



## Mission Grant Report Form

Iowa District West

Grant recipients are asked to complete and submit the report form within one month of the completion of the effort or, if a continuing ministry, by January 31 of the following year in which the grant is received. Please submit any pictures, as well, that would help to share the story with other congregations to encourage them in their ministry.

1. Please provide a brief overview of the effort.

*We had six positive experiences for the visiting churches who taught English. Members from three different groups would like to come back this fall to teach, and others had never been to Memorial before and were excited about telling future college students back home. Not only were the visiting churches a blessing to the internationals, I think they also gained a bigger vision of God's world and the opportunities He's given us in our backyards.*

2. What goals were established for this effort; that is, what did you hope to accomplish?

*We hoped to give visiting churches a broader understanding of God's work in the world and both the challenges and opportunities of missions today. We wanted them to understand that one-third of the world has yet to hear about Jesus, yet some of them are at our doorstep seeking help with practical things (English) and answers to spiritual questions. We also wanted to give churches an opportunity to interact with the international students. Church visits and newsletters are good, but it's a much richer experience to spend time with them and learn from them. We hoped this would spark interest and ideas not only related to ISM in Ames but also get them thinking about "unreached" groups in their own communities.*

3. Did you achieve your goals? If not, what do you think were some of the contributing factors?

*We believe so, but you could also ask those congregations. Many thanked us several times for the opportunity and talked about coming back next year. The activity we did to share why we have ISM was also very eye-opening for many. We don't know if the last part of our goal (to get them thinking about outreach in their community) was reached, but if we do this again, we would definitely put more emphasis on that.*

4. Is there anything you would do differently if you were to undertake this effort again?

*See the last comment above. We would try to get the contact information of all the visiting volunteers and add them to our newsletter list. We would also simplify some of our teaching materials and pick a different subject on a couple of the days.*

5. What lessons were learned through this effort?

*We learned about prayer. For a while I couldn't get any churches to call me back, and I was worried we wouldn't fill all the weeks. The day I spent more time praying than strategizing, our phone started ringing again, literally. I also learned a lot about preparing simple materials for volunteers and how to utilize some of their giftings. We had one woman from South Sudan come for classes, but she needed help learning how to read, not practicing conversation. I started asking if anyone was a retired teacher or was more comfortable working one-on-one with someone and that turned out to be a perfect way to match them up. That is something I can do a better job of in the future as well.*

6. What suggestions would you give to a congregation considering a similar effort?

*The need for reaching out to internationals whether they're temporary visitors or migrants is increasing all over Iowa and the U.S. We have unique opportunities in Ames, but we are not alone. I think the best thing about this summer was having the chance to share with the visiting congregations about what God is doing in bringing so many from unreached places to our doorsteps. It's makes mission-work something that's "here and now" instead of far off and distant. We hope other congregations can embrace the diversity in their communities or the ones around them.*

7. Contact person

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