

The View From the Launchpad

By LISA SMART

Lisa Smart is the Director of Communications with All Nations Kansas City. She has served in missions mobilization roles for close to 20 years.



Twenty years ago, God ushered me into the world of mission mobilization through coordinating Perspectives. I've experienced Perspectives from many angles—as a student, class coordinator, instructor (once!), member of the national office staff, and as staff at Frontier Ventures.

I knew that God was using the course in people's lives that whole time (he used it in mine!), but my view was generally limited to what happened in a class and hearing stories secondhand. It wasn't until eight years ago, when I joined All Nations, a missions-sending organization, that I was thrilled to see with my own eyes the powerful role Perspectives plays in mobilizing people to lovingly follow Jesus to the ends of the earth. Darren and Crystal are one such couple.

From Dream House to Dreaming with God

"Darren Taylor, I am not getting on an airplane. You just bought me my dream house!" Those were Crystal's words after sitting through the first night of Perspectives. Her husband Darren had persuaded her

to take the class with him. After hearing talk about God's heart for the world, she assumed he was trying to turn her into a missionary. Darren and Crystal had bought their dream home six months earlier after he retired from the Navy. They were in their 40s, had good jobs, and lived near their children and grandchildren. *What more could she want?*

Darren told her he had no such intentions with her taking the class, but they at least could support missions and be good senders. He retired from the Navy looking forward to a season of ministry, and perhaps this could be part of it.

Week 15 changed the trajectory of their lives. Pam Arlund (from All Nations) spoke, bringing fliers about an unreached people group, the Japanese. At the class break, Darren took one of the fliers and put it on the table where Crystal sat. When he got home, Crystal met him at the door. Before he even entered the house, they both agreed that they were ready to go to Japan. "I would leave tomorrow!" she said. And so, this couple in retirement, living a comfortable

life, received further training with All Nations and have now sold their home in preparation for launching to Japan this year.

Pam Arlund's words aptly describe what happened in Darren and Crystal's hearts.

Perspectives helps people to see the entire message of the Bible in a way they never have before. As a result, people fall in love with the amazing God of the Bible in a fresh way. Inevitably when people know Jesus, they will long to be involved with his purposes and plans. Perspectives... is a class for all believers to discover anew how to align their hearts with God's heart.

May Perspectives unleash many more like Darren and Crystal to begin dreaming with God!

A Worthwhile Priority?

Five key leaders from All Nations International and All Nations Kansas City collectively teach over 50 Perspectives classes every year. Whenever possible, these All Nations Perspectives instructors go to classes with another person who is available to talk with students. This is a significant investment of time and resources for All Nations.

Is it worth it? We say YES.

Not only does Perspectives completely change life trajectories but it also supports and connects people who are already on the path to missions.

Mary Ho, All Nations' International Executive Leader, says, "So much of missions can be busy activities unless we can be singular and strategic. Perspectives' strategy section focuses us to aim at the bullseye of making disciples and planting and multiplying churches." These strategic priorities become a filter for students as they choose who sends them to the field, and the class is an amazing place for students to connect with instructors and organizations.

Choosing Who to Hold the Rope

Jordan, now in Sweden reaching refugees, had two All Nations speakers in a class he coordinated. He shared his interests with them, and they recommended he connect with Pam Arlund. Jordan says,

When Pam came, she started sharing about the great need for people to move to cities in Europe to reach out to all the refugees and immigrants that were coming—the very thing my wife and I were thinking about trying to do! We had breakfast with Pam and Peggy the next day, and that was the beginning of our relationship with All Nations. That summer ... we ended up reconnecting with Peggy and traveling with her to Europe for a two-week vision trip. We then did CPx that October and moved to Sweden the next year. This all started when God connected us to All Nations through Perspectives!

This story of connection has happened over and over again. Meredith Johnson, Co-Director of the All Nations Kansas City hub, says, "Perspectives offers me a chance to share my own stories and missional values in a way that helps me identify who in the audience resonates and therefore may be a good fit for our agency's culture."

From 2020–2023, just under half of those who launched to the field with All Nations came to us through Perspectives.

May the Nations before the Throne Increase

This is a tiny glimpse into the stories of lives now woven into All Nations—and thrust into the nations—through God's good work in the Perspectives course. I could tell many more stories of goers and share about the strong sending and praying teams inspired by Perspectives or those who mobilize, like me, because of Perspectives' influence.

I believe I speak for all of us at All Nations when I speak blessing over Perspectives' next 50 years:

May the Perspectives staff be rooted deeply in God, the curriculum solid, and the coordinators and instructors Spirit-filled.

May partnerships for the kingdom flourish.

May those who love the world as God does increase, and may unreached peoples be reached with Jesus' love.

May God's continued blessing be on Perspectives to multiply the nations before his throne! 