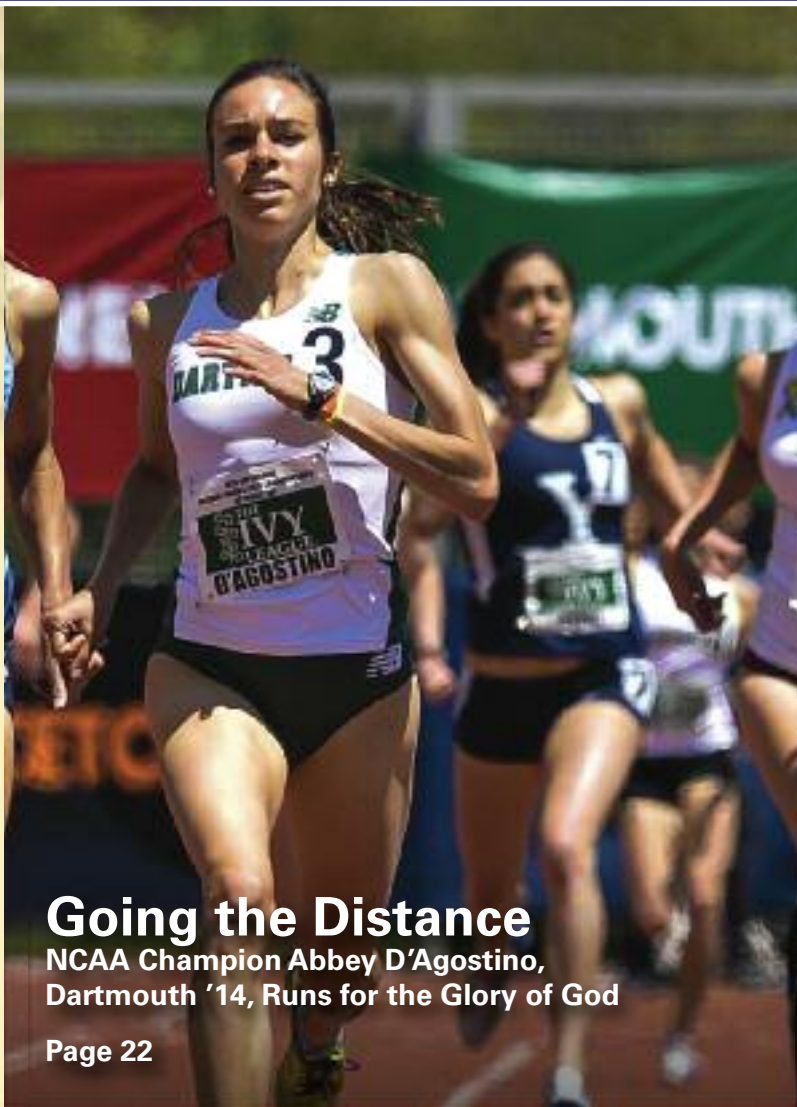


# the IVY LEAGUE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER



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Brown ■ Columbia ■ Cornell ■ Dartmouth  
Harvard ■ Penn ■ Princeton ■ Yale



CHRISTIAN UNION

Developing Christian Leaders to Transform Culture

The Ivy League Christian Observer is published by the  
Christian Union, an independent Christian ministry.



CHRISTIAN  
UNION

# PRAY WITH US

## FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS WHO WILL TRANSFORM CULTURE



At Christian Union, we are prayerfully seeking God for transformation at Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Penn, Princeton, and Yale. Each year, thousands of students pass through the halls of these institutions and move out into positions of leadership in our society. Unfortunately, over 90% have had no regular Christian influence in their lives during these critical college years.

Christian Union sends out monthly, campus-specific e-mails that describe the needs of the ministry. E-mails are available for Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale.

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Please help us get this magazine into the hands of those who want it. E-mail or write us in order to:

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Please send us your feedback regarding events and topics described in this magazine at the e-mail or regular mail address listed above.



By God's power and with the help of other ministries, the mission of Christian Union is to change the world by developing Christian leaders and networking them together to make an impact for Christ in the larger culture. Matt Bennett (Cornell BS '88, MBA '89) founded the ministry in 2002 in Princeton, New Jersey. To learn more about Christian Union, please visit [www.Christian-Union.org](http://www.Christian-Union.org).

The purpose of *The Ivy League Christian Observer* (this free quarterly magazine) is to inform Christian alumni, students, parents, staff, faculty, and friends about the spiritual activity at eight of the country's most influential colleges, including Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Penn, Princeton, and Yale. Our desire is that you would be encouraged to pray for these universities, give financially to Christian initiatives on the campuses, and use your influence for the cause of Christ.

Cover image photo credit: Tim O'Dowd, Dartmouth Athletic Department

## A Christian Response to National Rebellion



Many, including myself, have been saddened by the recent Supreme Court rulings further legitimizing gay "marriage" in our nation. The move represents a steady spiritual darkness moving over the United States in the last fifty years. Our greatest rejection of God's purposes has been centered on sexual integrity and marriage. Hebrews 13:4 warns us to "keep the marriage bed pure," but beginning in the 1960's, our nation started to view sexual expression as harmless fun, and even a constitutional right. This mindset has led to an explosion of promiscuity, divorce, cohabitation, abortion, pornography, gay "marriage" and, no doubt, in the near future, polygamous "marriage."

