

NEWS FROM UTAH

AIM class of 2011

September-October

Salt Lake City

Hello! I hope this newsletter finds you all in good spirits! I have now completed my time as an AIMer and am on my way

to visit you all in Alaska! I can't tell you how excited I am to see you all! I feel like it was only yesterday that I stepped into Utah, yet it has been 14 months.

Preparing for a new beginning...

As I worked in Utah, I focused on some main ministries. Up until July, my biggest ministry was teaching English as a second language. If you recall, my student was from Afghanistan and belonged to the Muslim religion. Though she wasn't anywhere near to being converted, we have a very good friendship from that time spent together. She has made it very clear that I'm not to stop visiting her just because our English lessons are over.

Another of the bigger ministries was working with the teenagers in the church, specifically the girls. When this first started, things weren't looking very hopeful, it was difficult to get close to the girls. More than 6 months later is when we started to see progress. And now, the goal to get close to the girls has been achieved. Through many hours of talking over coffee or before and after church, those relationships have grown more than I imagined. I'm looking forward to coming back to Utah and continue those friendships.

Overall, my time here in Salt Lake City has been fantastic! And its not over just yet! In about 2 months, I will travel back to Utah to begin college and continue growing the relationships made here. I plan to make Utah my home at least until I finish college. I have always been interested in being a nurse, so I'll begin classes for that and eventually work my way up to a doctor. I'd like to use those skills to work overseas.

The local church has taught me many things from the first time I stepped into the church. I was surprised to see how different things were done there and how small and intimate the family was. What surprised me the most was how hard everyone worked to reach out to the community and how much they genuinely cared for others. The next thing to surprise me was how well the church responded to their Mormon community, not spitefully but with love. I have learned that in 14 months, I'm curious to see how much I can learn in a few years.

Though I am finished with my AIM time, I still need to graduate. My whole class will graduate in Lubbock, Texas in March of 2014.

I don't know how to let you know how grateful I am for everything you as my supporters have done for me while I was studying in Lubbock and working in Salt Lake City. I know I couldn't have done it without your financial support. You have encouraged me while I was in Utah to keep on working and loving people. Thank you isn't enough, but its all I can say.

I can't wait to see you all again and to see what has happened in your life since I left. See you soon!!

Love,
Beta Katkus