

# RUF=INTERNATIONAL

## THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

### Welcoming the Nations & Equipping Kingdom Ambassadors

JUNE 2017

#### In Their Own Words...



"I've learned that Islam, Judaism & Christianity all basically teach the same thing. There are differences, but those are only found underneath (the surface) and I'm not sure they're important." (Muslim PhD student from N. Africa)

"I got the 'OM' tattoo because it's always meant a lot to me. You're right - I *am* a scientist and I'm *not* very religious...*but* this is a spiritual symbol that has always made feel peaceful." (Hindu PHD student from India)

"My parents are devout Buddhists. My mother went to Tibet to study with a monk. I like Taylor Swift's song 'Blank Space' because I believe human nature is a 'blank' and is shaped by the experiences we have." (Buddhist PHD student from China)

"Christians have done ten times more for me in the U.S. than Muslims have ever done for one another in my country. I've seen it and experienced it for myself." (Muslim PhD student from the Middle East)

Dear Friends,

We are so grateful for another year of ministry among the nations on the campus of the University of Tennessee! We've been blessed to get connected with more than 300 internationals from 40 countries, and have been helped by 75 volunteers from 7 local churches. The people we've been able to welcome, the conversations we've had, the lives we've seen changed...God has been at work and we're so thankful for how you've prayed and given to support the ministry of RUF at UT.

#### "And There Was No Longer Any Sea"



RUF "Contingent" at RUF Summer Conference in Panama City

This would have been really bad news to the 4 international students from UT and the 1000 other college students from across the U.S. who attended last week's RUF Summer Conference in Panama City, Florida! They thoroughly enjoyed the sight and sound and feel of the sea! And on top of lots of fun, they also experienced Christian worship, heard great teaching, and had time to reflect on life alone and with others.

In the book of *Revelation* the risen and reigning King Jesus says this about the new heaven and earth to come: "...*and there was no longer any sea*" (21:1). At first glance the Apostle John seems to be saying...seeing...that in the world to come there will not be any "sea", "ocean", "beach". But in the ancient world the "sea" represented chaos, frustration, and the undoing of everything truly precious in our lives.

Our international friends - like all of us - live with a frustration and emptiness that only Jesus can remove by bringing his reign and rest more fully into their lives. They're weighed down by false beliefs, broken relationships, anxieties and addictions, and uncertainty about what their purpose here on earth is. Please pray that Jesus - who worked salvation for them on the cross - would bring them into his salvation rest that their souls long for and need, now and forever.

#### Making It to the End...Again

On the evening of Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>...nothing happened. Well, what actually happened was that our RUF "Finish Line" Party got rained out. We were all the more grateful that May 7<sup>th</sup> was a foretaste of the beauty of heaven in more ways than one, as the party DID take place and great memories were made for the 125+ of us who met to celebrate.

It was a beautiful and warm May evening. We enjoyed a great feast, a **"kaleidoscope" of cultures**, the joy of conversation among friends, plenty of games, good music, and...of course...fireworks (no stray Roman candles this year!). Some sad goodbyes, but a special ending to a great year!



RUF "Finish Line" Party



Annie & Neissa NOT talking!



Phillip, Daniel & Caleb Norris on the Vanderbilt college tour

### Growing Up Too Fast

Just over four years ago Annie & Neissa arrived in Knoxville and we began a new chapter in our life together as a family. We've all experienced some incredible days, some average days, and some exhausting days. **But we continue to see the "fingerprints" of God's good plan** to use one another to smooth

away the rough edges of our hearts and to show us even more of Jesus' abundant grace.

This summer **Daniel** and **Phillip** are both lifeguarding, getting up with the roosters for football workouts, and going to youth camp. Daniel's exploring colleges and Phillip officially hit the road today with his driver's permit! **Neissa** is becoming quite the little gymnast and **Annie** just played her first tennis match. Both girls loved school this year and are blessed to have many friends in our neighborhood. **Jen's** decided she wants to move to "the City" after enjoying a rare "girls getaway" with both of our moms and my sister in "old New York."

### Thanks for YOUR Ministry To and Through Us

We are humbled by and amazed at how God has sustained this ministry for the last decade. That has happened because YOU have prayed for and given to this work. Thank you!! We literally would not be on the campus without you playing the vital role you do. And I can't hold back tears as I think of how the lives of so many international friends have been impacted. Friends like "A" from Iran, "Luna" from China, "M" from Iraq, "Simone" from Scotland, "S" from N. Africa, and "P" from India - these lives have been touched forever because of YOUR ministry to us of praying and giving which continues to enable us to be on the UT campus day in and day out loving the "strangers among us" (Leviticus 19:34).

Our goal by the end of the summer is to raise an additional \$1500/month in new giving from individuals, families, and/or churches. **Would you think and pray about how the Lord might lead you to become involved, or more deeply involved, in supporting the ministry of RUFU at UT?** You might be able to give \$300/month or \$25/month...or somewhere in between. Or you might be more inclined to give annually, or even just a one-time gift. Any and all gifts help us with our campus 15 Dinner & Discovery events, our 12 monthly social activities, and the hundreds of individual meetings throughout the year.

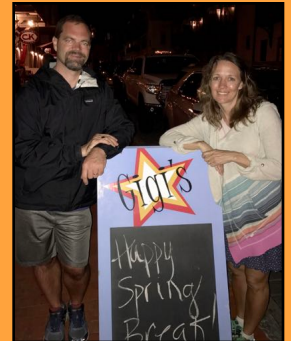
*So That the Nations may be Glad and sing for Joy,*

*Lee, Jen, Daniel, Phillip, Annie, & Neissa Leadbetter*

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### Prayer & Praise

- ❖ **Praise** for an incredible "Finish Line" Party as 125+ of us celebrated the end of another year!
- ❖ **Praise** for the 4 international students from UT who attended the RUF's summer conference in May in Panama City.
- ❖ **Pray** for our family this summer – for physical rest and spiritual renewal, and for some significant time together as a family.
- ❖ **Praise** for the opportunity to preach at Redeemer Church on 5/21 and **pray** for me as I preach at West Hills Pres. on 6/18.
- ❖ **Pray** for RUFU's summer ministry of continuing to connect with internationals & their families.
- ❖ **Praise** God for generously providing funding so that we made up \$20k in May of the \$25k we were behind at the end of April!
- ❖ **Pray** for financial development efforts this summer – for 2 new supporting churches & 5 new supporting individuals or families.



**Contributions Information**  
Reformed University Fellowship  
P.O. Box 890004  
Charlotte, NC 28289-0004

Please make checks payable to "RUF" & designate the memo line as "RUFU @ UTK / #241010510". All gifts are tax-deductible. You can also give to RUFU at UT by credit card or bank draft at [ruf.org/utrufi](http://ruf.org/utrufi)

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