

Mission Aviation Training Academy



MATAUSA

WWW.MATA-USA.ORG

425-231-5855

"Passing the Baton"

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven ..."

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Stacie and I visited MATA in June 2006, while on furlough from the Philippines where we were serving with New Tribes Mission. During our visit we met Lori Crowell, the widow of MATA's founder Pastor Mike Crowell, and their son Jeremy who was working as a flight instructor and mechanic. Lori said, "Gordon is in Alaska, and will be excited to meet you when he gets back." *We had no idea who Gordon was.*

In 2004, Gordon quit his job at Smith Gardens in Marysville to serve full-time at MATA. Then, with the death of Mike Crowell, Gordon agreed to serve as "interim" Executive Director for a couple months until a new Executive Director was found. The rest is history... Gordon served as Executive Director from June 2005 to September 2016: 11 years and 3 months, as a self-supporting missionary volunteer. In addition, he raised countless thousands of dollars to support Kako Retreat Center's summer Bible camps for Native Alaskans. He has flown hundreds of hours, and many thousands of miles, supporting Kako's ministry, and has introduced MATA students to bush flying in Alaska as a ministry where several of them now serve.



In September 2006, Stacie and I joined MATA as full-time volunteers. We hadn't been at MATA long before we heard Lori telling us about Dary Finck... "Dary this, Dary Finck that, Jeremy and Dary..." *Who was this Dary Finck?*

Dary grew up as a missionary kid in Senegal, Africa. After high school he came to the U.S., and in Colorado met Brandon Penkoff (MATA alumnus with JAARS in Cameroon), who was on his way to Washington to train as a missionary pilot. Dary came to MATA with Brandon in 2001 and earned his Private Pilot certificate, his Instrument Rating, and Commercial Pilot Certificate along with earning his A&P Mechanics Certificate from Everett Community College. Sensing a call to join the U.S. Army, Dary served in Iraq until severely wounded in action. God miraculously spared Dary's life and he was eventually med-evac'ed back to U.S. After 14 surgeries and months of recuperation and rehabilitation, he was medically retired from the Army. While recuperating at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, he married his sweetheart, Anna. After relocating to Arlington, Washington, and weaning himself off of painkillers, Dary had his FAA pilot and aviation mechanic privileges reinstated. Dary has served at MATA since 2010.

Two years ago Gordon asked us to find a new Executive Director because he needed more time at home to help Elaine, who had cancer surgery and chemotherapy in 2009. The Board of Directors finally honored Gordon's request, and at the meeting on Tuesday, September 20, we named Dary Finck the new Executive Director. It has been a pleasure, and a blessing, to serve alongside Gordon for these past 10 years. As we "pass the baton" to Dary, we look forward to all God will do through his leadership on the next leg of the relay.

Serving Him together,

Gary Elliott, Chairman of the Board, MATA



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ARLINGTON, WA
PERMIT No. 383

MISSION AVIATION TRAINING ACADEMY
MATA
P.O. Box 3655
19002 59th Dr. NE
Arlington, WA 98223
Return Service Requested

You're invited
to MATA's Annual "Thank You"
luncheon for you, our supporters!

Complimentary catered lunch and recap of all the Lord did
through MATA and your partnership in **2016**.
We could not do what we do, without you!

MEDALLION HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER

16710 SMOKEY POINT BOULEVARD, ARLINGTON, WA, 98223

Saturday, November 12, 2016
11:30am—3:30pm

Open House at the MATA hangar to follow

Please RSVP by Friday, November 4, 2016

info@mata-usa.org

425-231-5855

This year's lunch will include
*a special recognition
of Gordon Bakke*
for 11 years and 3 months
of leadership at MATA

*There will be a basket
available to place personal
cards for the Bakkes*

