

# CONNECTION

chi alpha

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 2 FALL 2016



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Check out how Chi Alpha is reaching Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

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See what God is doing this fall on campuses across the country.

## BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS

Galatians 6:2,5 says, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.... For each will have to bear his own load." While on the surface these two statements seem to contradict each other, a look at the Greek words and the context make the meaning clear. The Greek word for burden, *baros*, means heaviness, weight, burden, trouble. While the word *phortion* means "load," often used for the cargo of a ship. The context shows the first refers to helping fellow believers to carry what is too much for them, while the latter refers to the responsibility each has to carry their personal load.

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Your gifts to the Minority Mobilization Fund are making a difference to these 2016 grant recipients:

Bethany Baldwin  
Khumbo Banda  
Andria Brown  
Moriah Burrell  
Joshua Byrd  
Courtney Celestine  
Steven DeJesus  
Gabriel Flores

Marcus Floyd  
Isaac Fulton  
Kevin Guthrie  
Judith Gutierrez  
Heather McEntee  
Sir James Offerd  
Brian Udechukwu  
Adrian Valencia

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## CHI ALPHA CONNECTION

Volume 9 / Issue 2 / Fall 2016

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*Chi Alpha Connection* is a quarterly publication  
of Chi Alpha Campus Ministries, U.S.A.  
Assemblies of God U.S. Missions  
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Special thanks to BGMCM for funding this project.

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# EDITORIAL

BY E. SCOTT MARTIN



We like our affinity groups. This is where we relate and feel comfortable with others, and people will gravitate to their preferred affinity groups. Athletes like to hang out with athletes, musicians with musicians, and debaters with debaters. What I have observed though is the affinity group of ethnicity becomes a prevailing affinity group; black athletes like to hang with black athletes and white athletes generally prefer to hang with white athletes. Why? Because the cultural implications of ethnicity are generally stronger than other affinities, and culture is a comfort zone.

Our mission field, the secular university, in most instances is a diverse institution. I believe a healthy Chi Alpha group will represent the ethnic demographics of the campus it serves. I am very pleased with the advancement of diversity amongst our student involvement in local Chi Alpha groups. According to the 2015 Chi Alpha census data completed and returned to National Chi Alpha (10,771 students), approximately 66% of our students participating at Chi Alpha events were reported as other than Caucasian. Note that this figure comes from only one third of our Chi Alpha groups, so we cannot quote it as accurate. However, based upon my extensive travels in our Chi Alpha groups across the country, I would suggest it is not too far off. My point is, we are doing a good job being ethnically inclusive amongst students in our groups.

The need for ethnic cultural sensitivities must continue to be in the forefront of our local Chi Alpha group if we are to grow in a continually expanding ethnically diverse environment on the university. The way we fellowship, pray, worship, minister, and preach all need consideration through the lens of ethnic diversity or we endanger our ministries to the proclivity to only gather our affinity group.

The indubitable problems we face today are the impediments preventing ethnic minorities from joining Chi Alpha's missionary force. In 2015, 83% of affiliated Chi Alpha staff were of European American descent. It is evident that our missionary force is predominately white and not a true representation of the student demographic in Chi Alpha. The Diversity Task Group has done an excellent job identifying various impediments preventing ethnic minority Chi Alpha graduates from “giving a year” in missions (AGWM and Chi Alpha) as well as becoming long-term Chi Alpha missionaries. Under the adroit leadership of Belkis Lehman they continue to address the issues and present solutions to our movement to assist our ethnic minority brothers and sisters in following their missionary call.

May each of us and missionaries do all we can to be culturally sensitive to opening doors of the Kingdom of God to the ethnic minorities to whom we minister.

**E. SCOTT MARTIN** is the seventh national director of Chi Alpha Campus Ministries, U.S.A. He previously served as the Student Mission Director for 18 years. He has served with Chi Alpha since May 1986, where he pioneered Chi Alpha on The University of Arizona. He and his family along with two great teams of “give a year” Chi Alpha volunteers also pioneered Chi Alpha in Central Eurasia.