What is not widely appreciated is the sociological reality of these sexual choices. In its publication, *Marriage and the Public Good: Ten Principles*, The Witherspoon Institute has compiled research from a variety of nationally recognized scholars demonstrating the extraordinary harm caused by our society's choices. Our nation's sexual narcissism has led to significant increases (especially for children) in depression, suicide, poverty, incarceration, juvenile delinquency, disease, high school dropouts, sexual addiction, government spending, and sex trafficking (for a free download of *Marriage and the Public Good*, go to [http://winst.org/wp-content/uploads/WI\\_Marriage\\_and\\_the\\_Public\\_Good.pdf](http://winst.org/wp-content/uploads/WI_Marriage_and_the_Public_Good.pdf)).

The Christian's response to a society's rebellion against God should always first be about repenting, fasting, and praying for God to forgive us and move powerfully to restore His purposes for the community. Joel 1:13, 14 says, "Put on sackcloth and lament, O priests; wail, O ministers of the altar. Go in, pass the night in sackcloth...Because grain offering and drink offering are withheld from the house of your God. Consecrate a fast, call a solemn assembly..."

In that spirit, I began a 40-day fast on July 8 and invited many friends to join me for all or some of the time. Will you also consider joining me in crying out to God for His mercy for the American Church and this nation? If you haven't fasted much before, please be cautious and don't do anything that would damage your health. To learn more about fasting, I recommend Jentezen Franklin's book, *Fasting: Opening the door to a deeper, more intimate, more powerful relationship with God*.

What is extraordinary is that God is a faithful God who loves to show mercy. Joel 2:13 says, "Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster." God has brought spiritual awakening to the United States in the past, and I believe that as we cry out to Him with passion and desperation, He will gladly do the same again today.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Matthew W. Bennett

Founder and President, Cornell '88, MBA '89

**P.S.** *The Ivy League Christian Observer* reports on the programs of Christian Union and those of various other Christian organizations. While it is our desire to foster unity, encouragement, and awareness among campus ministries, Christian Union is not an umbrella organization.

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# THE POWER OF THE SPOKEN WORD

## Ivy League Students Compete in Christian Union Bible Memorization Challenge



Joshua Echebiri's inquisitiveness in spiritual matters led the Dartmouth College junior to craft a poetic dialogue voicing key penetrating questions from central Old Testament figures.

Echebiri's captivating performance of the prayerful, gut-wrenching queries – as well as divine replies taken from verses

“They did a great job. The presentations were all really compelling,” said Jim Black, Christian Union’s ministry director at Columbia University and key overseer of spokenWord.

Teams and solo contestants from Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale universities vied on March 30 at the Scholastic Auditorium in Manhattan.

Best-selling author Eric Metaxas, Yale '84, served as host for the evening.

During last year's pilot event and this year's formal kickoff, Christian Union organizers timed the contests to coincide with Easter weekend, given the heightened interest in spiritual matters. “It's a time to focus on the Christian faith,” Black said. This year's prizes were gift cards to Christian book outlets.

Christian Union sponsored spokenWord as a means to encourage students to embrace the value in memorizing Scriptures. “Our prayer is that it will

inspire people across the nation to see the beauty and power of this and be motivated to do the same,” Black said. “We want students to take in God's Word, to allow it to bear fruit and abide richly in them.”

For Echebiri, the contest provided creative outlets for his twin passions of writing and acting, as well as an opportunity for the biology major to memorize Scripture with robust determination. As a teen in Houston, Echebiri excelled in Bible quizzes, an exercise he missed upon commencing pre-medicine studies.

The wrestling of the prophet Habakkuk inspired Echebiri's thematic dialogue between man and God.

“When Habakkuk questions God about the widespread depravity in the nation of Israel and the seeming absence of God's intervention, Habakkuk is shocked to hear God's response,” Echebiri said. “This

resonated with me and my personal questioning of God's will and works.”

For Echebiri's entry, entitled *Case Closed*, the rap enthusiast used 35 verses taken from 17 books of the Bible. “There's power in art and in redeeming art through the Scriptures,” Echebiri said. “People are ready to receive that.”

In other results, Angelique Henderson, Harvard '14, took second place for the presentation of her work, *Creation, Fall, Redemption...What Else Should I Mention?*

The New York City native said she participated in the contest to use her “God-given gifts in the realm of the arts. I wanted people to see God, not me, as I performed and [sought] to connect with the Scriptures I recited in a meaningful way,” said Henderson, an economics major who is also pursuing a minor in dramatic arts.

As for the third place team, a pair of Columbia University students performed a collection of verses that reflected soulful, agonizing conversations with God. Lilian Chow, Columbia '15, performed a series of heartrending prayers from Job and Psalms, while Tatianna Kufferath, Columbia '15, delivered powerful divine answers, including some from the book of Jeremiah.

