * Iran by John Limbert
- * China in Africa by David Shinn
- * Threat Assessment by Gregory Treverton

Since a recent email was sent about Great Decisions, we have had a very positive response. Sign up to indicate your interest in joining a discussion group. Groups will meet once each month in September, October, and November and discuss the topic of greatest interest to the group. Specific meeting dates will be determined according to best dates in the majority of attendees' schedules. Sign up by contacting Barbara Dolci at btrdolci@gmail.com (<mailto:www.fpa.org?subject=Great%20decisions>) .

Docent-Guided Tour of Mexican Art

RSVP by July 29

Our own tour of the Frida Kahlo – Diego Rivera Exhibit at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art is Thursday, August 1, 2013. This is a great opportunity to socialize with other members of our chapter and get a group tour of the exhibit with inside information about the artists. The agenda is:

- * 5:00 - 5:45 p.m. GKCPTP members and friends gather, purchase tickets at \$5 each.
- * 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. Pre-tour presentation (see below) in the Atkins Auditorium.
- * 7:00 Docent-guided tour begins.

Please come for either part or both parts! And please RSVP to Jane Kohl at jkid96@msn.com

Tips for Sponsoring International Military Students

by Randy and Marquita Pace

** 1) Give a heartfelt welcome

- * Start with an early “first contact” email to your officer; try to do this as soon as you get your officer contact information.
- * Once you hear from your officer, be sure to reply with a little more personal information so he can learn more about you, your home, your family, your job, etc.
- * Keep in contact and determine his/her (and family's) arrival flights and times.
- * IF AT ALL POSSIBLE... Meet him/her at the airport. If you can't meet at the airport, explain to your officer ahead of time that you can't be there.
- * Coordinate with your other assigned sponsors to make sure the airport greeting will happen.
- * Remember: YOU NEVER GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION!

** 2) Treat them like family

- * One of the things your officer will miss is family time. A meal served at your home is a real treat for him and his family.
- * A meal at your home is more personal; it reflects more of who you are. The officer will take this as a very personal reflection of how you perceive your relationship with him.
- * If you are worried about cooking a meal, you can always order takeout and serve it at home.
- * Encourage your officer to invite another officer to come with him/her, especially on this initial visit.

** 3) Do little things that make a real difference

- * Meet him/her at the airport with his country's flag or a sign with his name.
- * If taking him/her and/or family to their housing, prepare a couple of meals beforehand and freeze them. Providing some snacks and an initial meal or two eases the stress level for the officer and family.
- * Flying his/her country flag, along with the US Flag (according to protocol), shows him the very personal regard you have for his/her country.

- * Encourage him/her to ask any questions he might have about our country. Letting him know that you are willing to answer (or at least research) these questions will provide him/her an additional comfort level with you as a sponsor.
- * A small gift for each family member, particularly for the spouse and each child, will do much to cement your early relationship.
- * Providing a case of bottled water, along with the information that our tap water is safe to drink, is helpful.

** 4) Start off on a "good note."

* A little extra effort at the beginning will help in getting you off to a great start with your officer.

A Wonderful Year at Fort Leavenworth with our “People to People” Sponsors

Submitted by Major Frega Wenas Inkiriwang, MIR, MMAS

A year ago I was selected to attend the Intermediate Level Education at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. After flying for more than twenty hours I eventually arrived at Kansas City International Airport. On my arrival day, a lovely lady namely Dorinda Nicholson greeted me at the airport. She welcomed me and handed over a small package, which comprised of daily necessities and several books, including map and her own book about Pearl Harbor (Hawaii). I was surprised for having been greeted with such warm welcome. She informed me that she was part of People to People’s Kansas City chapter and would sponsor me for a year while attending my education program at Fort Leavenworth.

Throughout the year, she always communicated with me. Dorinda also introduced her husband, Larry, a professional photographer in Kansas. I met both of them at an event, which was organized by the International Military Student Division (IMSD) for sponsors. We shared stories and discussions at the event. In addition, Dorinda and Larry also invited me to come to their dwelling to celebrate Thanksgiving Day. It was my first experience of celebrating the day with an American family. Their sons and daughters-in-law as well their grandchildren went to their residence. I was introduced to everyone in the family. In fact, Larry asked me to give a brief explanation about my country, Indonesia. I was happy to meet them and share the joy of the Thanksgiving Day with them.

On another occasion, Dorinda and Larry made an appointment to meet me at another IMSD event at the Deanna Rose Children's Farmstead in Overland Park, Kansas. We visited a traditional farm and shared talks while walking around the place. A few months later, they also invited me to watch a ballet recital performance of their friend, Dempsey. She is a charming and lovely ballerina. I was fortunate for having been asked to watch her performance by Dorinda and Larry. It was a great opportunity to visit the University of Missouri at Kansas City (UMKC) to watch Dempsey's ballet performance. Dorinda and Larry also asked me to bring my family to visit their home. My parents, my little sister, and I stayed overnight at their home. We shared another interesting conversation and stayed up rather late enjoying ourselves.

