CONNECTION

CHI ALPHA CAMPUS MINISTRIES

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REACHING FRESHMEN

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CHI ALPHA CONNECTION
Volume 10 / Issue 1 / Summer 2017

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...that none perish

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THANK YOU CHI ALPHA FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS!

Thanks to you, Chi Alpha partnered with illusionist, Jim Munroe, and his MAZE gospel presentation to reach over 10,000 students and resulted in thousands of students requesting to have further conversation about faith in Christ! The MAZE Campus Tour included the following campuses and will conclude this fall with three final locations in Iowa and Illinois.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
STANFORD UNIVERSITY
TULANE UNIVERSITY
UC DAVIS
UCLA
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA - LAFAYETTE
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
UPPER IOWA UNIVERSITY (COMING THIS FALL)
IOWA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY (COMING THIS FALL)
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY (COMING THIS FALL)

EDITORIAL

BY E. SCOTT MARTIN

CHI ALPHA IS THE BEST AVENUE TO REACH FRESHMEN

As we have just concluded another impactful RUI conference with a record number of attendees, I am reminded chasing freshmen is the most noble of endeavors. I am encouraged every year a record number of young men and women from Chi Alpha and the Church are responding to the call of God to reach the most strategic mission field in the world: the secular university. As I spoke with a number of our RUI students, I discovered most were reached through Chi Alpha as students. My life was eternally impacted my first day as a freshman on The University of Arizona!

When students arrive on the university campus they immediately begin the pursuit for community. Normally, within the first two weeks of moving on to campus, students have made the friendships and entered the affinity groups that they will adhere to for the majority of their collegiate career. This is why it is imperative that Chi Alpha is present and highly visible on campus all year long, to welcome, serve, love and share the gospel of Jesus to incoming freshman.

Every recognized student organization knows how critical these first two weeks are. And let there be no doubt, there is an intense battle for the souls of students during this time. Will the incoming student join the fraternity or will they join Chi Alpha? These types of decisions for the most part will be made early in their tenure on campus. This is why we must connect with the freshmen early!

Further, Christian parents are concerned for their students who attend the secular university, and rightly so. For most students, the season they spend on the university is the time in which they will determine their walk of faith, who they will marry, and what their career will be. Chi Alpha is on the campus to welcome these students and their parents. We serve as covering to these incoming freshmen by providing a community of fellowship and discipleship that if the student engages in, will be life transformative. We cover the incoming Christian students.

As has been prophesied through multiple credible sources, we are about to witness the greatest student awakening in history. As we reach freshmen students for Christ and disciple them through small groups, one-on-ones, student leadership training, large group meetings, Chi Alpha Expedition mission trips, etc., I believe we will see the fulfillment of this word from the Lord. We prepare freshmen to live for the Lord not just in their college years, but for life.

I believe no entity on the campus can touch the whole person like Chi Alpha. We reconcile students to Christ and none are more important than the freshman!

When you join together with Chi Alpha through your prayers and financial giving, YOU are reaching college freshman with the gospel of Christ and transforming the university! Thank you for your continued support!

Extending His Kingdom,

E. Scott Martin, National Senior Director

E. SCOTT MARTIN is the senior 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.

WHY WE FOCUS ON FRESHMEN

BY ALEX RODRIGUEZ

When I stepped onto Sam Houston State University as a freshman, I wanted nothing to do with Jesus.

I grew up in a Christian high school where we memorized Bible verses for quiz grades, and wrote on Old Testament covenants for essays. And to my own fault, I interpreted Jesus as a subject to be studied as opposed to a Person who could be known and loved.

With that mindset, I wanted to take a break from Jesus my freshman year of college. I figured I had learned enough about Him, so perhaps I could do something else.

The plan was to avoid college ministries at all costs. That plan failed as soon as a bunch of Chi Alpha girls invited my girlfriend to their first party of the year. I went, not to meet Jesus, but to make sure a bunch of Christian guys who read their Bibles all day while watching "Facing the Giants" didn't hit on her.