The pair concluded their dramatic performance by quoting in unison Romans 8:38-39. Those inspired passages proclaim, “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Overall, Black said he marveled at the ways the students were touched while compiling and delivering their renditions of Scriptures.

“It's a beautiful thing to see young, bright students who are wonderfully gifted,” said Black. “We look forward to seeing how God will use them.”

*Videos of the Ivy League spokenWord Bible Memorization Challenge are available at <http://tinyurl.com/n8vjhzc>.* ■



Teams from five universities competed in the 2013 Ivy League spokenWord Bible Memorization Challenge.

scattered across the Old and New Testament – landed the Texas native first place in Christian Union's inaugural Scripture-memorization contest.

During the 2013 Ivy League spokenWord Bible Memorization Challenge, teams from five universities performed a series of Bible passages, including some woven into theologically intense, inspirational conversations with the Almighty. Event organizers instructed participants to memorize 25-plus verses from the Bible and to present them in four minutes. The Scriptures could be delivered in context or developed into dramatic renditions or thematic narratives from multiple passages.

Christian Union encouraged contestants to be creative. Not surprisingly, the undergraduates showcased impressive results after selecting verses and practicing diligently on their home campuses.

# MY FOUR YEARS AS A BELIEVER AT CORNELL

*Connecting with the Christian Community Was Essential*

**C** I recently graduated from Cornell University with a major in Biology and Society and a minor in East Asian studies. My time at Cornell was definitely linked with my experience with the Christian community here.

Early on, I realized that finding a Christian community was often not a high priority—there were so many activities offered that it seemed to make sense not to commit to one organization right away. Later on, however, it was apparent that in order for me to grow consistently in my faith, I needed to settle down with one of the campus ministries, and that's when I chose Cru ([www.cornellcru.com](http://www.cornellcru.com)). In this organization, I met my closest brothers and sisters. They were there for me throughout my time at Cornell. They were the people who kept me accountable, who challenged me in my faith, and encouraged me to grow and become a godly man.

The Christian community at Cornell is truly unique in the relationships the various ministries on campus have with one another. This comes first from the leaders, staff, and pastors who are praying together every week. Without this foundation, the unity that we share on campus would not be possible. Together, various ministries have been able to work as one body to reach the campus.

**Many people believe that the Christian community is very large at Cornell, yet it only represents about two percent of the student population. There is still much work to do.**

One of the most visible examples of unity happens at the beginning of the year through the Christian Fellowship Fair for incoming freshmen. It is here that many students encounter the whole Christian body for the first time, and hopefully, find

their future ministry. It's crucial for any Christian entering Cornell to know that we are all here to support one another and we are here with one united purpose, to glorify God on campus.



**William Poon, Cornell '13, now serves as an intern with Cru.**

God has worked in amazing ways during my time at Cornell. One thing that I've learned is that He rarely works in the same way twice. My freshman year, I was among a group of four students who prayed together every weekday morning at 8 a.m. The group grew to 30 by the end

of the year. The next year, about 70 students from various ministries gathered together once a week to sing praises and pray together. In my junior year, we had a united outreach called "Old Secrets, New Hope," where students could openly

share their secrets. This helped reveal a need for a savior in many people's lives. This year, students gathered to start praise nights in an academic hall.

Many people believe that the Christian community is very large at Cornell, yet it only represents about two percent of the student population. There is still much work to do. One thing we need to do is love our God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and especially our mind. This is because college is a place where everything is literally fighting for that same heart, soul, strength, and mind. If every Christian devoted himself to loving God first, then the campus would be transformed by the gospel because it would become a natural outpouring of who we are.

As for ongoing unity, we need to strengthen each other in the knowledge that we are one body, not because we physically meet together, but because we share the same Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and are called to the same Great Commission. Once we can see that we are working as a body with many parts on a campus, we can effectively go forth with the purpose of sharing the gospel with every person.

The Christian body also needs to understand that college is a mission field, in and of itself. There is no other environment like it. There is no other place where you live with your peers 24/7 and go through exactly the same experiences. There is no other time in life where you can meet your friends every day on a whim simply to hang out. Students must use this to their advantage and hope to be able to look back on their time and say with confidence that they gave themselves the opportunity to be used by God to share the gospel with those around them.

College is an amazing time in a person's life. And it's also the best time to be involved in an amazing Christian community.

*Following graduation, William Poon accepted a position as an intern with Cru at Cornell. ■*

# RE-RECOGNITION

## Christian Fraternity Perseveres, Gains Student Organization Status

**Y** This spring, Christian fraternity Beta Upsilon Chi was officially recognized as a student organization on the Yale campus—again.

Originally sanctioned as an official organization in September of 2012, Yale administrators reversed the fraternity's status by Halloween when a *Yale Daily News* article stated the obvious—that the Christian fraternity required its members to be Christians.