Support raising is a challenge for almost everyone who sets out to do it. But our missionaries from ethnic minority groups face unique challenges. About a year ago, the National Chi Alpha Diversity Task Force received an email from a former CMIT (Campus-Missionary-in-Training) sharing his own personal difficulties in raising support as an African American, which resulted in him leaving missions.

“Here I was with a college degree—the first one in my family—and I can’t even support myself,” part of his email reads. “I’m having to live in my parents’ house and ask them for money whenever I needed something. No one in my family understood what I was doing. They didn’t know what missions was, let alone campus ministry.... Not very many people in my family could afford to support me.” Not only did the struggle of support raising affect this missionary’s finances and ever-accurring debt, but his own self-worth as well—he battled depression and said he felt like a failure.

For missionaries like this one, Chi Alpha instated the Minority Mobilization Fund. This fund is funded by the sacrificial giving of missionaries who chose to share the burden of our new minority missionaries. It does not replace the responsibility each missionary has to seek God, share their vision and calling, and make appeals for partnership. Instead, it alleviates the “burden” that, due to cultural and ethnic complexities, may be too much for some to bear. There are three kinds of grants the MMF has available:

- **Anchor-Level Support:** Anchor Level monthly support helps a new CMIT with monthly support to complete his or her budget.
- **Training Grants:** Training grants are one-time gifts to offset or cover costs for eligible CMIT training costs. Eligible expenses include: CMIT Fees, RUI registration and travel, SALT registration and travel, and book and material fees. The maximum amount granted is \$1,500.
- **Emergency Funds Grants:** Grants to help cover expenses related to medical needs, automotive repair, and other emergency situations are available on a case-by-case basis. The maximum amount granted is \$500.

Last fall the MMF awarded four CMITs \$4,915 in grants, and three more missionaries received \$3,900 in grants last spring. Adrian Lopez was one of the fall 2015 recipients, receiving \$400 in Anchor-Level Support. He faced the same obstacles as the former CMIT who sent the email, but was able to serve as a fully-funded CMIT at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi. “The MMF grant was an answer to prayer and allowed my wife and I to fulfill the call we were sensing in our hearts from Jesus,” Lopez says. “I am forever grateful for my brothers and sisters for being obedient to the Lord and for giving generously.”

For the fall 2016 semester, CMIT Bethany Baldwin was given \$400 as a Training Grant. She met and served Chi Alpha at Northern Arizona University and upon graduating has made the journey across the country to start the CMIT internship at North Carolina State University. Raising her budget was a huge test of faith, but she trusts God to provide for her. “Coming from the Navajo reservation in Northern Arizona, most of my family do not consider themselves to be Christ followers but practice the cultural and spiritual ceremonies of the native people,” she says. “To be a recipient of the MMF is an answer to countless prayers to be funded. It allows me to follow God’s plan for my life, starting as a CMIT, regardless of the cultural background I come from.” Bethany hopes to work in an XAi position and would love to help pioneer a Chi Alpha in the future.

This upcoming year the MMF will give more than \$45,000 in grants as more than 115 of our own missionaries sacrificially give each month to the fund. What a beautiful example of our movement embracing the values of the kingdom over those of our culture. American culture tends towards an ultra-individualistic extreme, creating isolated human beings disconnected from real relationships. Chi Alpha has long loved and valued the splendor of real community. The MMF is a marvelous opportunity for us to extend our commitment beyond our local campuses and to bear one another’s burdens across our entire missionary family.

**Article is coauthored by Belkis Lehmann and Melanie Lynch.**



# GREATER TRANSFORMATION: REACHING HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



Chi Alpha loves transformation. It is the goal of our mission statement. We believe truly gospel transformed disciples bring transformation to their environments and that when we build multi-ethnic communities on campus, it increases our ability to bring transformation to the world around us. Reaching Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) is another vision fueled by our commitment to transformation.

