

District NYI President's Report

MAY 14, 2016

Pastor Ian, Pastor Steve, Students, Young Adults and my Canada Central Family,

NYI has gone through a year of transition. In October, our NYI President Arun Thangaraj resigned and left a void on our Council. I'd like to express my gratitude to Arun for the 23 years on the District NYI Council, 13 of which serving as NYI President. As a result of Arun's resignation, I was appointed by the District Advisory Board as interim District NYI President.

As the NYI Council had to adjust to the leadership change, it presented an opportunity to look at the strengths and giftings of people on Council to serve Canada Central District Youth and Young Adults. Council looked at the Canada Field NYI, USA/Canada NYI and also the Global NYI to develop a vision for this District. Each website and document that was read, reflected the same thing, "Calling our generation to a dynamic life in Christ.", through evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development.

You may say, "Marg. NYI isn't calling your generation." Don't you mean that NYI is calling their peer group? No. I don't mean that at all. While that is true, our teens can model living a dynamic life in Christ to their own age group, they also model it for me. They can model it for you. In April, six Youth Pastors and Leaders attended a Canada Field NYI conference in Calgary called CONNECT. Once again, I attended as the oldest youth leader in the group, and once again, I walked away encouraged and inspired with ideas from young people that were a fraction of my age. We need our teens and young adults to challenge us to take risks from time to time and trust that the Holy Spirit is truly leading and directing us. They may not have the experience, but they have the passion to do things that most of us would never dare to attempt.

In March, four members of the NYI Council went to the District Presidents' Leadership Conference in Boston. It was there that we heard of the history of NYI and vision for the future from NYI Global Director, Gary Hartke. We need to know our past so we have confidence in our future. We heard about the "Message" of the Nazarene Church in the late 1800's that challenged young people to form the first NYI - then known as NYPS in 1923. That formed group started to set the pace for the church - and

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the church grew - that became the "Mission". In 1976 NYPS was changed to NYI. We began to develop programs and curriculum and structured ourselves to the point where we lost the Mission of NYI. Gary Hartke pointed out that while programs and curriculum are important, the Mission is what is really important. Creating opportunity for people to lead a dynamic life in Christ.

In October and November, members of the NYI Council attended discipleship training courses. We hosted one in Ottawa to be able to accommodate and encourage our Quebec District NYI. Calvin Russell, from Youth Unlimited, lead a full weekend training on the 4 Chairs Discipleship development. As that began to resonate with the Canada Central District NYI, we now are looking at things more purposefully. The 4 Chairs Discipleship training showed the 4 development stages and strategies in assisting growth in discipleship. As your NYI Council looks at future training opportunities, event plans and retreats, our focus for this next year will be discipleship training.

NYC 2015 was attended by 23 students and 4 sponsors. Many of the reports coming from not only Canada Central District but across Canada and the US said this was a time of personal challenge and a time to renew commitments to Christ. I'd like to take a moment to read a commitment card that was shared anonymously during one of the services. "At NYC 2015, I believe God is calling me to: take up ministry and when I get older, I should open a church so I can help people with whatever they are going through." Another one says "I believe God is calling me to: grow in faith and be an example for others." Thank you Pastor Jani for leading Canada Central District in this opportunity for our teens to live a dynamic life for Christ.

As we looked at the upcoming year, NYI wants to not just have events for the sake of an event. We want each gathering to be intentional - to meet a need. Most of the recent research studies done for millennials reflects their heart's desire to make a difference in the world. To look at social justice issues and to see what they can do to make a difference. Perhaps that is why year after year, we have returning youth and young adults return to Swaziland as part of a GO Team. They have seen what education improvements to an impoverished nation can do for

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children. As one of our teens realized when a Grade 7 girl scored top 10 in all of Swaziland's national testing for highschool, he said, "We've just helped someone's life change forever". As Council looked at planning a Fall Youth and Young Adult Retreat, we have planned around that desire. This will also meet our discipleship training initiative.

Canada Central NYI is thrilled to announce to announce that Brooklyn Lindsey will be our keynote speaker at our "Just Move" fall retreat, September 30th to October 2nd at Riverview Camp. Brooklyn has 16 years in Youth Ministry. She believes that life change is possible, that cycles can be broken, that Jesus is re-writing everyone's story. The Church of the Nazarene's "The Justice Movement" is led by Brooklyn. It's a voice for justice and compassion in the world. We believe this initiative will be appealing for many attending, and it will be a time for our District Leaders to focus on discipleship training during our small group times. An information package for "Just Move" fall retreat will be available at District Assembly. We are focusing on creating opportunities for people to live a dynamic life for Christ. Canada Central District is blessed with dedicated leaders and enthusiastic youth and young adults.

In closing, there are many people I need to thank. I'd like to thank Ann Atkinson for serving as NYI Treasurer for over 10 years. In November, Ann resigned and helped me and our new Treasurer, Jocelyn Kitzman, as we worked through yet another transition. I've worked with a great NYI Council this year as they patiently let me learn as I go and their encouragement was needed many days. This past year's NYI Council has been comprised of very gifted people. Each one brings a unique talent to compliment the others. Speaking of patience, thank you, Pastor Ian and Pastor Steve as I have inundated your email account with hundreds of emails asking a LOT of questions. Helen Thiessen, our Canada Field Youth Co-ordinator, you probably got as many emails. Thank you for your replies to all those questions. My family... they are such a blessing to me and I am so very thankful for each of them. My husband has stood behind me through all of the ministry opportunities that have come my way. While he may not attend church, he recognizes the influence of the church on his family as they reflect Christ in the way they serve each other, their church, and the communities they live in. My children are a product of NYI and the opportunities given to serve on this District. I hope

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many of you in this room today can see what investing in the life of a student can become and I am thankful to you for that. Canada Central NYI is committed to be the same investors for the students currently in NYI - your family's children, your grandchildren, and your church's students.

Lastly, I recognize none of my efforts is of any value if it wasn't for the life-changing God we serve and His sacrifice for me. As a child, my very first memory verse was Psalms 119:105. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." When I'm feeling lost or confused, it's that verse that keeps coming back. Read the Word. Be the light of Jesus. Let the Spirit direct. God is in Control.

Respectfully submitted,

Marg Stahlbaum
NYI President