

“How Beautiful are the Feet of Those who Bring Good News!”  
Romans 10:15

## **INFORMATION PACKET**

### **INTRODUCTION**

As part of the internationalization efforts at Azusa Pacific University, the Center for Student Action is convinced that our responsibility is not only to facilitate global opportunities for youth and university students through our missions and study abroad programs, but to also provide opportunities for students to serve around the world after graduation. As a result, we have developed a strategic mobilization process that takes youth and young adults from high school mission trips to Mexico, through graduation from APU, and into global ministry. We believe that a *God First* university should go the extra mile to advance God’s kingdom around the world.

Based on conversations with a variety of organizations focused on the mobilization of young adults and in-house debriefings with students after summer mission trips and study abroad opportunities, it has become clear that God uses the mechanism of short-term international experiences to activate individuals for long-term global ministry. Upon return from short-term service events, many students share that they sense God’s call toward full-time missionary service. Unfortunately, research shows that the financial stress of having school debt, the need to find a job that will provide income, and working through what to do after leaving college, are obstacles to responding to this call. While students feel the desire to serve, they often do not know where to begin regarding which organization to partner with, how to fundraise, or how to prepare for a significant time of service.

The H.I.S.years program is designed to remove or mitigate these barriers as we believe that, with these barriers removed, many will make the decision to step into mid-term global ministry. Azusa Pacific University will play a significant role in directing graduates toward ministries around the world that have expressed a desire and need for educated workers in a variety of fields.

### **WHAT IS H.I.S.YEARS?**

H.I.S.years exists as a sending program providing a ‘bank’ of students each year ready and willing to serve overseas with Christ-based community development/mission organizations that work with unreached/least reached people groups for two years after graduation.

The goal is three-fold:

- To facilitate the gospel message to people who have not heard.
- To enable and facilitate APU students to participate in ministry earlier in their life, increasing the likelihood of continuing on to serve for many years.
- To work in partnership with organizations that need resources and people to be more effective in their ministry.

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### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Strategically equipping and sending Azusa Pacific University graduates to serve with Christ-based community development/mission organizations that work with those who are spiritually and physically in need.

### **PURPOSE STATEMENT**

To provide an opportunity for recent graduates to serve full-time for two years or more with a world service organization. H.I.S.years also serves as a catalyst for graduates who want to serve vocationally.

### **PROGRAM CORE VALUES**

- *Least Reached* - The program will focus on the least reached/unreached parts of the world. Least reached is defined as people groups that have limited access to the Gospel message and who are also living in physical poverty. They are often considered the least important in society.
- *Intentionally Christ-Centered* - To intentionally send graduates to spread the gospel message to people groups who have not heard.
- *Incarnational* – To look for ministries who desire to live contextually within the culture they serve and yet remain agents of Christ-based life transformation.
- *Strategic* - A directed and specific purpose and vision for the program that includes strategy on with which people groups, regions, and organizations to serve with.
- *Partnership* – To work with selected organizations and graduates to facilitate healthy, interdependent, and on-going relationships between all who are involved. Major focus will be on assisting in the vision of the national ministry team.
- *Long-Term* – To focus on developing long-term disciples for the kingdom.
- *Missional* - The purpose is to spread the Gospel message **and** meet physical/educational needs. The focus is on whole person development.

### **HOW H.I.S.YEARS WORKS**

The application process begins each Fall semester and it includes completing an application, submitting references, and a number of interviews. After a thorough screening process, a selected number of applicants will form that year’s H.I.S.years cohort. Upon entering the program, H.I.S.years staff help volunteers select an approved organization, apply to work with that organization, and provide support and encouragement throughout the preparation process. There is consistent and intense time spent with volunteers to ensure that they are as prepared as possible for the two-year mission experience. This includes training, mentorship, and advice on loan management.

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### **WHAT AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY WILL PROVIDE**

In addition to personal support and development, Azusa Pacific University will provide finances for H.I.S.years volunteers by making financial contributions toward their student loans while serving overseas.

If a volunteer does not have student loans or is able to defer their loans, APU will still provide finances over the two-year period.

#### **BENEFITS OF OFFERING FINANCIAL AND LOAN ASSISTANCE:**

- This significantly aids volunteers as they are trying to obtain full financial support to go on the mission field.
- This removes some additional obstacles that volunteers face when considering their time of service.

Upon completion of the two years, APU communicates with the volunteers in regards to their plans and next steps. There will be continued mentorship and encouragement, however, after their two year completion, financial assistance will no longer be provided. By this point, volunteers should have a solid understanding of fundraising and will work more directly with their organization in regard to future intentions to serve.

### **CRITERIA FOR SELECTING VOLUNTEERS**

- Entering into senior year of college or recent alumni of APU.
- Have a strong call to serve in international missions among the least reached/unreached.
- Have had significant international experience through missions, study abroad, and other experiences.
- Actively participating in fellowship with other believers and self-initiated participation in global learning opportunities throughout their time at APU.
- Demonstrated leadership and initiative academically, personally, and professionally.

### **CRITERIA FOR SELECTING ORGANIZATIONS**

H.I.S.years works with specific organizations, based on the following criteria:

- They are working directly and intentionally with unreached/least reached people groups.
- The central purpose and message of these organizations are sharing Jesus Christ.
- They are involved in whole person development and outreach.
- They are involved in outreach that is strategic and that has a long-term presence.
- The organizations will send out H.I.S.years volunteer with or to a team. Volunteers are not sent alone.
- They are working intentionally with the impoverished.

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## **TIMELINE**

### **FALL OF SENIOR YEAR (SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER)**

- Applications are accepted, and selection is made by beginning of December.

### **SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR (JANUARY- MAY)**

- Students begin weekly training, coaching, and mentorship.
- Students begin goal setting and working with the organizations.
- Preparation and intensity increases as students are accepted on a team and start their fundraising.
- Students attend a one week intensive training in May.

### **SUMMER AFTER GRADUATION**

- Graduates continue to raise prayer and financial support in preparation to depart for their service overseas in the following fall.

## **MENTORSHIP**

H.I.S.years assigns a mentor to each volunteer preparing to go into service. These mentors are assigned based on knowledge of region/country, previous experience serving overseas, spiritual commitment, and a commitment to mentor for the entire three years. This includes post-departure and the two years on the field.

Guidance will be given to the mentors regarding topics and issues to discuss. Mentors will also be required to attend periodic meetings with everyone involved in the H.I.S.years program for the purpose of informing and prayer.

## **TRAINING**

Volunteers will take part in training throughout the spring semester of their senior year. This training will focus on holistic development, developing a wellness plan, ministry plan, and other practical items. Topics will include:

### **GOAL SETTING**

- What is my purpose for going?
- What would God like to accomplish in and through me?
- What are my expectations/assumptions?
- What are my personal goals and challenges?
- Who and where will I be serving?

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#### **SUPPORTER UPDATES**

- How to write supporter update letters
- How to maintain relationships with those who are financially supporting your ministry

#### **SPIRITUAL CONSTANCY**

- Developing Spiritual disciplines
- Setting up a support system
- Coping with things you will see and face
- Being aware of Spiritual warfare
- Working among the unreached/least reached
- Accountability
- Missionary Care

#### **SELF- LEADERSHIP**

- Wellness - being well spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically
- Values, Personal Mission Statement, knowing who you are

For more information regarding the program, please contact Lindsey Howard on [lhoward@apu.edu](mailto:lhoward@apu.edu). You can also call the Center for Student Action at 626-812-3027.