The student paper also questioned if Beta Upsilon Chi (BYX) was in violation of the university's discrimination policy because the fraternity's constitution states that it “exists for the purpose of establishing brotherhood and unity among college men, based on the common bond of Jesus Christ.”

Although BYX had openly disclosed its membership policies when it first applied to the university, the scrutiny raised by the article resulted in a reversal of recognition. As a result, the fraternity lost the ability to reserve rooms for activities and recruit members during campus events.

Not content with Yale's disregard for freedom of religious expression, the BYX leadership decided to respectfully challenge the administration's decision.

“It seemed a bit unfair given that we were honest. We didn't hide anything about who we were and what we sought to do,” said Jason Hoyt, president and CEO for Beta Upsilon Chi, Inc.

However, Hoyt was not surprised by the decision and spoke of similar objections from other universities. When discussions with administrators at the University of Florida failed, BYX took legal action. As a result, Florida instituted an exemption to its policies for religious groups, allowing the fraternity to fully function on campus.

Litigation, however, is seen as a last resort as BYX's national leadership prefers to maintain open communication with admin-

istrators and demonstrate the value the fraternities add to campus communities.

At Yale, the student leadership of BYX already had a good working relationship with administrators. Therefore, BYX President Victor Hicks '16 said he and the other leaders worked to demonstrate the good that the fraternity brings to Yale, while also pointing out the university's discrimination.

Hicks, an intern with Yale Faith and

ternity membership is based upon an interest in growing a relationship with Jesus Christ.

“What distinguishes us as a Christian fraternity is that each man is of the same accord in terms of belief in where our strength and faith comes from. That unites us in a different way. It is a key aspect to growing in our relationships,” said Hicks.

Hoyt also believes that the type of parties and campus-wide events BYX hosted demonstrated the caliber of its members and the value being added to the Yale community.

“I do not think it would have been effective to blow up and go right into a public campaign. I didn't want that for us or for the men,” said Hoyt. “When you're starting something, it takes a while to get off the ground. We didn't want everyone to know BYX because we caused a ruckus.”

What the fraternity does want to be known for is its brotherhood, unity, and strength in Jesus Christ.

“This was a step toward Christianity and faith being something that is respected

more,” said Hicks, who noted that non-Christians are attending BYX events and recognition will help the fraternity impact the community.

He likened the recognition process and experience to Paul's efforts in the Book of Acts, when the Apostle contextualized the gospel so those in various cities could understand it.

“This experience allowed us to contextualize what our mission was for Yale in a way they would understand and be receptive and supportive of it,” Hicks said. He also learned what it was like to take a stand for his faith in a transformative way.

“I experienced firsthand what it means to be courageous and bold in my faith,” said Hicks. “You truly can change the campus.” ■



**Beta Upsilon Chi (BYX) is once again an officially recognized fraternity at Yale.**

Action: An Undergraduate Organization, also received encouragement from Christian Union ministry fellows at Yale. Yale Faith and Action is a leadership development ministry that is supported and resourced by Christian Union.

According to Hicks, the students spoke openly to administrators about the inequity of Yale's policy, which states that student organizations cannot discriminate based on race, religion, or gender—but allows some to discriminate by choosing members based upon common interests and abilities (in organizations such as investment groups, sports clubs, singing groups, etc.).

The tipping point in getting BYX recognized, says Hicks, was the consistency of their conversations, and the students' perseverance in communicating that fra-



# 'THE GOSPEL AND STRESS'

*Christian Union Teaching Fellow Empowers Students with Timely Lectures*

**H** HARVARD The characteristics that are emblematic of Ivy League students—hyper-ambition, focus, and discipline—are also the traits that can make them vulnerable to idolatry and an inordinate amount of stress.

That message was a word in season for hundreds of Ivy League students this past academic year thanks to lectures by Nick Nowalk, a Christian Union teaching fellow at Harvard. Entitled, "The Gospel and Stress," the lectures were hosted by Christian Union-resourced and supported leadership development ministries at Harvard, Dartmouth, and Yale.

The desire to succeed, achieve, and please others opens the door to idolatry for high-performing students, Nowalk said. It can also lead to a status of busyness that seduces them into thinking that the more they do, the more they are succeeding. This one-two punch of achieving and doing often leads to anxiety and stress, which hampers the emotional balance and spiritual maturity of many students.

Stress and anxiety are not merely emotions, Nowalk told the students. When left unchecked and misdirected, worry and anxiety can become sinful.

However, Nowalk didn't intend to instill condemnation in the students. Rather, his presentation offered them freedom by raising their awareness of what stress and fear signify in their lives, and how to redirect it toward Christ.

"If you really want to know what your life is devoted to, look at your emotions, and not just your behavior and beliefs," Nowalk told the students. "Look at what a person is worried about, look at what they are afraid of, and you have a window into their value system, into what they are devoted to, and upon what their heart is set."

For example, worry about what others think, grades, and professional success puts earthly desires before Christ. Too much worry about what others think

takes away from pondering what Christ will think on the final day, Nowalk said.

