



# FIGT Connections

Where Research Comes to Life

## Families in Global Transition

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Families in Global Transition leads the worldwide community in empowering families and those who serve them in global transition. FIGT is the premier advocate and educational resource for families, organizations and service providers.

## SWISS AFFILIATE EVENT - MARCH 27, 2012

### Preparing for Transition to University International School of Geneva, La Chataigneraie Campus

The Swiss affiliate of FIGT gathered a cross-section of about 80 international students, parents, and professionals (eg., educators, relocation specialists, corporate HR, psychotherapists) from the Geneva - Lausanne region to participate in an evening focused on the non-academic aspects of transitioning to university and its impact on students and families. Through students' and graduates stories (Chloe Smith and Vicky Long), a virtual presentation by Tina Quick, based on her new book *The Global Nomad's Guide to University Transition*, and a panel comprised of a parent (Christina Surtees), a graduate (Mera Okello), educators from different international schools (Robyn Tyner and Alan Ackroyd), and a psychologist moderator (Dr. Michèle Lewis O'Donnell), various themes relevant to university transition were discussed. These included, TCK identity development, the transition cycle, unresolved grief, relationships with peers and answering the question, "Where are you from?", the potentially isolating dynamic of social networks, affluence and the need to learn budgeting, the broader social realities beyond the privileged "cocoon", and how to deal with good-byes.



Attendees at the Swiss Affiliate function



Tina Quick, FIGT Program Chair, virtually

The positive struggle to build a personal identity, woven of the complexities of a culturally diverse and enriched life experience, was elaborated upon by parents during the discussion time and captured in the hopeful conclusion of a student essay quoted by a panelist: "I know that eventually, something amazing will emerge from the tangled mess, all the better because of the struggles." Gabriel Mallows, UK, born in Brazil; English essay, age 15, ENP, Lycée International, Ferney-Voltaire, France.

France.

A special thanks to the FIGT Switzerland volunteer team of dedicated professionals



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coordinating the event: Suellen Bonga (Connecting Worlds and Cultures), Patricia Gros-Piron (TPAQ), Denise Nickerson (Allegory House), Sanda Ionescu (The Culture Broker), as well as Debbie King, of the International School of Geneva, for her logistical and technical assistance.

Submitted by Dr. Michèle Lewis O'Donnell, Co-chair, FIGT Switzerland



Panelists

FOOD FEEDBACK

If you didn't join us at the FIGT Conference this year you missed a seriously delicious time. The Thursday night ice-breaker revolved around a food quiz that had attendees hustling along the sponsor tables looking for answers, and tasting morsels taken from recipes already submitted for the FIGT Cookbook.

For no prize whatsoever, can you identify the following two photos, taken from the many used in the quiz so ably concocted by Dottie Byers and Anne Pereira?

It's not too late to submit your favorite recipes to the FIGT Where is Home Cookbook! You can do it online - simply go to:

[www.typensave.com](http://www.typensave.com)

Enter the login: FIGTCB

Enter the password: xp44t

The cut-off date for recipe submission is June 1, 2012.



Photo by Anne Copeland

The Where is Home Cookbook will be published by the end of 2012, just in time for holiday gifts!

Thank you for supporting this worthwhile project and remember all proceeds go to support the FIGT David C. Pollock Scholarship Program.

And just so you know how much our Pollock Scholars benefit from the chance to attend an FIGT Conference, here is a quote from one of the 2012 Scholars, Cerine Jin.

"I was so overwhelmed of the people's interest in my story that I was walking around telling everyone about my booklet. I don't do that... now back in Korea, I feel extremely embarrassed."



Photo by Dottie Byers

Don't be embarrassed Cerine - you and other attendees have just been zapped by the power of FIGT!

CHATTERINGS FROM THE BOARD ROOM

Board terms are usually for two years but in exceptional cases, as with Dottie Byers, they are extended, and extended again. Some of you will recall her memorable role as Cruise Director, the culmination of months of hard behind-the-scenes work organising the smooth operations of the last few FIGT Conferences. Behind her sparkling and quick humor you will find a sharp business acumen accompanying her deep personal, and professional, understanding of the needs of global families. Not

happy to merely support his wife from a distance, Kelly Byers, has volunteered his technological know-how to many conference speakers, ensuring a seamless flow of presentations. The Byers - two exceptional people FIGT has been lucky to have aboard!

#### Tribute from the FIGT President - Peggy Love

Dottie Byers has been an integral part of the FIGT family for many years, and it is with sadness we have had to accept her resignation. Her contributions as both a participant in the annual conference, and as an Officer and member of the Board of Directors will long be remembered by conference attendees and by her fellow board members. Dottie will be a hard act to follow.



Dottie's tenure on the Board of Directors began in 2008. She has been the Nominating Committee Chair, Vice President and Conference Planning Chair, but her involvement has spread far beyond the influence of those two areas. From hosting board dinners at her lovely home to escorting board members to the rodeo when the conference was in Houston, Dottie always went above and beyond, and she is always involved, leading a project. Some of her recent innovative ideas for fundraising include; an FIGT cookbook and raffle tickets for high-end prizes and fun ways to get attendees to buy them. The list goes on and on. But Dottie is not only involved in the "fun" part. During the past year she has taken on important projects that include re-writing the bylaws, and restructuring the association to become a membership organization. And as always, Dottie has kept all of us on our toes.

A small organization relies on many. Dottie Byers works hard as part of a team. She has set a great example for all of us as she demonstrates how to juggle a lot of balls without any of them falling. Thank you, Dottie. You will be missed. The board wishes you good luck with your future endeavors and we look forward to staying in touch.

- Peggy Love

We also say good-bye to Judy Rickatson, our Social Media Director. Judy first came to FIGT as a volunteer in 2010. Her sensitivity to the needs of globally mobile families made her a perfect fit for the organization. Judy's technological savvy has helped launch FIGT into the modern world of information sharing. Much of what you see from FIGT on your computer screen has been generated, monitored, or encouraged by Judy. Unfortunately she could not be at this year's conference to experience the rewards of the hard work she put in over the past year but she was, and will be, continually working to keep FIGT in the lime light. Thank you, Judy, for all you have done and continue to do, despite stepping off from the board, to keep us all connected.



Farewell also to Apple Gidley who has been working behind the FIGT scenes for many years even before becoming a board member. FIGT has benefited enormously from her understanding of the joys and challenges of global families and her skills as a writer. She has served on the Program Committee in many roles and had a large part in shaping this year's conference. Apple has been a valued member of our FIGT board firstly as Program Committee Co-Chair and more recently as the Communications Director. Her enthusiasm, attention to detail and work ethic made her the perfect colleague. Thank you, Apple, for all you have done and continue to do as an advocate for families in global transition.



Dr. Anne Copeland was honored at this year's conference for the work she has done serving as FIGT Program Director from 2007-2012. Anne has been involved with FIGT since 2001, first as a speaker, then Program Committee Co-chair, Board member then Program Director. While Anne and the others will be missed for their unique contributions to the organization, we rest assured they will continue to be with us as friends, supporters, volunteers and cheerleaders.

