

# ORIENTATION ADVISORY GROUP

October 5, 2011

# Agenda

- **Introductions – 15 min**
- Review Revision Schedule – 2 min
- Group Norms – 10 min
- Call Guidelines – 1 min
- Tech Check – 2 min
- Task At Hand – 25 min
  - ▣ Orientation Framework
  - ▣ Pre-Departure Orientation
  - ▣ Brainstorming
  - ▣ Division of Tasks
- Questions & Next Meeting – 5 min

Please Share:

Your Name

Hometown

Current town

Area team  
affiliation

Birthday

Three Facts



Introductions

Ruth Quiles

Please Share:

Your Name

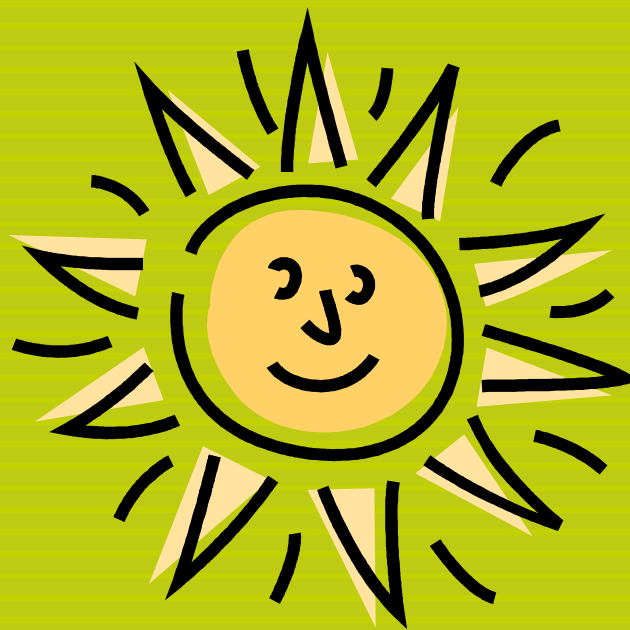
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## Introductions

Diana Ziffer

Please Share:

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Introductions

Christine Wilson

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Introductions

Briana Ross

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Introductions

Chris Perkins

Please Share:

Your Name

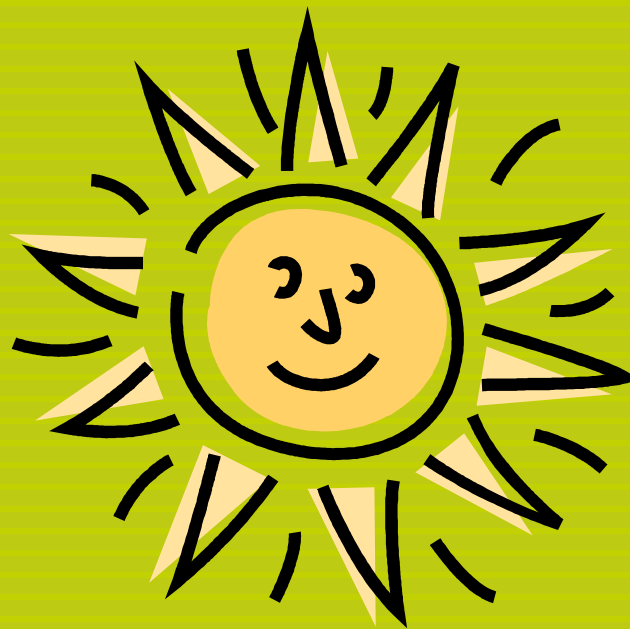
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Introductions

Loan Nguyen

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Introductions

Molly Lopez

Please Share:

Your Name

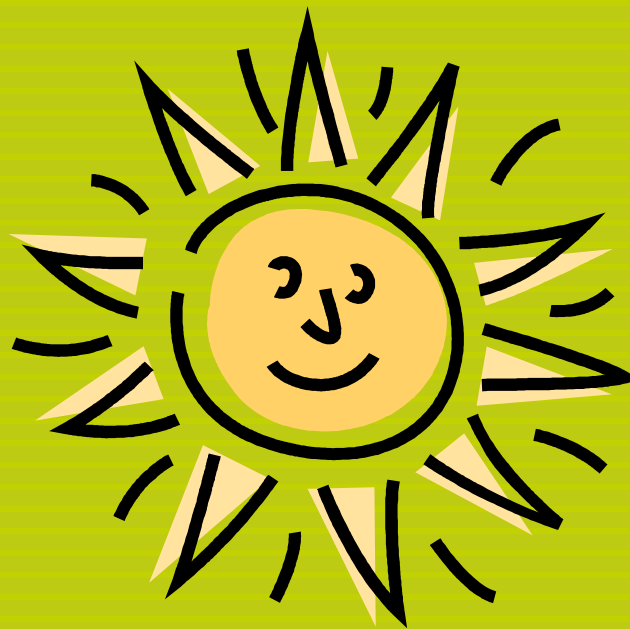
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## Introductions