However, Nowalk didn't suggest that students simply stop worrying. Instead, he encouraged them to reorient their emo-



**Christian Union Teaching Fellow Nick Nowalk presented a lecture entitled "The Gospel and Stress" at Harvard, Yale, and Dartmouth.**

tions around a new value system—one that puts Christ and the love of neighbor before more selfish concerns and anxiety.

"God is a gracious God who loves to give freely to those who place Him at the center of their value systems," said Nowalk. "Fearing Him, and being worried about His agenda and priorities is a liberating kind of fear, a profoundly joyful kind of anxiety."

To achieve that joyful anxiety, even during exam time, Nowalk suggested the students reflect on what is going on in their hearts, disown and repent of false gods, and seek God's kingdom.

He exhorted students to love their neighbors as themselves, and to care

about the wellbeing of others as much as their own. He also encouraged them to meditate on the promises of God daily, and discipline themselves to walk by faith in all that God has promised.

"You have to spurn your old treasures, and find a new treasure," said Nowalk.

After speaking about stress to students at Harvard College Faith and Action in the fall, Nowalk also travelled to Dartmouth and Yale.

Chad Warren, a Christian Union ministry fellow at Yale, said Nowalk's message resonated in a tangible way for Yale College Faith and Action: An Undergraduate Organization.

In the last three years at Yale, Warren has found seeking the approval of man to be the largest idol in the lives of students. For some, he said, it's an issue of insecurity.

"The students show up and feel they are the exception to the students around them—that they were chosen to attend the university, but that they are not legitimately a Yale," he said. "Many students are plagued with the fear that, although they were admitted, they may flunk out."

Warren said there is also an overwhelming pressure to get noteworthy internships and to feel worthy of a degree from Yale.

However, Nowalk's message helped ease that burden and others that come from a hyper-stressed environment found on Ivy League campuses.

"Emotions in the kingdom of God, even the apparently 'negative' emotions, are radically transformed in life-giving ways," said Nowalk. "What matters is whether our hearts treasure the King over and above His gifts in creation, or whether we turn away from the King in rebellion and worship His gifts as our gods." ■

# GOD'S PROPERTY

## Student Finds Christian Organization at Penn

**P**A University of Pennsylvania junior recently launched a club to bolster spiritual support for African-American students.

Chantias Ford debuted God's Property in the spring semester after holding two open meetings during the fall to gauge interest among Penn undergraduates.

"I was seeing this need as a lot of black students were not involved in Christian organizations," said Ford '14. "After talking to a lot of ministers, I realized it would be beneficial for us to get to know each other, for the black Christians on campus to be unified."

The urban studies major from Huntsville, Alabama said she hopes to gain university recognition in the fall. During the spring, about 40 students attended the club's meetings, which took place semi-monthly and focused on discussions and social gatherings.

A key aim of Ford was to create a club that provides nourishment for students craving spiritual refreshment and juggling heavy academic loads.

"A lot of them haven't been to church since Easter. For some, it's all or none," said Ford in late spring. "I would rather have them be able to connect with God in some way and have an outlet."

Likewise, Ford also wants the group to

bilingual individuals feel more comfortable speaking a particular language, Ford said many African-American students prefer worship and fellowship styles that reflect a common heritage and traditions.



**Chantias Ford '14 is the founder of God's Property, a Christian organization at the University of Pennsylvania.**

"I wanted us to have an avenue to create bonds, for students to be unified," Ford said.

Victoria Ford '15 (no relation to Chantias), a board member for the fledgling or-

group has taught me so much about how to pray and whom I can look to for fellowship and help. I love this group, the people, and our worship."

Another goal for founder Chantias Ford was to create a group that would allow students to discuss freely the challenges and issues associated with being young believers on a lively campus where frat parties abound and the surrounding neighborhood is dotted with bars and nightclubs.

"I really wanted to create a group where people could be open and have some nonjudgmental space," Ford said. "If they are convicted, it's between them and God. We offer a very stress-free, 'building' atmosphere."

In addition to serving as founder and president of God's Property, Ford also is the choir director of the New Spirit of Penn Gospel Choir and a vocalist with the Southern Silk jazz ensemble. As well, she recently interned with the Blues Babe Foundation, a Philadelphia organization that seeks to nurture college-bound youths of color in their ac-

***[God's Property] has taught me so much about how to pray and whom I can look to for fellowship and help. I love this organization, the people, and our worship."***

***— Victoria Ford, Penn '15***

reflect the cultural styles and preferences shared by many students of the African Diaspora, especially in music and worship. "The music and dances we plan speak to our culture," Ford said.

Ford highlighted the desire among African Americans for a dedicated spiritual and cultural community. Just as some

organization, echoed those comments. "Ultimately, we are trying to engage college students during these critical moments in their lives by fostering discussions about spirituality as they most directly relate to our experiences," said Ford, of Memphis, Tennessee.

"I feel so much closer to God... This

academic and artistic efforts.

At Penn, Ford is focused on helping African-American students who have not settled into a campus ministry or church to feel welcome in a community of believers linked by a common heritage.