HBCU graduates account for 40-80% of Black professionals, yet they only account for 10% of the over 4,000 U.S. campuses. What strategic places! Think of the leadership potential, reaching tomorrow's leaders today by targeting just over one-hundred schools. Leroy Barber director of the Voices Project and Author of *Embrace: God's Radical Shalom for a Divided World*, says of HBCUs,

“Contrary to popular belief, there is a wealth of fantastic leaders of color all around us and a

vast number of potential leaders being trained. According to the National Center for Education, there are 300,000 students in... Historic Black colleges and universities of which the vast majority are black. In my opinion many people and organizations don't look towards these schools for leaders. If diversity were as important as I hear people say on a daily basis, this would be one of the first places to begin looking.”

Presently, Chi Alpha has presence on six HBCUs; this includes one full-time missionary, Deanna





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Cesar at Xavier University in New Orleans, two satellite ministries and three church sponsored groups. How do we reach the other one-hundred?

First, we all need to take make the responsibility personal. We can't hear about the need of HBCUs and respond by saying, "I agree, these campuses are important, I sure hope somebody does something." We need to be that somebody. Begin by praying for specific campuses, near and far. Make this a regular part of your prayer gatherings. When you share the call to campus missions with your students or church, highlight HBCUs.

Secondly, we need to do more of what we are already doing. This means placing missionary teams, starting satellite ministries (an extension of an established Chi Alpha ministry to a nearby campus), and coaching local churches to reach out. You may feel like Heather Demoro, missionary at Florida State University, "We had it on our heart to start a satellite to Florida A&M, the largest HBCU in the country, but just felt too busy do so. Finally, Anthony and I looked at each other and said, 'There's never going to be good time for this. Let's just do it.'" After a semester of building relationships and working through the system, Chi Alpha became a Recognized Student Organization at FAMU this past Spring and was able to participate in the student organizational fair in August.

Lastly, we need to raise up scores more African American missionaries. Do you know that of the 118,000 American missionaries of all agencies less than one percent are African American? As a movement we are specifically working to change this with initiatives like the Minority Mobilization Fund. We rejoice that more than five percent of our missionaries are African American. Still, this is still not enough to fulfill our mission. The good news is that as we reach more and more HBCUs, we will see more and more African Americans becoming missionaries, which in turn will enable us to reach more HBCUs.

As we pray, give, and work together, God will use Chi Alpha to reach these strategic campuses. If you have an HBCU near you, consider joining or financially supporting the HBCU Dream Team, a network of Chi Alpha missionaries who connect electronically every six weeks for prayer and resource. To join this team or to process what the Lord is speaking to you in regards to HBCUs, contact me at [msbelkis@gmail.com](mailto:msbelkis@gmail.com). Let's work together towards greater transformation.



**BELKIS LEHMANN is Chi Alpha's Diversity Specialist. She lives in Winston Salem, North Carolina with her love and ministry partner Steve and her children Sofia and Gabriel.**



- 75% or all black PhDs,
- 46% of black business executives,
- 50% of black engineers,
- 80% of black federal judges,
- 85% of all black doctors,
- 50% black attorneys,
- 75% of black military Officers
- 40% of black dentists,
- 50% of black pharmacists,
- 75% of black veterinarians  
come from HBCUs







THE  
Holy Spirit  
MAKES US RELEVANT

My junior year at Stanislaus State, the Holy Spirit revealed that I had an underlying level of racism in my heart. My campus pastor, Jeremy Anderson, asked me to join the student leadership team. I declined claiming I didn't have time to commit to leadership responsibilities. At the time, the body was primarily white with a handful of other ethnicities. I was one of the few African Americans. So, when asked to come onto leadership, I thought to myself, "I don't want to join this white movement." In my mind, it was justifiable, that is until I met an African American lady at work who ministered to me. She shared how through reading the Word, Jesus revealed she was grieving the Holy Spirit by choosing not to engage with the body of Christ based on racial preferences. Specifically, The Lord asked her, "What do you think Heaven will look like?"

At that point, I felt a deep conviction for my racial preferences and unwillingness to serve in the body of Christ because the leadership didn't look like me. They may not have looked like me, but they were willing to run with me. I quickly repented and asked to join the student leadership team. From there, I made the decision to purposely choose to identify more with who I am in Christ, rather than my racial make-up. Jesus said, "Who is my mother, who is my father, brother, sister? Those that do the will of God." It's clear that the eternal bond

we have in Christ transcends any racial, cultural, or social backgrounds.

