



*February 21st, 2012*

# Returnee Initiative



*Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures*

*Please join the call by following the instructions in your confirmation email.*



# Attendee Introductions



- Name
- Current location
- **When** and **where** did you go on your AFS program?
- Current **Returnee Initiative Role**

# Agenda

- Interns- introduce new RI interns
- Damayonti Rowe
- RI Members being referrals
- National Volunteer Assembly (NVA)  
Proposal for Mandating Returnee Re-entry Orientations



# Meet Our Intern Team

## Current RI Interns

- **Patrick Matthews** – *Returnee Coordinator Group Leader*
- **Mireille Perzan**- *Integration Group Leader*
- **Nora Mishanc-Novak**- *Returnee Mentor Project Manager*



Patrick



Mireille



Nora

## Welcome aboard!

- **Robert Finney**- *Returnee Resources Group Leader*
- **Claire Macfarlane**-*Ambassador Project Manager*
- **Sarah Cash**- *Country Specialist Project Manager*



Claire



Sara



Robert

# Damayonti Rowe – Congratulations!



RI Task Force Member

- Promoted to AFS International – starts in March
- She will no longer be working directly with RI
- However, she wants to help bring International opportunities to RI
  - such as: International Internship Opportunities!

We will miss you!

New email: [damayonti.rowe@afs.org](mailto:damayonti.rowe@afs.org)

# Returnee Initiative Members

- 91 active RI Members
- All RI Members now available for student/parent referrals
  - Students interested in going abroad often have questions for AFS Returnees
  - AFS staff & volunteers will be allowed to send an inquiring student RI member's contact info
  - RI members are encouraged to take our [Country Specialist Training](#) to get helpful tips on talking with interested students/parents

# National Volunteer Assembly Proposal

- Review Proposal (located on the RI wiki under NVA Proposal)
- Gather ideas
- Start working on pros/cons, overcoming challenges, in prep for writing the background papers

# NVA Proposal

- **Why are re-entry orientations important for Returnees?**
  - Continued support from AFS and not feeling isolated after you return
  - Reverse cultural shock needs more support
  - Informing Returnees about ways to get involved with AFS and how important it is to give back
  - End-cap their educational experience and that their experience is not over and how they can direct their focus now
  - Connecting Returnees with other Returnees, connecting Returnees with volunteers, how to connect them to other volunteer teams
  - What AFS can do for Returnees and what opportunities they can get involved with nationally, locally
  - Support for Parents, so they feel AFS is supporting their son/daughter, they can get involved with volunteering

# NVA Proposal

- **What are the challenges?**

- Welcome home events are challenging because there is a lot of effort to put into it, and there is not enough of expectation from Returnees yet
- Orientations can be dull and not motivated to go
- Reaching students in rural areas and logistics to pull those students
- Busy time for volunteers when students are returning and lack of resources
- Staggered arrivals - May- Aug and challenging to coordinate
- What is the cost? Need to factor the cost
- Geography is challenging for AFS, but AFS wants to support re-entry orientations
- What should be our success rate? (30% success rate from other partner countries, 70-90% come back for the second orientation)
  - Hard to determine now. It will be successful no matter what because slowly it will grow and any impact will make a difference

# NVA Proposal

- **How can these re-entry orientations work best?**
  - Orientations occur soon after they arrive back home, or a month or two after they return giving Returnees time to adjust and notice more culture shock issues
  - Orientations need a personal touch rather than by the book, interactional
  - National, regional, local possibilities
  - Have someone more dedicated for planning these re-entry orientations and having meetings to have a social aspect for Returnees and volunteers
  - Returnee Coordinators and Returnees have a role in assisting in the orientations to help take the weight off of volunteers feeling like they have to run them
  - Communication from the Team before Returnees get home
  - Combining with hosted student events
  - Grass root Returnee Meet-ups- low cost
  - Area Teams communicating to students ahead of time
  - Orientations are paired with distance learning to support returnees who are unable to make it
  - International integration- looking to create more e-learning opportunities

# NVA Proposal

- Next step: Working on Background papers

## What are background papers?

- Any information that is important to support the proposal
- Addressing some of the concerns up front

## Proposal Background paper Team

- 5 hour commitment over the next month to help prepare some of this support information for the proposal
- Meeting to be scheduled soon to start tackling the background papers.
- **Want to help?** Please email [jpeck@afs.org](mailto:jpeck@afs.org)

**Team:** Robert Finney, Mireille Perzan, Rachael Dimit, Kyle Paget, Jessica Robinson, Ruth Quiles

# Upcoming Events 2012

- 2/24-26- In person Intern Meeting, Portland, OR
- 3/15- **YR & SM Fall Programs** Full Application Deadline
  - (Returnees Can Go Abroad again!)
- 4/1- First Returnee Initiative E-Newsletter published
  - What something published? [email Robert \(rfinney@afs.org\)](mailto:rfinney@afs.org)
- 4/10- **Summer Programs** Full Application Deadline
- 4/21- **AFS National Day of Service**
  - <http://www.afsusa.org/serviceday/>
  - <http://www.afsusa.org/serviceday/five-steps-for-global-youth-service-day/>
- 6/TBA- **Returnee Training Summit in Washington D.C**



# Thank you for attending!!!



*Join us on Facebook: [Returnee Reconnect AFS-USA](#)*

**We appreciate how much you continue to give to AFS!  
We couldn't do it without you!**