

# RECOMMENDATIONS IN CONNECTING WITH ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

*TO SERVE YOU AS YOU SERVE YOUR STUDENTS...*

***Things I wish my staffworker understood about being Asian American:***

- The role my family may or not play in my life: decision-making, vacations, career choice.
- That I *am* an ethnic minority
- There are times I might identify more with the majority culture and times when I might identify more with my Asian culture and it doesn't necessarily mean I'm confused about my identity (although it *might* mean I'm confused and sorting it out).
- Continuing education is important because graduate school may be important to my family or my community or both.
- That I might not agree with everything in *Following Jesus Without Dishonoring Your Parents*.
- That if I'm *not* an East Asian American, I may not feel that at home in InterVarsity's Asian American student gatherings. (I.e., Vietnamese, Filipinos, South Asians, and bi-racial Asian Americans as well.)
- It's sometimes hard for me to feel well-represented at the "top" when there are few Asian American national leaders.

***Questions that would be helpful for my supervisor to ask me:***

- Would it be appropriate for me to meet your parents and/or siblings? If so, when and how?
- What are your parents' aspirations and dreams for you? What family obligations or responsibilities do you carry—financial or otherwise? How can we as an organization or me as your staffworker help you meet them?
- What was it like growing up in your family? What were your fondest memories? Your hardest memories? What kinds of relationships do you have with your mom? Dad? Each sibling?
- Where do you fall in the family order? If you are the oldest child, what is that like for you? Do you have any special responsibilities?
- Are there any family events that are important for you to be at?
- What was immigration like for your ancestors?
- What generation are you?
- What stories from your family history "sticks with you" and has shaped you personally?
- What roles or assignments would you be interested in taking on as part of our Exec team (or whatever team they are a part of)?
- (For Chapter Leaders) If my tendency is not to speak up much in meetings, before the meeting ask me about my thoughts about \_\_\_\_ (a topic to be discussed in the meeting)? Affirm any good ideas or insights shared to encourage confidence and prime the pump for them to bring it up during the meeting. Or at the meeting, you could take the initiative by saying you were talking with \_\_\_\_, she had a great idea.
- (After a meeting when I didn't say much) What were you thinking about \_\_\_\_ (whatever we were discussing)?
- (For Japanese American students) How did the WW2 internment affect your family?
- (For Taiwanese American students) Do you think of yourself more so as a Chinese American or a Taiwanese American?
- What are your favorite foods and when can we eat them together?