My Journey

I’ve grown up in the church, and while I was young played a lot of sports. Every year I would have to explain why I wouldn’t play on Sabbath. Having, at such a young age, to stick up for what I believed helped set a foundation for my faith, which I am especially growing during my year as a student missionary. Visit https://vimeo.com/256832163 for more of Evan’s journey.

Evan W. Mcgraw,
Junior business administration major,
Pacific Union College

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“Work, for the Night Is Coming”
Five student missionaries share why they serve, and what they’ve learned.

The Pohnpei Seventh-day Adventist Mission School sits in a lush valley between the verdant mountains of the island’s interior. More than 300 students attend this K-12 school in Majuro and Pohnpei. Visit http://www.nadadventist.org/news/beyond-palm-trees-beaches-and-palms for more photos, story, and video from mission students last for the basketball game—or at school the next day—"I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've always loved the ocean and the beach, and I knew I wanted to go to an SM. I've alw...
“I love teaching [my students] classroom work, and how to pray and learn more about Jesus.”

Madeline blinked back emotion when asked about her class. “I absolutely love them; sometimes I feel like they are my kids,” Madeline says. “I have 22 of them, the biggest class in the elementary [school]. They are such a blessing, and I love teaching them classroom work, and teaching them how to pray and learn more about Jesus. It’s fun to watch the bulb light up in their brain, knowing that I helped that happen.”

Teaching her students has helped Madeline too. “I know I’m on the right career path. I feel that I’m doing something: helping change [the kids] and helping them grow.”

That isn’t to say that there aren’t tough days on the island when SMs deal with frustrations. “Some people struggle and are negative, and it could be running out of water or food, dealing with the bugs, or challenging times with students,” Madeline explains. “But we pray a lot. At staff worship in the morning, throughout the day with my students... I feel like my walk with God has become a lot stronger. I’m more optimistic in life. I just feel God all around.”

WHERE LOVES COME IN

Hannah Gregg, junior graphic design major, Union College

“Majuro wasn’t my first choice,” says Hannah. She had wanted to be a student missionary in her freshman year, but a serious knee injury caused her to postpone those plans. Hannah kept applying; Majuro was near the bottom of her list. But her other choices were not working out, and after lots of prayer she talked to a professor. He told her she should apply for the art teacher position, which she did. She was accepted the next day.

“I never considered teaching art; coming here was a God thing,” Hannah says. “So far I’ve been around a lot of great people. The other SMs I’ve met have really changed the way I think about myself and the work around me.”

Bonding with the other SMs in the program has helped prepare Hannah for teaching art and supporting the students, K-12. While younger children just love art and get excited about what she’s teaching, some of the older students have confided in Hannah about being victims of bullying and other problems. “I have no idea what these kids have gone through. They are things I won’t ever understand. But it’s been cool to be able to talk to them and help them in some small way.”

“I do struggle with my faith, and with my life in general. It’s good for a person to be in situations where they can’t do anything on their own... I’ve been praying a lot about that, too. God is always there, and I recognize it.”

Madeline Ringering begins her day teaching first graders at Pohnpei Mission School with worship. Madeline Ringering, junior elementary education major Walla Walla University

CAREER PATH

Madeline Ringering, junior elementary education major Walla Walla University

Wide wooden planks serving as benches under a roofed seating area near the staff and faculty apartments at Pohnpei Seventh-day Adventist Mission School gave us protection from the tropical sun. Taro, the school’s spunky, little black cat, weaved around Madeline, pressing her head to the SM’s hand. Grabbing the cat, Madeline gently put her on the ground and explained how she—SM—likes the hot weather and loves the people.

“I’m more of a summer girl,” says Madeline. “It’s very different than Washington. And it’s not just the weather. I call this my island home. The people are respectful, they’re more loving to visitors, and they’re not in a rush. It’s definitely island time, and just a lot of love.”

As a sixth grader Madeline went to a basketball tournament with Lindsey. “I was talking about it with God and He said, ‘This is your moment for something else’,” says Madeline. “I had a couple students who came to me after the first month or two of school and were going through terrible depression and were suicidal. I had to lean on God 100 percent for what to say, when to say it, how and when should I give them to Him, and when should I be talking to them,” says Lindsey. “I definitely don’t feel worthy to be here. It’s a situation that is so far over my head I’ve had to put it in God’s hands 100 percent.”

