

# JOHNSTON, Walt/Sue

October 2009

*Serving in the Philippines w/SEND International*

---

What do Tunisia, Georgia, Bangladesh, Bolivia and Indonesia have in common? All five have had presidents who studied in the USA. Did you know that 45% of the current heads of state around the world studied in the USA? Were you aware that international students represent the top 5% of the people of their country? What a window of opportunity to minister and share the love of Christ with people who may never hear the good news in their home countries and may be significant influencers in the years to come. Unfortunately 75% of these students never get to enter an American home during their time in the USA. These students come eager to study, to learn about “American” ways and to make friends with Americans. Yet few Americans are willing to cross cultural barriers to reach out to the strangers on our doorsteps.



When we learned that SEND would be pulling out of the Philippines, we began to pray and ask God, “What next?” We attended an international forum/conference on reaching the Diaspora (scattered people living in a country other than their own). During this symposium, we learned that international students studying in the USA are considered one of the Diaspora groups. They are often open to friendship and even spiritual issues, yet relatively few people are willing to minister to them. Our daughter, Hannah, has been reaching out to international students at her college. She recognizes how few Americans engage them for Christ sake. She also recommended we look at this kind of ministry. Increasingly the Lord began to burden our hearts to be more involved in doing evangelism and discipleship specifically in reaching these students.

This past summer we spent time talking with church and mission leaders, pastors, elders and our supporters about our future (we did not get to all of you but thank you for those we were able to talk with). When we suggested the idea of working with international students, everyone concurred. Many responded with, “We can really see you doing that.” We actually received no negative feedback. Upon returning to the Philippines we continued to pray and seek the Lord’s guidance. We now feel He is asking us to join CCO (Coalition for Christian Outreach) and minister to international students most likely at Penn State University in State College, PA. Penn State Univ. has over 4,000 foreign students primarily from China and India.

This is a huge change for us and to be honest, a bit scary. But we see this as a strategic opportunity to introduce the claims of Christ to those who might never hear. Having lived overseas for 23 years, we know what it is like to be a foreigner. We have learned how to befriend and the need to be befriended! Our plan is to return to the USA around mid-May, 2010. We will spend June taking the orientation course for CCO and then move to State College in July/ August. International students arrive mid-August so we hope to be involved in the opening activities. More details will follow.

You have been such faithful partners with us over our many years of serving in the Philippines. We continue to need your financial and prayer support as we venture into this new ministry. However, we do not want to obligate anyone to staying with us. If you feel that you can no longer be partners with us, we understand. It would be helpful if you could let us know if you would like to remain partners with us. Information about how and when to change financial donations will be explained later. We

deeply appreciate all that you have invested in us and look forward to a continued ministry of reaching the world for Christ.

Let us know if you would like more info about CCO or see their website [www.ccojubilee.org](http://www.ccojubilee.org)

By His Grace,

Walt & Sue Johnston

### **Flood Update**

Thank you for praying! The second major typhoon spared Manila, but unfortunately caused major flood and landslide destruction in the northern Philippines. So the Philippines is reeling from a series of major disaster that has ruined many houses, towns and large amounts of rice fields, not to mention roads, schools, etc. Piles of garbage clutter the sides of the roads in Manila.



Fortunately, the 2 families that moved in with us, found small apartments and are trying to re-build their lives. Students from Indiana University and PITT Univ., donated money to replace the one family's washing machine which was swept away in the flood. Marissa and Alvin were thrilled when we took them shopping yesterday. Marissa said she had prayed every day for a washing machine. We ask you to pray for wisdom in ministering to the people who come to our gate. He is helping us with Marissa and other families. Their needs are great.



SEND has set up a Relief Fund for the typhoon. If anyone wants to help, we'd be glad to bless those who in need.



---

ADDRESS: Box 1415 QCPO, 1154 Quezon City, Philippines  
EMAIL: [walt1636@gmail.com](mailto:walt1636@gmail.com); [sue1636@gmail.com](mailto:sue1636@gmail.com)