"There are lots of Christians who are not being fed," she said. ■

# JUBILATION AT COLUMBIA

## A Cappella Group's Concert Raises Money for World Vision

**C**OLUMBIA Jubilation!—Columbia University's premier Christian a cappella group—performed with Canadian worship band Starfield this spring to benefit World Vision and bring some joy to New York City.

Approximately 250 people turned out for the concert, which was held April 16 at the Roone Arledge Auditorium on the Columbia campus. The event raised \$2,000 and enabled 16 children to be sponsored through World Vision. A Christian Union grant helped underwrite the event.

"I think the entire experience, from start to finish, was one that built up a lot of faith within the group. So many times, I was so stressed out by the fundraising, or the details and logistics, but God always, always provided. He always led us. He always exceeded our expectations," said Josephine Wei '13, the president of Jubilation!

World Vision was chosen as the beneficiary because its commitment to humanitarian work and fighting injustice and poverty is in line with the a cappella group's mission of spreading God's love.

Partnering with Starfield allowed the event to reach beyond the Columbia Christian community and attract a much larger audience than usual. The concert was modeled after a similar outreach held by Boston University's a cappella group, Mustard Seed. Wei said Mustard Seed was very helpful in providing resources and guidance to make the evening a success.

"Starfield said that they love coming to New York City and especially performing for college crowds," she said. "People have told us about how big of a blessing the evening was and have asked when we are going to do something like this again."

Working with the award-winning Christian worship band was a thrill for the Columbia students as well.

In a word, Wei called the experience, "awesome."

"It was really a mind-blowing experience," she said, "I can still hardly believe it happened."

Jubilation! was founded in 1990 at Columbia.

"We are a ministry, but we are also an a cappella group that performs at various events on campus," she said. "Because of this, God has presented Jubilation! with a unique opportunity for outreach to non-Christians on Columbia University's campus, particularly to the friends of our members."

For example, Wei, a member of Korea Campus Crusade for Christ, has found it easier to invite her non-Christian friends to concerts than to her campus ministry's large group meetings.

tian Fellowship ([www.facebook.com/ColumbiaRCF](http://www.facebook.com/ColumbiaRCF)), and Compass Christian Koinonia ([www.columbia.edu/cu/cck/](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cck/)).

"We exist as a unified body that uses its talents to glorify God and to bring joy to others," said Wei. "Our music is our way to carry out our vision to inspire, motivate, and encourage our audience, at Columbia and throughout New York City."

Wei said she sees music as a universal language that speaks love and consolation.

"Just like David was able to soothe King Saul with music when all else failed, I be-



This spring, Jubilation! performed a benefit concert to raise funds for World Vision.

"It seems less stressful, less premeditated, and more natural," said Wei.

At large group meetings, she explained, newcomers may feel alienated by the experience of standing in a crowd of regular attendees who are all singing and worshipping in their own way. At a Jubilation! performance, they are part of the audience, but are still exposed to the worship and gospel message.

Jubilation! consists of students from all class years, and every member is a believer, representing various campus ministries, including InterVarsity ([www.columbia.edu/cu/ivcf/](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ivcf/)), Remnant Chris-

lieve that music touches hearts in ways that even the wisest, strongest sermon cannot," she said.

Consequently, Jubilation! has ministered to Wei, like a constant companion that has been present throughout her four years at Columbia.

"God has used Jubilation! to bless me, to sharpen me, to show me love, to teach me to love, to encourage me, to teach me to pray, to bring me joy, to show me grace," said Wei.

"Jubilation! and its members have shown me the image of Christ on Columbia's campus." ■

# SOPHS ARE SEEKING GOD IN SUMMER

*Dartmouth Students Appreciate Fellowship Opportunities*

**D** Dartmouth's unique sophomore summer term basically gives second-year students the run of the campus and enables them to develop deeper relationships with each other. And thanks to ministries like Summer Christian Fellowship and Aquinas House, many sophomores are also able to go deeper in their relationship with Christ.

"Although summer is a time for the brighter side of Dartmouth to shine, I think it's also a time for me to renew certain aspects that I felt thin between God

Additionally, Ryu said SCF enables him "to bond with my brothers and sisters in Christ, because a walk with the Lord is not meant to be alone."

Classmate Bridget Shaia, a member of Aquinas House, agrees.

"Summer is often a difficult time to maintain your faith if you are away from a supportive community like Aquinas House," Shaia said. "So being able to spend the summer at school with the support and fellowship that Aquinas House enables students to grow stronger in their

dents on campus for the summer term provides a greater opportunity for evangelization.

"It becomes easier to form close relationships with our classmates and start deeper conversations about faith," she said. "The Year of Faith [initiated by Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI] has brought more focus on creating these types of conversations and rooting our friendships in the faith that we share."

For Junior Molly Pugh, SCF was important to her growth as a Dartmouth student and a Christian last summer.

"I absolutely was thankful for the Christian fellowship over the summer. I do not really have a great church community at home, other than my best friends from high school, so I grow in my faith most when I am at Dartmouth."

Like Ryu and Shaia, maintaining Christian relationships is important to Pugh, and something SCF provided.