It is the Holy Spirit who continues to make us relevant to anyone, anywhere, anytime. We must be willing to cross different barriers like Jesus did. Jesus crossed over the gender line, cultural line, and racial line in his interaction with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:7.

The Jews and Samaritans had no dealing with each other. With over five-hundred years of racial tension, Jesus still saw it fit to go out of his way to engage with her. He didn't focus on the barriers they had, but operated in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He set the example for us of not limiting our ability to minister based on our racial differences or even the racial tensions that plague our world, but to reach out to everybody as he did.

Though Vanessa and I are both minority leaders, we know it is the Holy Spirit that gives us the ability to reach every ethnicity for Him. We love and celebrate our racial and cultural backgrounds. However, as ministers of the gospel, we consistently make the conscience effort not to lead solely from it. If we lead solely from our culture, we limit ourselves to who we minister to and eventually our ministry will look more like us, rather than the Kingdom of God (every tribe, nation, and tongue). We are often asked, "How do you connect with

a person from a different race, social class, or cultural background than you?" Our response is, "You're not here to give them you. You're here to give them Jesus." It's really that simple. We may all have different upbringings, backgrounds, and racial make-ups, but the Word of God, the Holy Spirit's voice, and Kingdom values are non-discriminatory. They are eternal truths, which allow us to operate in one blood.

We are committed to seeing diversity in our Chi Alpha body because it is a picture of God's heart. Diversity will continue to be one of our core values because it is only through diversity that we will see the fullness of Christ. We know it won't happen just because we are minority leaders, and it will not continue just because we are seeing it now. Diversity will continue through the generations of Chi Alpha students that are empowered to reach every ethnicity for Christ because their identity is rooted solely in Him.



**JAMIL AND VANESSA STELL** have been serving as campus missionaries for the past nine years. They are currently the Directors of Chi Alpha at Stanislaus State and Modesto Junior College.





**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE WATER BOTTLES!**

We were able to get contact information from 50+ international students at the International Student Information Fair! We had many university employees comment on how great that was that we had something so nice to give away!

What is also cool, is that since the water bottles have been provided, we've seen our international student fair grow over the last few years. When there used to only be a few tables, it is now a whole event. I have to believe it's because Chi Alpha was able to bring energy and life to the event! Thank you for helping us meet students from India, Jamaica, China, Korea, Saudi Arabia, and more!!

**Katie Cannon,**  
Arizona State University



We had our launch here (Taco Party!) in Fort Myers, FL at Florida Gulf Coast University last night. There were nearly 150 students with us! We are blown away by the Lord's favor as our student leaders and CMAs were able to make solid connections with students, even international students.

**Megan MacPherson,**  
Florida Gulf Coast University

We wanted a "grown up" event where the focus was conversation. Our students are our best asset. We wanted new students to mix with them.

**Think cocktail party.**



A local old-school general store type place carries 100 different glass-bottle sodas.



We bought one of each. String lights and high-top tables completed the ambiance.

Our students really rose to the challenge. Lots of conversations about REAL things.

About Chi Alpha, about music, about missions, about how cool this event was.



We think it may have the power to become our key event each year.

Hoping we have to buy 200 bottles for 2017.

Huge success.

**Ryan Brooks,**  
Murray State University



What a night! Our On Campus Chi Alpha Launch in Somsen Auditorium at Winona State couldn't have went better! 184 attended! 30 made decisions to put God first in their lives. Thank you to every student leader, intern, staff, supporter, parent, alum, and all the churches who gave so much of their time, energy, prayers, and money to make this dream become a reality. Most of all thanks to God for...everything!

**Steph Peterson,**  
Winona State University



GOD BRAG ALERT!!! This year is the beginning of our official 2nd year of Chi Alpha @ Ole Miss! Our first service was last night and we had 100 students there!!! God is blowing stuff up!!!!

**Courtney Clements,**  
University of Mississippi



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