

Evangelism Partnership

Missionaries and Churches

Field Personnel Orientation is a time for spiritual and emotional preparation, security overviews, and cultural research.

Every International Mission Board (IMB) missionary spends seven weeks at Field Personnel Orientation (FPO), a period of training and preparation before heading to the mission field. It all takes place right here in Virginia at the International Learning Center (ILC). This training is a time for spiritual and emotional preparation, security overviews, and cultural research.

A growing partnership with SBC of Virginia churches in the central region is also creating opportunities to proclaim the Gospel throughout the Richmond area. During each Field Personnel Orientation, missionaries partner with more than 25 local churches to evangelize neighbors and the nations—and this partnership is bearing great fruit.

Pastor Kenny Van Horn of **West End Baptist Church** in Henrico is thankful for the partnership his church has with the ILC. He says, “Partnership with ILC helps strengthen our vision for collaboration



in missions and facilitates our own personal evangelism in our community. We have also seen real fruit from regularly linking up with FPOs, seeking out Gospel conversations in our neighborhood and the surrounding communities we are trying to reach.”

Missionaries and church members team up to engage in marketplace evangelism, seek out pockets of various people groups, and visit community gathering spots in hopes of starting Gospel conversations and seeing lives transformed and souls saved.

Mark Stevens, IMB’s Director of Field Personnel Orientation, says the value of this partnership is immense and the fruit is amazing! Stevens shared, “During one week in November of 2025, 429 people heard the Gospel, 13 professed faith, and 78 expressed a desire to hear more. Local church participation has been vital in ensuring that those who profess faith and who want to hear more are connected for long-term follow-up.”

This partnership also builds ongoing relationships with missionaries around the globe and fosters a culture of sending and supporting global Gospel work. Van Horn loves that this evangelism partnership gives his church “faces to remember when we are encouraged to support overseas Gospel proclamation.”

Carl Peyton, pastor of **Transformation Church** in Chesterfield, explained, “Partnering with the IMB to equip each new class of missionaries is one of the greatest privileges our church has. These men and women are stepping out in obedience to the Great Commission, often at great personal cost, to take the Gospel to places where Christ is not yet known. When our people come alongside them—teaching, encouraging, praying, and sharing real-life evangelistic experiences—they get a front-row seat to what God is doing globally. It brings mission conferences or that line item in the budget to life and makes it personal. Our members leave those weeks with a renewed fire for sharing Jesus right here at home and a deeper willingness to say ‘yes’ if God ever calls them or their kids to the nations. This partnership doesn’t just equip the missionaries we send out; it has mobilized our church to live sent.” ●



JOIN THE MISSION

*Partner With
Missionaries Passing
Through the ILC*

If your church would like to partner with missionaries passing through the International Learning Center in 2026—for evangelism or to encourage them through prayer and support—**contact Brad Russell at missions@sbcv.org.**