God used Jesus’ words, “Go and make disciples of all nations,” to give Zach a passion to share the gospel. Growing up, Zach learned a little of several languages and began to desire to join Wycliffe. Later, after Zach finished a Computer Engineering B.A., God gave him a Wycliffe computer programming internship and led him to join the organization and start GIAL training. In December 2014, Zach completed a Language Development M.A. with a Survey concentration.

Christy’s mother planted a seed by telling her as a little girl that nurses and teachers were greatly needed in overseas ministry. After receiving her B.A. in Elementary Education and Fine Arts, Christy enjoyed teaching children Spanish for several years. Still, she prayed, “God, if you don’t want me to stay here, you better make me feel uncomfortable.” Soon afterward, the school made her job part-time and took her benefits away. Meanwhile, some of Christy’s friends reminded her, “Wycliffe needs teachers,” naming Cameroon as one of the country options. Years earlier, while listening to a guest speaker from Cameroon, Christy had heard God saying, “What about you? I want you to go to Cameroon!” So Christy eventually went to Cameroon and taught the children of cross-cultural workers with SIL. Many people there suggested she study at GIAL—and she listened. In December 2014, Christy graduated with her M.A. in Applied Anthropology and a concentration in Scripture Engagement.

Now Zach and Christy work with SIL in Nigeria. Zach is a Survey Consultant and the Assistant Director for Scripture Engagement, and Christy is a Scripture Engagement Specialist. Zach leads a team in recording audio Scriptures, developing local Scripture-based ethnoarts, and teaching people how to conduct audio Bible studies. Christy leads audio Bible study trainings, manages a mother-daughter program, and trains teachers for children’s oral Bible storying Sunday School.

At the Bible Translation Conference (co-sponsored by GIAL) in October 2017, Zach presented both his paper, “Seed Scattered in Seventy-Seven Languages: The State of Vernacular Scripture Engagement in Nigeria,” and a paper by colleagues about Scripture listening and reading groups in Nigeria. This conference allowed him to share his and his colleagues’ fieldwork and learn invaluable lessons from other cross-cultural workers.

Wayne Dye’s GIAL Scripture Engagement class was vital in preparing Zach for “the myriad of Scripture engagement issues” he now encounters. Furthermore, Pete Unseth’s classes on survey and language development taught him to serve communities effectively and see Bible translation’s key role in language development, which Zach explained is “really important in Nigeria, especially for church leaders to grasp.”

About their fellowship with other GIAL students, Zach said, “We not only studied together, [but also] ran together, played Frisbee together, prayed together, memorized whole books of the Bible together...We still encourage other by e-mail, pray for each other, and meet whenever and wherever we can.”

Please pray for Zach and Christy in their future ministry roles. They’ve been praying for God to start an oral Bible storying movement (called “OneStory”) in Nigeria—let’s join them in this bold prayer!
The following testimonial was shared with GIAL by the Wycliffe Foundation.

Sandra (“Sandy”) grew up in the 1950s and developed a love for missions while in the Girls’ Auxiliary at the little Baptist church her family attended.

A retired Registered Nurse, with two fine sons, two wonderful daughters-in-law and seven amazing grandchildren, Sandy was married for 48 years. When her husband died rather suddenly in 2012, in her grief she turned to her Lord and Savior, spending more and more time in His Word, which she already loved. “God began to show me who I was without my husband and to clarify how I should use my many blessings for His glory.”

When Sandy’s long-time friend from high school, Margaret, moved back to Arlington (TX) after she retired as a missionary to Brazil, she started working at GIAL; she invited Sandy to tour the campus. “So with one son, his wife and four children in tow, I toured the GIAL campus. It was then that my passion for Bible translation and for training those called into that special service began.”

“As I prayed about the way God wanted me to use some of my resources, it was an easy decision to include GIAL along with my support of Wycliffe Bible Translators and JAARS. They beautifully work together to accomplish the monumental task of bringing God’s precious Word to peoples around the world in their heart language.”

Sandy decided to make her gift via a charitable gift annuity with the Wycliffe Foundation*. In exchange for her charitable gift, the annuity pays her a fixed lifetime income (part of which is tax-free) she can never outlive, generates an income tax deduction, and provides her the opportunity to make an impactful gift to the work and ministry of GIAL and Bible translation. It was easy to do with the assistance of a Wycliffe Foundation Gift Planning Advisor.

Should You Consider a Charitable Gift Annuity? Do you want your will to help the ministry of GIAL to reach the Bibleless? Are you interested in supplementing your retirement needs with an increased secure income for your lifetime? If so, a charitable gift annuity is worth your while to consider.

If you would like to see how a charitable gift annuity can work for you, we would be happy to assist and even send you a personalized illustration. Please contact Michael Occhipinti at (800) 681-5103 or michael_occhipinti@wycliffe.org.

*The Wycliffe Foundation is a support organization for the partner organizations of Wycliffe USA: GIAL, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Seed Company, JAARS, and SIL. The mission of the Wycliffe Foundation is to provide professional, donor-centered charitable gift and estate planning services, helping people use their God-given assets to impact His Kingdom through Bible translation.