

## FOF delegate reflects on experience

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### Future officers met at College for Officer Training at Crestmont

*By Laura Fyn –*

As I got myself ready to attend the Future Officers Fellowship (FOF) retreat, I couldn't believe that my first time attending this annual event would be from the perspective of an accepted candidate. A year ago, I would've answered the classic "Are you going to be an officer?" question with a resounding "No," followed by a hesitant, "Well...if he calls me to become one, then I will." When that call to officership came to me this past June, it was time for me to act on what I had professed.

We met Feb. 6 in a ballroom at the Torrance Marriott Hotel in Torrance, Calif., anxiously waiting for what was sure to be a spirit-led weekend led by Territorial Candidates' Secretaries Major Bob and Captain Joanne Loungamath. Cadet Larry Carmichael gave his testimony, grounded in Proverbs 3, prompting the question, "Are we living for comfort, or Christ?" Territorial Commander Commissioner James Knaggs preached from Matthew 4:18-22, reminding us that we must always trust and then obey, just as Simon Peter and Andrew followed Jesus, without a second thought. Knaggs challenged us with this life-changing statement: "The question isn't 'how' God will use you, its 'will you follow?' Respond to Jesus, and he will work out the questions." Even in that first meeting, many of us were already being convicted by the weekend's theme, "Trust and Obey."

Saturday morning found the chapel at the Crestmont College for Officer Training (CFOT) crammed full as we started our day in worship. Prospective Candidate Heather McBride gave her testimony, saying, "...the word of God disarmed the lies of the enemy" in her own life. Captain Emmanuel

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Masango, divisional youth and candidates' secretary for the Cascade Division, brought us the word of God with a sense of urgency. We felt the power of the Holy Spirit moving as he said, "...if you trust him, trust him enough to get up and do it!"

We then had the opportunity to choose three different rotations on a variety of topics, held in the classrooms at CFOT. As I sat in Major Brian Bearchell's class on "Stewardship," Captain Annalise Francis' workshop on "How to Study the Bible," and Major Nancy Helms-Cox's panel on "The Cadet/Officer Life," my future as a "Joyful Intercessor" and future Salvation Army officer began to feel even more real to me.

As each department head at CFOT spoke in the afternoon and tours around the college began, I felt myself starting to feel slightly overwhelmed, but excited for the training that I will receive over the next two years in order to become a full-time minister in The Salvation Army. The evening was full of fellowship and laughter as we dined and were entertained by Pennsylvania's classic traveling interactive event, "The Brain Show."

Sunday morning began with continental breakfast and Bible study shared in our divisional delegation groups, followed by the holiness meeting. After the testimony of Accepted Candidate Leah Fowler of what it means to completely trust God to direct your path, Territorial Program Secretary Lt. Colonel Edward Hill preached, using Proverbs 3 and Matthew 16:24 as the focal points. He implored us that we must, as William Borden once said, "Say 'no' to self, say 'yes' to Jesus every time!" He compelled us all to remove the hindrances to trust, to live out our trust and to live a consecrated life by having "...no reserves, no retreats, and no regrets." As many delegates came to the altar to meet with God, it was clear that we were all meant to be in the same place for this weekend.

As Madge Unsworth once said, "God will not call his people to a career but to a life of obedience." No matter what God has in store for us, we know that he fervently desires for us all to "trust and obey," in all matters, without hesitation about the future.