Lindsey may pursue global communication at Walla Walla University. She still wants to be involved in mission, but in planning and creating programs. “I love this kind of work. I want to be a tentmaker, a Paul. I want to run around the country to different cities and help those churches and be able to minister to those people. I’m looking for a degree that will help me change the world. I’ll take the leap of faith and see where the Lord is leading.”

Madeline Ringering began her day teaching first graders at Pohnpei Mission School with worship.
“I say this a lot: I think I’m learning more about myself than my students are learning from me.” Hannah adds, “We’re going to make mistakes. We’re human. We’re not perfect, even if we want to be. And that’s where God comes in, where love comes in. As I tell my students, their work doesn’t have to be perfect. I’ve been learning the same lesson.”

**ROOTED IN MISSION**

Alex Chang, senior biochemistry/premedicine major, Pacific Union College

All smiles and energy despite the withering early-afternoon heat, Alex climbed onto the tall benches under the ‘gazebo’ near the apartments on the school campus. It was time to start prepping for the school week after a busy weekend—one that included a special Ten Days of Prayer Friday night vespers at the nearest Adventist church (where Alex played piano and spoke), Sabbath church service participation, and a Vacation Bible School in a small village on Sabbath afternoon. Clipping on his mic, Alex was ready to dive into our conversation.

“I’ve had the opportunity to be on eight different mission trips, and all of that has been leading up to this year abroad in Pohnpei,” says Alex. “Mission is really in my blood.”

Alex’s great-grandfather, a pastor, had been one of the first Adventist converts in China. His grandfather had been a longtime missionary in Southeast Asia, and later a pastor in North America. His father is one of the mission trip coordinators for Alex’s home church in California. “It’s been fulfilling to be here,” explains Alex, “I feel like I’m connecting to my roots.”

After developing a keen interest in mission work in high school, Alex felt God leading him to spend a year as an SM after his junior year of college. “God planted His seed in my heart, and I was impressed to come.”

Alex is a high school Bible teacher at the K-12 mission school where more than 300 students attend. He doesn’t regret a moment of his time in Pohnpei. “A lot of people who go to be student missionaries are excited for the adventures; and they’re excited for all the cool outdoor activities they can do wherever they’re being sent,” shares Alex. “And while that’s definitely a big part of it, my favorite thing is actually the students.”

“I really was not prepared for how much I was going to love these students. I wasn’t prepared for just loving every moment of being with them in the classroom, having the opportunity to really talk about God for six hours a day with them. It’s ended up being the best year of my life so far.”

Alex continues, “I have a favorite quote: ‘God doesn’t call the qualified; He qualifies the called.’ It’s been special to see the way God opens doors; the opportunities He gives me and all the SMs around me to be involved in students’ lives; to be involved creating new programs for them; and to really make deeper relationships and deeper connections in a place halfway across the world.”

Leaning forward, Alex offers this advice: “Everyone should be a student missionary at some point in their life. There’s definitely a paradigm shift that comes from being a student missionary. When your life is dedicated to service, when your life is focused on others, when your life is focused on sharing Jesus with other people, it changes your life. You don’t go home the same. You go back home someone with a lot more experience serving the Lord. You come back as someone who has seen the awesome ways that God has worked. You’ve seen prayers answered.”

Alex, and these other student missionaries, are living the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19, 20). These experiences not only help others, but change the SMs. “Give God that year of your life, and He will take that space and time and really bless it,” says Alex. “He will help you grow. You will see the awesome ways He works in your life, as well as in the lives of the people around you.”

*Since our interview, Madeline Ringering has decided to continue as an SM for one more year. She plans to teach second grade next year, staying with the same group of students.*

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**Hannah Gregg shows a student how primary colors complement and contrast with each other during an art class at Majuro Mission School in Delap.**

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**I say this a lot: I think I’m learning more about myself than my students are learning from me.” Hannah adds, “We’re going to make mistakes. We’re human. We’re not perfect, even if we want to be. And that’s where God comes in, where love comes in. As I tell my students, their work doesn’t have to be perfect. I’ve been learning the same lesson.”**

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**Alex Chang teaches Bible class at Pohnpei Mission School.**

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**Kimberly Luste Maran is editor of Adventist Journey.**

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**Alex Chang teaches Bible class at Pohnpei Mission School.**

