There is a need for greater understanding of internationalism.
A personal perspective from Jim Loring, North Georgia Technical College Photography Instructor

There are many crisis points around the world that call for our understanding. For example, worldwide there are more than forty million refugees. But what does it mean to be a refugee? For me, three words sum it up; fear, trauma, and struggle. With your home and country in ruins you live in constant fear. Your children have witnessed unthinkable atrocity and you struggle to survive every day.

Making connections for our students, broadening horizons as well as acquiring essential skills should be a part of their college journey.

Before teaching, I was an international photojournalist. Now, after eight years at NGTC I still take advantage of the breaks to travel overseas – Mali in 2012, Lebanon in 2014. Why do I travel? How better to gain understanding of international issues such as food shortage, conflict, changes in the natural world? How better to gain firsthand knowledge and stay connected? How better to pass these lessons on to students?

Photojournalism is more than my career, it is my passion. More than ever we need good investigative journalism that digs deep to seek the truth. So much ‘news’ is really just commentary rather than actual reporting, and we desperately need to teach the next generation of photographers and journalists the value of their potential contribution.

“Our students trust the experience of our instructors,” said NGTC President Dr. Gail Thaxton. “The bridge of respect between student and instructor is one of the hallmarks of North Georgia Tech’s long-standing reputation in the community and in industries throughout the state. Jim demonstrates this by teaming his passion for the art of photography with an urgency to tell a story and take his students beyond the lens of the classroom and out into the world.”

Image caption:
What does it mean to be a Syrian refugee? With your home and country in ruins you live in constant fear. You have witnessed atrocity and struggle through each day not knowing if you will survive.
Credit: Jim Loring, Lebanon 2014