As I'm sitting at their party minding my own business, up walks this tall, skinny guy with thick, foggy glasses. He wore a t-shirt representing the garage band he and his friends made called, "Twinkie Enigma." Why anyone would wear such a shirt is the real enigma. He then proceeded to introduce himself as "Scroggins." That was not a nickname. It was his actual last name. I think it means German for "really white." In retrospect, there is no reason me and him should have ever become friends!

But he read my shirt and my hat and asked the only question that could've gained my attention, "How do you think the Dallas Cowboys will do this year?" We talked for hours about football because of that question. That conversation turned into lunch the next day, which turned into video games the day after that.

I was hundreds of miles from home in an unfamiliar place filled with unfamiliar people. And in those circumstances, Scroggins became my first college friend. But his friendship wasn't the result of a social club, he was intentionally becoming my friend to disciple me.

Scroggins had a habit of making every conversation lead to Jesus. He would talk about the Bible as if it were living and active, sharper than any sword. He would talk about Christian books as if he discovered treasure. He would talk about Jesus as if He just saw Him face to face. And as he introduced me to the rest of his Chi Alpha friends, I realized it was them who were normal and me who was abnormal.

All of them talked about Jesus as if He is alive. All of them loved each other as if God gave each individual value. And all of them loved me though I did nothing to merit their affection. The contrast of their Christian lives to my "Christian" life made it clear: I didn't have the real Jesus; they did. And I didn't just want what they had, I wanted Who they had.

BECAUSE OF CHI ALPHA, I GAVE MY LIFE TO JESUS MY FRESHMAN YEAR OF COLLEGE.

Eighty-eight percent of teenagers stop going to Church when they enter college. I was going to be one of those statistics until Chi Alpha found me. This is why we reach freshmen, so those 18-year-olds who are making decisions on their own will make a decision for Jesus!

My RUI class was taught that eighty percent of the time, whomever a freshman befriends in the first four weeks will be the people they spend the next four years with. I am evidence of this statistic because Chi Alpha found me and saved me!

This is why we reach freshmen. Leaving the familiarity of home for the unfamiliarity of college is an intimidating and influential time in a freshman's development. They are looking for friends, and because the Kingdom of God is established through relationship, we must befriend them. They are thinking on their own, and because thoughts determine destiny, we must influence their thought life.

The next Chi Alpha director, the next missionary, the next Christian is out there. It's our mission to find them and bring them Home.

ALEX RODRIGUEZ, and his wife Abby, have served as missionaries to Kazakhstan and Sam Houston State University between 2009-2012. They pioneered New Mexico State University in 2013 in Las Cruces where they currently reside.

Student Testimonies

At the University of Vermont's freshmen orientation, I met Jenna and Victoria, and we really hit it off. When school started, I had problems with my roommate, so they offered me space in their dorm. They also invited me to their Chi Alpha Life Group. I didn't have any church or religious background, but I was really touched by the love and sense of family they all had. I went to one of the Monday night large group meetings with them, and when we came home, I knew that's what I want for my life.

That night I prayed with my roommates to receive Christ. My life was forever changed because of Chi Alpha Campus Ministries!

-Lyndsey Woodworth
STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

As a freshman, I had no idea where I would find friends in college. Luckily enough, they found me! Students from Chi Alpha met me at my car in the parking lot during move-in, helped me carry all of my stuff, and invited me to dinner that night. Though I had no interest in Christianity, I started attending one of their life groups and realized that they weren't just acting nice—they genuinely cared for me.

This community challenged me to grow, mentored me as I started following Jesus, and stood by me through good times and bad. Now, because of Chi Alpha, I get to offer the love and friendship I received to others, and I couldn't be more excited!

-Toby Amodeo
CAMPUS MISSIONARY-IN-TRAINING AT
NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

THE GREAT NON-NEGOTIABLE: PRAYING FOR FRESHMEN

BY TODD LUCAS

Years ago, as an unsaved student, I stepped onto campus at Southern Illinois University. Unbeknownst to me, several months into my college experience the Chi Alpha ministry there began praying for me by name! I later learned that their months-long prayer focus reached its apex in April of 1999, the very month I came to Christ. Chi Alpha reached me as a freshman—not through its preaching, but through its prayers.