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**This magazine continued after**

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**Adventist Journey**

www.nadadventist.org
On Sabbath, January 20, 2018, just three days after Greensboro, North Carolina, was buried under six to eight inches of snow that canceled flights and closed schools, at least 170 refugees from six language groups braved the winter conditions to gather at the Greensboro Seventh-day Adventist Church for what they called a "Refugee Families Thanksgiving Worship." After a song service by the Karen (pronounced “Ka-BEN”) youth and opening prayer by cross-cultural church planter Fabian Reid, the event opened with a colorful parade of nations. Language groups included Nepali-speaking refugees from Bhutan and their leader from Nepal; Burmese, Karen, and Karen-speaking refugees from Myanmar; Montagnard refugees from Vietnam; and Kinyarwanda/Kiirundi-speaking refugees from Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Each group shared a brief group history and special music. Guests participating in this third annual fellowship event included a local Karenni Baptist congregation.

"It was a tremendous blessing and inspiration to join with local leaders from the Baptist [denomination] and other faith persuasions," said Carolina Conference president Leslie Louis. "I was blessed to participate in this third annual fellowship ministry to refugees." Event organizer Jimmy Shwe, who serves as both pastor of the five Karenni congregations in the conference and division-wide church planting consultant for the Karen language group, said, "I would like to encourage other groups to do it for their language groups. It doesn’t matter what religion. Just invite them and eat with them and pray with them. Build relationships with them." —Terri Saelee, Adventist Refugee and Immigration Ministries director, North American Division

On January 17, 2018, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit issued a decision in favor of Richard Tabura and Guadalupe Diaz, former employees of Kellogg USA, who were terminated in 2012 for violating the company’s policy mandating work on Saturdays (the day Tabura and Diaz observed as the Sabbath).

In its decision, justices determined that Kellogg’s "neutral employment policy”—in which all employees desiring a day off were subject to the same requirements—may not rise to the level of reasonable accommodations where personal religious practices were concerned. As such, the Tenth Circuit reversed the prior district court decision, sending the case back to the district court for trial (D.C. No. 1:14-CV-00014-TC-PMW).

"The Seventh-day Adventist Church is pleased with this watershed decision upholding the critically important right of Americans to adhere to their religious beliefs in the workplace," said Todd McFarland, associate general counsel for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Back on March 22, 2017, the two former Kellogg employees appealed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit after a lower court found insufficient evidence that the two Adventist plaintiffs were treated unfairly when they were fired for failing to work on Sabbath. The case was first argued at the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals by Gene Schaerr of Schaerr Duncan. The case was handled at the district (trial) court by Alan Reinach of the Pacific Union Conference’s Church-State Council, along with Erik Strindberg and Matt Harrison of Strindberg and Scholnick.

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The case was handled at the district (trial) court by Alan Reinach of the Pacific Union Conference’s Church-State Council, along with Erik Strindberg and Matt Harrison of Strindberg and Scholnick.
Catastrophic floods in Bangladesh!

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Many young adults are convinced that Jesus is coming soon and that the time to work is now.

Responding to His Call
Young people today are responding to His call. Like the young Anna Walker, many young adults are convinced that Jesus is coming soon and that the time to work is now. They are choosing to give their time, energy, and talents to work while it is day and to share the love of Jesus and the beautiful truths of God’s Word with those who may have a distorted view of God, or those who have no view of Him at all. They are going as student missionaries to such places as the islands of Micronesia in response to the call of their Savior, believing that the harvest truly is great and that time really is short.

As you read their stories in this edition of Adventist Journey, please pray for the young people who are now in the mission field. As glamorous as it might appear to serve on an island with coconut trees and white, sandy beaches, the work is difficult, and their sacrifice is great. Young people who have left family and friends to share the gospel of Jesus on the front lines of the mission field covet your prayers. When we pray for them we are praying for our mission field, since the islands of Micronesia are part of the Guam-Micronesia Mission, the only attached mission to the North American Division.

Let us each commit ourselves to join these young people in serving God faithfully in the mission field He has called us to, whether at home or abroad. Let us dedicate ourselves to work while it is day, for indeed the night is coming, when no one can work.

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Ken Norton is president of the Guam-Micronesia Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
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*Genesis 1:2*

“God said, ‘Let there be light!’...and there was light.”

*Genesis 1:3*

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