Nancy Buss

Please Share:

Your Name

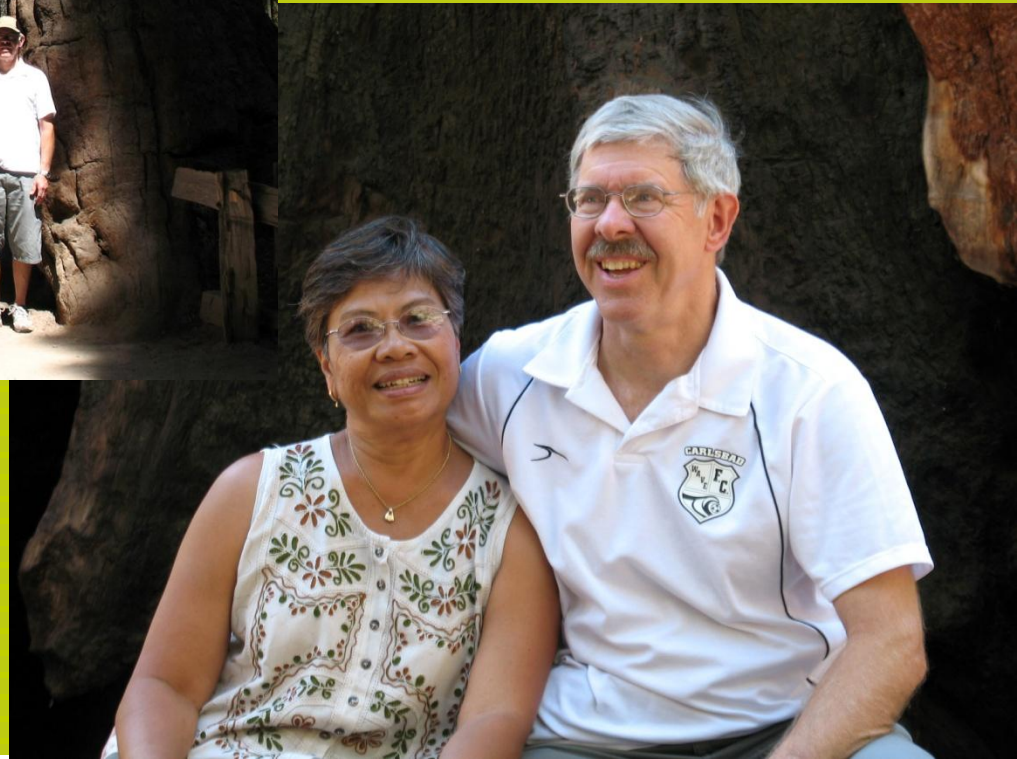
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Introductions

Ted Thomas



Last but not Least

Floyd van Weelden & Jim Laden

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# Revision Schedule

\* Clarification: not all of these tasks represent a total overhaul of the handbook; some may involve a simple review of what we have for minor changes

Month	Cycle	Task(s)
September	Hosting/Sending	Post-Arrival Orientation AFS Guides—Participants and Natural Families
October – November	Hosting/Sending	Pre-Departure Orientation Leader's Guide Mid-Stay Orientation
December – January	Hosting	Pre-Return Orientation
February – March	Hosting	End-of-Stay Orientation
April – May	Hosting	Arrival Orientation
June – July	Sending	Review: AFS Guides & PDO Leader's Guide Post Arrival Orientation
August	n/a	On Hiatus/New Member Recruitment

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# Norms

- Respect
  - ▣ Openness to new ideas & different perspectives
  - ▣ Support for the work and effort of others
  - ▣ Consideration for ideas presented to the group
- Communication
  - ▣ Clear
  - ▣ Timely
  - ▣ Honest
  - ▣ Respectful
- Task Completion
  - ▣ Focused
  - ▣ Follow-through with commitments
  - ▣ Timely
- Ask Questions

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# Call Guidelines

- Internet & Phone/Computer access for each call
- Come prepared
- Mute function
- State name when making a comment (so we know who is speaking)

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# Technology Check

- Word processing & File capabilities
- Document-sharing methods
  - ▣ AFS Wiki: [www.afswiki.org](http://www.afswiki.org)
  - ▣ Wiggio
  - ▣ Google Documents
- Meeting technology
  - ▣ Go to Meeting
  - ▣ Conference Bridge
- Diligence over Distance

