



Before



After



MATA Alumnus Accepts His First Missionary Assignment With "Samaritan's Purse"

One of the most exciting events for us at MATA is when we see a student complete the long journey required to become a missionary pilot. Just a couple of weeks ago we received a phone call from "Samaritan's Purse" in need of pilots. We forwarded this need to former MATA student, Ben Blacklock. God decided to move things quickly along, and Ben will be flying for "Samaritan's Purse" within the next couple of months. This process took Ben more than seven years to complete. When Ben first came to us for training he had zero hours of logged flight time. In the first photo he is 2nd from the left after passing FAA flight exams to earn his Private Pilot Certification. Afterwards he quickly sprung a surprise on us and informed us that he is the son of a former missionary pilot from MAF. He had proved himself an excellent pilot, free from riding his father's coat-tails. That summer he gained experience as a co-pilot assisting in the flying of travelers to a vacation lodge located in a remote region of Canada. Ben invested the following year at MATA earning both his Instrument Rating and Commercial Pilot certifications. This enabled him to fly as the Pilot In Command (PIC) and be paid to transport vacationers to the lodge the following summer. Since then, Ben has gained thousands of hours of experience flying for a number of commercial operations including one in the South Pacific (in the second photo 2nd from the right). The airplanes he flies have been getting bigger and more varied which has well prepared him for Missionary Pilot duties.



Security Update Due to a rash of break-ins of nearby hangars and vandalism of an aircraft close to the academy, the MATA board voted for the installation of a security system to protect the resources



God has entrusted us with. MATA staff and friends, including myself, have been involved with this project for the last few months.

The server and almost all the cameras have now been installed.



Missions Conferences The month of February was active with mission exhibits and seminars in Vancouver, BC, and a four-day event at a church in Arlington, WA. These events give MATA staff and students opportunities to interact and network with other mission agencies. We are able to encourage one another, learn new ideas, and see how God is working around the world. Part of my job is creating new videos, and it was fun to meet an expert director and film-maker from South Korea, Sung-Soo-Lee. Becky and I enjoyed his film "A Journey To Forgive", which was selected to be shown at the Vancouver Missions Fest event.

Prayer: During the past couple of months our daughter-in-law Paulina has traveled to London and San Antonio to assist her sister Melissa through the tragic and heartbreaking collapse of her husband Will. Unfortunately he has been diagnosed as "Persistent Vegetative". Due to Will's wishes, Melissa and the doctors made the difficult decision of removing fluids and nutrition. We are now just waiting. Please pray for Melissa and their 11-year-old son Matthew during this extremely difficult time. Please pray also for Paulina as she has been a rock to her family and hasn't yet had time to grieve the impending loss of her brother-in-law. And pray for logistics for Graham and Paulina to go to Texas for a funeral when Will passes.

Prayer: Please continue to pray for new staff to fill the positions of "Chief of Maintenance" and "Foreigner Liaison" to administer FAA Part 141 so we can train foreign missionary students. Also, pray for a favorable review and acceptance by the FAA to upgrade MATA's status as a result of our recent application to train foreign students under the Part 141 rules. Stay tuned - we hope to hear soon from the FAA.

Please pray for our son Graham. He continues to work in Stanwood during nights, attend school in Bellingham during daytime, and be a husband and a dad of three, while dealing with the family issues of Paulina's brother-in-law. Pray for endurance as he expects to finish school at the end of June.



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