"Christian camaraderie is very important to me at Dartmouth, where it is easy to succumb to stress and anxiety over earthly success, so I was blessed to have the supportive community to keep me focused on Christ," she said.

While the focus of summer spiritual development and camaraderie is to keep passions for Christ strong during the long summer days, the momentum they gain in their faith also helps them endure when the busyness of campus life starts up again in the fall.

"In the many times that I have felt discouraged or lost or out of place at Dartmouth, I have been able to rest in the assurance that God has a plan for my life and that He put me at Dartmouth for a reason," said Pugh.

Ryu also feels the Lord's mighty hand upon his time at Dartmouth.

"My faith in God has been a huge component of my experience at Dartmouth," he said. "I think I learned more about God than any class that I have taken. God really did bring me to Dartmouth for a reason and I believe that one of them is to teach me the nature and power of faith." ■



**The Dartmouth Summer Fellowship offers sophomores an opportunity to seek God and stay connected.**

and me," said Young Sang Ryu '15, a member of Summer Christian Fellowship (SCF)—a collaborative that brings together students from various campus ministries.

"With the freedom found in summer, it is even more important to exercise spending time with God. If you can't find time or don't feel like spending time with God when you have the time, how can you expect to have a deep relationship with Him when you don't have time?"

faith during this crucial time."

Students with the Catholic ministry participate in a spiritual leadership development program during the summer. The program consists of readings and discussions about how to grow individually in faith and engage others in spiritual discussions. The ministry also offers time for informal gatherings, weekly dinners, and lectures.

Shaia said the small number of stu-

# 'THE STREET' LESS TRAVELED

## New Organization Offers Alternative to Hookup Culture

**P** A new student organization is spotlighting the dangers associated with the hookup culture that dominates Princeton University's social scene and offering counter-cultural alternatives.

During the spring semester, the university recognized The Alternative ([www.bealternative.org](http://www.bealternative.org)), which exists to expose the harmful realities of the hookup culture and encourage students to pursue an alternative lifestyle, reducing the social acceptability of promiscuous behavior.

"The hookup culture is an assumed norm on Princeton's campus," said Jennifer Palmquist '13, outgoing president of The Alternative. "When it is so widespread and normalized, it is easy to become desensitized to what can actually be a damaging form of social interaction."

Promoting regard for the risks of a promiscuous lifestyle became close to Palmquist's heart after witnessing the destructive residual effects of casual sexual engagement across campus. This is especially true on "The Street," the place where Princeton's famed eating clubs are located.

"Our goal is to promote discussion surrounding the hookup culture and cause students to question the choices they make and how they influence their lives, both in the moment and in the future," she said. "The most frustrating aspect of the hookup culture is that it is the only prominent form of romantic interaction within the mainstream social scene."

Ali Smith Kennedy, a Christian Union ministry fellow at Princeton, noted students often are left with the impression that they are social misfits if they are not participating in short-term encounters.

But those who partake in loose sexual experiences often find the lifestyle "does not deliver on the promises," rather, it "results in tangible dissatisfaction," said Kennedy, Princeton '06.

"They're starting to see through it," said Kennedy. "They are asking, 'What are we settling for? Maybe, there's another way to experience relationships.'"

Despite widespread perceptions that

hookups are acceptable and ingrained in collegiate culture, participants often feel they have violated their own internal standards. In addition to guilt, common reactions include regret, disappointment, confusion, embarrassment, awkwardness, reduced self-esteem, and depression.

"It is difficult to get students to see the long-term implications of living a hookup



**Angie Chiraz, Princeton '16, is a leader with The Alternative.**

lifestyle. Not only is there much dissatisfaction and lack of fulfillment in the short term, but there are long-term implications to consider as well, like a decreasing value of long-term, monogamous, committed relationships, which can, in turn, decrease their chances for a successful marriage and family life." Kennedy said.

Students who experience serial sexual contacts often encounter complications when attempting to transition into more stable, emotionally intimate relationships. "Instead of learning in college how to relate to the opposite sex through committed relationships based on trust and

respect, the 'no strings attached' paradigm fueled by the hookup culture often translates into dysfunction later on." Kennedy said.

Dave Kurz '12, a Christian Union intern, echoed those comments, noting undergraduates also need some basic instruction – as well as successful models – as they approach friendships and dating. While most Princeton students matriculate with extraordinary brainpower and motivation, they often are unversed in the practices and principles behind thriving, committed relationships.

"The campus environment is a pro-hookup culture," he said. "There are pressures in certain circles to conform to the norm. There's not a dating lifestyle. There are not a lot of life-giving or healthy relationships."

Student leaders with The Alternative say some undergrads also want wholesome options for leisure, recreation, and campus interaction.

"Since I've been here, The Street has maintained a monopoly on the social scene," said Seth DeValve '15. "Most freshmen don't feel really comfortable with what happens on The Street. Because that's what everyone does, they just go along with it. Before long, they get sucked in, too."

