

Ministry Spouses Network Newsletter

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*"The light that shines the farthest
burns the brightest at home."
~Oswald J. Smith*



Dear friends:

It never ceases to amaze me how God speaks! Lately, He's been using repetition to bring one specific place to my attention. On seven different occasions, through seven different people, the work of a training center for young girls located half way across the world has come up. We are a family, not only here within our District, but across Canada and across continents. God is at work amongst us! It's exciting to share the joy that arises when we see the Hope of Jesus Christ grow strong in our communities. However, these changes don't just happen. Prayer isn't optional, it's essential. God has designed us to bring His purposes about by prayer. Join with me this month and give a few minutes each day to focus your attention on one school and the people who are seeing God's hand at work there.

I first heard about The Niger Vocational Training Center from Tim and Brenda Tjosvold, team leaders in the Niger region. Next, I learned more about the center from the Cheungs and then the Chens, (these two families are also part of the International team in that country.)

Some quick facts about Niger: only 1-2% of the population is Christian, the rest is Islamic. On the United Nations Human Development Index, Niger ranks second to last at 167 out of 169 countries around the world. Their infant mortality rate is 81 out of 1,000 live births. To give us some perspective in comparison, Canada ranks 3rd or 4th on the UN Human Development Index, and has an infant mortality rate of 5.3 out of 1,000 live births. (Wikipedia, 2011)

Over the summer, Shirley Oakman, told me of her connection to the vocational center. Clint and Shirley minister at Drumheller Alliance. They have been a support to Chantelle McIver who directs many of the programs at the school. Shirley is part of a team of 7 women (mostly from Alberta) who are going to teach several sewing projects in Niamey, Niger from September 7th– 25th.

Shirley and the team will be meeting Dorrie Hansen who arrived in Niger earlier in August. Dorrie and Dennis Hansen minister at RockPointe Church in Calgary. Just last week, Dennis returned to Alberta with a team from their church. They were involved in teaching the girls at the vocational school as well as taking part in a variety of projects in and around the center.

The seventh person to share about the Niger Training School was Kerrienne Ibsen. God interrupted her plans to return to school at Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton so she could participate in the work of this school on a one year internship. She is a woman who has her feet on two continents. She was primarily raised in Guinea, West Africa. Her parents Dan and Melody Ibsen continue to serve on the International team in that country. She tells us that since she was in her mid teens, she has "felt God calling me back...to touch broken lives." Kerrienne expects that she will be teaching basic math and French courses as well as vocational skills. She says: "The key tools the team in Niger uses to share our faith include mentoring, listening, visiting homes, acts of service, urgent medical support and LOVE! Having the opportunity to teach these skills provides hope and a future to a group of very young

women. Without this training these young people often have no opportunities to learn how to provide for themselves or their families. How wonderful to be part of the process of seeing women move out of adverse generational poverty into the joy of knowing Jesus as their Saviour!"

Last month we focused our attention locally and lifted up our new District leadership. We prayed specifically for Brent and Mandy Trask. As we begin a new year of ministry this September let's shift our focus and join together and pray for one of our Alliance International fields.

It's a fact that when the international work of a congregation is strong, it adds strength and vitality to the local community of faith. Oswald J. Smith put it this way: "The light that shines the farthest burns the brightest at home." Both local and international work is completely dependent upon intentional and daily prayer from each of us. This is how we participate in seeing God move and work. This is how we bring hope and health to those who are in great need of hearing about Jesus Christ. When we pray we participate in the work of the training center.

Let's thank the Lord for local churches and individuals who are willing to organize working trips and take part in short term ventures at the school. Let's ask that those who have seen the project in Niger first-hand inspire others in their churches back home. Let's pray that this inspiration fills our local churches with a deep connection to the people in Niger. Join me in asking the Lord to protect the team of seven women, including Shirley Oakman and Dorrie Hansen, who will contribute to teaching life skills at the vocational school this coming month! Be specific and ask God to allow them to see the gospel take root in the hearts of the students! Finally, remember Kerrienne Ibsen. She left Canada on the 7th of September and will be in Niamey Niger for the next 12 months. May God grant her joy, health and much love for each young woman as she teaches!

Blessings,

Elizabeth Chotka
Coordinator for Ministry Spouses

Chantelle and Kerrienne would like you to consider becoming prayer partners for them and for specific students at NVOC. Please consider being in touch with them through the new website: www.nvoc.ca. Remember, they are counting on our prayers!



Kerrienne Ibsen



Dorrie Hansen

TRANSFORM
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