After spending a year interacting with them, I had to say goodbye. Finishing my ILE course and my Master of Military Art and Science program required me to return to Indonesia. On my last day in Kansas, Dorinda and Larry picked me up at my apartment and drove me to the airport, the same place which I met Dorinda for the first time. They helped me check in my baggage. When everything was done, they left and said goodbye. It was a difficult time for me since I had experienced a wonderful year with them as my People to People sponsors.

I personally observed that such a program is invaluable to establish a good connection with foreign students. Not only does it introduce American culture to the student, but likewise, it also shares the students' respective cultures to their sponsors. Interaction between American families with foreign students helps build confidence and amplifies personal networking that may contribute to nation-to-nation relationships. I am so blessed for having experienced a wonderful year with the program. In the future, I hope I can meet again my sponsors, Dorinda and Larry, as well as their family. I am sure that our relationship will last forever. Thank you to the People to People sponsor program and for allowing me to interact with a very welcoming American family, Dorinda and Larry Nicholson.

Friend Your Chapter on Facebook

Facebook has become an important communication vehicle for connecting to our members, friends and supporters. Our chapter has had a page for quite a while, and we're re-emphasizing it in order to better share our mission. We hope you will "friend us" and encourage others to do the same.

Facebook is a social media tool that claims to have 350 million members, including thousands of nonprofit organizations. Click on the logo to the right to access Facebook and our chapter's profile. Once you "friend us," you can:

- * Read pertinent information and news on our page.
- * View photos and video uploaded by our Facebook administrator.
- * Upload great photos you've taken at chapter-related events. Do note that photos of international military students must be pre-approved by the international military student.

International Military Student Sponsorship Committee Update

Provided by Sharon Valasek

By now, all GKCPTP sponsors have had a few opportunities to meet with their new international military student (IMS) from the 14-01 class. Whether it was at the airport upon the officer's arrival, at the ice-breaker or sometime in between those events, I hope you are getting to know your officer and his/her family.

A few reminders/next steps:

- * If you haven't already done so, contact the other two sponsors – the Fort Leavenworth military sponsor and the Operational International (OI) sponsor (from the Leavenworth/Lansing community)
- * Suggest and schedule a gathering (e.g., meal, brief tour of KC) with your IMS
- * Plan to attend the 14-01 Flag Ceremony on Monday, August 12 at 09:00 a.m. at Lewis & Clark, Fort Leavenworth

Please consider sharing a fun or touching experience that you've had with your IMS, either currently or in previous years. It's interesting for fellow sponsors and you may just offer a tidbit that could help recruit new sponsors. Speaking of that, it's not too early to begin talking with friends and family about the sponsor experience. The committee will begin its sponsor assignment activity for the 14-02 class in October and it would be great if we had new sponsors "waiting in the wings." Your military committee would be most grateful!

Please contact me at 816-213-5847 or svalasek@kc.rr.com (<mailto:svalasek@kc.rr.com?subject=Military%20sponsor%20program>), Sonia Eichenwald at 913-851-0873 or seichenwald@aol.com (<mailto:seichenwald.com?subject=Military%20sponsor%20program>), or any member of the military committee if you have questions about sponsoring or ideas to improve the sponsor experience. We appreciate your feedback and chances are your questions or ideas could benefit others.

Membership Update

by Betty Olberding

New Members Are:

Tom and Nancy Van Hoozer
Michael and Elaine Symanski
Dave and Teresa Perky
Terry Buller
Cynthia Smith
Jingjing Que
Ellis Thigpen
Mike and Julie Monahan
David and Linda Bryan
Carla Mitchell

Recruited By:

Jack and Errett Schmid
Jim Malouff
Jeff and Mary Jane Muchow
Returning member

Betty Olberding
Mike Sigler
Jeff and Mary Jane Muchow
PTPI
PTPI

Welcome to our organization! It's truly wonderful to have these new members join through referrals from current members.

International Military Students' Sponsor Recognition

Spring 2013

For each graduating class, the International Military Student Division (IMSD), Command and General Staff School (CGSS), holds a recognition event for the Kansas City area civilian, Leavenworth/Lansing area civilian, and Fort Leavenworth military or civilian sponsors of international military students (IMS). This past spring several of our chapter's members were honored. The photos below show our members receiving their recognition items at the spring 2013 Sponsor Recognition event.

1. Pamela Simmons, 25 years and Thelma Simmons, 30 years
2. Sonia and Howard Eichenwald, 20 years
3. Sally and Larry Gordon, 15 years
4. Pamela and Alan Felton, 15 years
5. Diane and Frank Koranda, 15 years
6. Howard Welch and Debbie Lane, 10 years
7. Sharon Valasek and Gary Lofstrom, 15 years
8. Duane and Betty Olberding, 30 years