Like me in 1998, over two million freshmen will breach the thresholds of college campuses across the nation this fall. These young souls will be entering a post-Christian climate teetering between apathy and hostility regarding the gospel. It's a spiritual environment that renders even the best of our strategies, structures, and servants ineffective when trusting in them alone. If our movement will effectively reach freshmen, we must employ the great non-negotiable: Spirit-empowered prayer.

The strategic opportunity to reach freshmen for Christ is always met with spiritual opposition. In our efforts to advance God's Kingdom on campus, spiritual resistance is to be expected and engaged. Indisputably, the first level of spiritual engagement is prayer.

The efficacy of our efforts to reach freshmen for Christ will rise and fall on the faith and frequency of our prayers. The difference between fruitful and barren ministry is prayer. The difference between an open freshman and a closed freshman is prayer. The difference between a freshman being won for Christ and a freshman remaining lost is prayer. On the following page is a short list of strategic prayer points for incoming freshmen. May they aid you as your contend on behalf of this most strategic demographic.

TODD LUCAS serves as director of Chicago XA. He and his wife, Shawndra, reside on the city's north side with their one-year-old son, Ethan.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WELCOME WEEK

BY ERIC TREUIL

In a recent conversation with a local pastor, I was explaining the difference between leading a campus ministry and leading a local church. One of the biggest differences is that thirty to forty percent of students in a campus ministry will depart each year. This simply means that in order to maintain an average number of attendance from year to year, campus ministries have to grow by at least forty percent annually. The pastor looked at me and basically said, "My goodness you pastor a parade!"

That is exactly what we do, and if we are going to be successful from year to year, the first few weeks of every fall is of the utmost importance. Welcome weeks on university campuses are to campus ministry what Easter and Christmas combined are to the local church!

It is our opportunity to get in front of the parade and reach the incoming freshmen class with the gospel. Statistically, the average freshmen will decide within the first few weeks what they will be involved in and who their social group will be, many for the remainder of their time on campus.

Welcome week meetings and outreaches need to be extremely freshmen-focused and friendly, and the ministry's visibility needs to be at an all-time high in university welcome events. This includes dorm move-ins, large group get-togethers, and contact tables on campus with freebies and fliers.

All this must be undergirded by prayer, supported with finances, and put into action with the help of alumni volunteers. Your support may just help reconcile a student to Christ.

ERIC TREUIL is the campus pastor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Get Involved!

CONNECT

Follow your local Chi Alpha campus on social media and sign-up for your local campus missionary's newsletter.

Contact your local campus missionary to find out if volunteers are needed for Welcome Week: **ChiAlpha.com/Group-Locator**

Follow National Chi Alpha on social media: **@ChiAlphaUSA**

Invite Chi Alpha friends, family, alumni, and affiliates to join the National Chi Alpha Alumni Association: **ChiAlpha.com/Alumni**

PRAY

Connection – Increasingly, unsaved students want to belong before they believe. As an influence toward their conversion, pray for non-believing freshmen to find loving relationships within the Chi Alpha community.

Perspective – Newfound academic pressure and social stimuli often distract students from recognizing their spiritual need. Pray for non-believing freshmen to be awakened to their need for Christ.

Encounter – Students are often most open during their freshman year. Pray for them to meet Christ this school year and become lights on their respective campuses.

GIVE

Support your local Chi Alpha campus's Welcome Week through financial gifts or donations (such as prizes for giveaways, funding for food or t-shirts, etc.). Contact your local campus missionary for more information: **ChiAlpha.com/Group-Locator**

Join the National Chi Alpha monthly support team. Together we can reach college freshman with the gospel and transform the university! **ChiAlpha.com/Give**

EVERY ALUMNI CONNECTS, PRAYS, & GIVES

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