Working long-distance with technology can be daunting; please be diligent with responding to each other

## Notes:

All group members have Microsoft Word except one, who has Open Office;  
All group members have wiki log-ins;  
The review process was discussed; the group may approach editing using different tools, depending on the project

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# Orientation Framework

- **AFS and You**  
What the participant needs to know about AFS - AFS Mission, the support structure, rules and regulations.
- **Required Logistics\***  
Specific information about travel and program requirements, school requirements.
- **Personal Safety and Wellbeing\***  
Knowledge and skills needed to help keep participants safe and healthy while on the AFS Program.
- **Cultural Adjustment and Coping**  
Stages of cultural adjustment, culture shock and related coping strategies. Interpersonal relationships, changing attitudes and behavior.
- **Culture Learning**  
Understanding cultural differences and similarities, communication skills, developing appreciation for the home and host country and culture in a wider context.
- **Personal Goals and Expectations**  
Reflection on the participants' own goals and aspirations for the experience.

# Pre-Departure Orientation Objectives

- AFS & You
  - ▣ place their participation in an AFS Program within the context of AFS' history and mission
  - ▣ identify several ways in which they can prepare for the AFS experience
- Personal Safety & Wellbeing (check!)
  - ▣ identify challenges they may face in their exchange experience that could effect their health, safety and ability to stay on program for AFS
  - ▣ list sources of support and contact information to help deal with difficult situations while abroad
- Cultural Adjustment & Coping
  - ▣ describe one model of cultural adjustment and reflect on ways to cope with the stress of adjusting to a new family, culture, school, etc.
  - ▣ list several strategies for effective cross-cultural communication

# Pre-Departure Orientation Objectives

- Culture Learning
  - ▣ explore the concept of culture
  - ▣ differentiate between a cultural generalization and a cultural stereotype
  - ▣ become familiar with five frameworks of cultural differences: language use and perception, non-verbal behavior, communication style, patterns of thinking, and values and assumptions, and be able to use elements of these frameworks to compare cultures
  - ▣ identify several of their own cultural characteristics in the context of the home culture in general and various subcultures within the home culture
  - ▣ practice using the “Describe, Interpret, Validate, Explain/Evaluate” (D.I.V.E.) method of observation
  - ▣ reflect on how they react upon encountering cultural differences within the home culture and consider how they might react upon encountering cultural differences abroad
  - ▣ discuss cultural differences in a non-threatening environment
  - ▣ if it can be done well, you may provide some specific information about the host culture

# Pre-Departure Orientation Objectives

- Personal Goals & Expectations
  - ▣ reflect on and record their motivation for becoming an AFS participant and their hopes for the experience
  - ▣ record one goal they hope to fulfill between now and their departure
  - ▣ prepare their recorded expectations and goals in a way that they will revisit later in the experience and in the post-return phase, such as writing a letter to themselves.

# Our Project Objective

Reorganize the Pre-Departure Orientation according to these objectives into one, mandatory orientation schedule

- We have received feedback that our volunteers would prefer more specific instructions when it comes to orientations
- All of our other orientation handbooks are organized by orientation objectives
- This organization will help us to ensure that all elements of each orientation objective topic is addressed

# Brainstorming – New Elements

- Reinstated Old Activities
  - ▣ 2005 Version of the PDO Leader's Guide
  - ▣ Build a Tower; It's Your World Activity
- Country-Specific Preparation
  - ▣ Cultural Adjustment & Coping/Culture Learning sections
  - ▣ Addressing Feedback from Partners
  - ▣ Country Quotes; Returnee Skits; reiterating resources
- Break-out Opportunities
  - ▣ By Program
  - ▣ Pax vs Parent (natural breakouts with the parents?)

## Notes:

- Ted brought up the idea of incorporating the AFS Learning Objectives more purposefully into this Orientation (to address what their goals are and why, with a broad scope)
- Ruth suggests that this might work well incorporated into the Goals & Expectations section
- Christine suggests finding natural break-out points in the orientation

# Division of Tasks

Create a mandatory session for each of the following (1-2 ppl each):

- AFS & You – **Nancy**
- Cultural Adjustment & Coping – **Loan**
- Culture Learning – **Christine & Chris**
- Personal Goals & Expectations – **Briana & Molly**

## Guidelines

- ALL orientation objectives must be fulfilled within the hour
- Covering all objectives in less time is okay!
- Indicate where activities may be interchangeable
- Overlap is okay!
- Activities will not be eliminated if they are not used in your sessions

# Other Tasks

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- Remove All Logistical Details to the Wiki
- Create multiple indices of activities
- Rebranding
- **Midyear Orientation**



Questions?