DeValve, a wide receiver for the Tigers, envisions The Alternative offering low-cost, high-energy activities such as volleyball tournaments, open-mic nights, and swing dances.

"When you go out to The Street, there is nothing planned. People stand around with beer in their hands the entire night. In my opinion, it's extremely repetitive and extremely boring, which becomes even more apparent going to The Street sober. I'm ready for a change and I be-

lieve other students are, too.”

In addition to showcasing spirited activities that build camaraderie, student leaders with The Alternative simply want undergrads to consider the repercussions of promiscuous practices during their college years and beyond.

Angie Chiraz '16 is hoping to see “serious social transformation” on campus as

students realize that another lifestyle is possible.

“It makes me really excited to think that incoming freshmen will see this social scene promoted from the start of their time at Princeton,” said Chiraz, who is majoring in operations research and financial engineering.

Meanwhile, Princeton students are en-

thusiastic about their plans for an alternative social scene in the upcoming fall semester, with speakers and various social activities in the pipeline. “We are excited for what God is going to do next year,” DeValve said. “More and more students are wanting to join us in setting a new alternative norm at Princeton and that’s a really positive sign.” ■

By Catherine Elvy, Staff Writer

## THE DANGERS OF CASUAL SEX

### Columbia Alumnae Document How Promiscuity Hurts Young People

**C**asual sexual contact poses a substantial threat to the psychological well-being of young individuals.

That was one of the key points from Susan Krauss Whitbourne in an article the psychologist and Columbia University alumna penned for a spring issue of *Psychology Today*.

In particular, Whitbourne highlighted the well-documented emotional consequences associated with serial sexual encounters, including some outlined by Kinsey Institute researcher Justin Garcia and a team from Binghamton University in a comprehensive review of scholarly literature.

Common reactions include anxiety, regret, disappointment, confusion, and embarrassment, according to Whitbourne, who earned a doctorate in developmental psychology in 1974 from Columbia University. Whitbourne, a University of Massachusetts at Amherst psychologist, also participated in a recent national study that echoed some of the findings of Garcia’s team and noted new questions for future exploration.

In probing the body of scholarly research on casual sex practices, Garcia pointed to evidence of more serious issues, including depression and damaged self-esteem. Such anxiety, ironically, sets the stage for future sexual dysfunction, Whitbourne noted.

Of even greater concern, Garcia noted about half the young women in one survey said they had experienced a nonconsensual sex encounter. Not surprisingly,

alcohol and other substances are likely to be part of nonconsensual hookups.

The majority of studies Garcia reviewed on the relationship between hookups and mental well-being involved small samples, mostly taken from one college campus each.

However, Whitbourne participated in a recent study involving 3,900 undergraduates at 30 campuses across the United States.

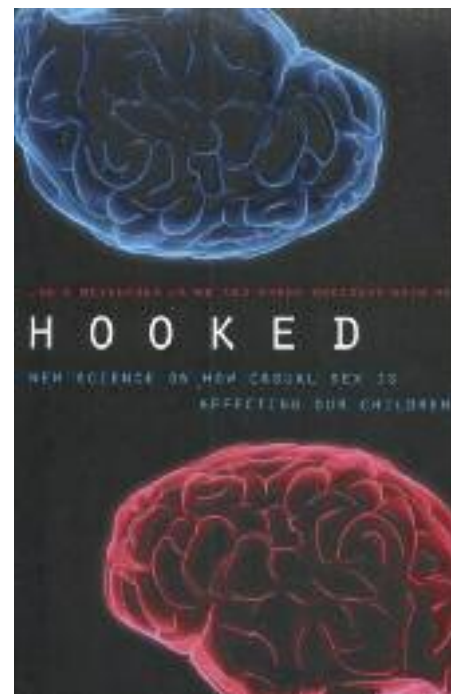
In research to be published in an upcoming article for the *Journal of Sex Research*, Whitbourne’s colleagues also noted higher distress scores as expressed by levels of depression and anxiety among individuals who had sex with someone they knew for less than a week.

“To measure well-being, we asked participants to rate their self-esteem, degree of life satisfaction, general sense of positive functioning, and feelings of self-actualization,” Whitbourne wrote. “To tap into feelings of psychological despair, we asked participants to report on their feelings of depression, general anxiety, and social anxiety.”

In the results, about 11 percent of students indicated they had engaged in casual sex within the last month, with a higher number of men admitting to such practices than women.

“We don’t know whether poor mental health caused individuals to be more likely to engage in casual sex or whether... poor health resulted from casual sex,” Whitbourne wrote.

Whitbourne served as a co-author on the paper, which was headed up by Sacra-



**Gynecologist Freda Bush is a co-author of *Hooked, New Science on How Casual Sex Is Affecting Our Children*.**

mento State University psychologist Melina Bersamin and based on a multi-campus study led by Miami University psychologist Seth Schwartz.

In contrast to the notion that men are OK with casual sex but women are not, Bersamin’s team did not find gender differences in levels of distress for participants of casual sex.

“Moreover, the fact that we defined ca-

sual sex in the way that we did..., it is possible that we were tapping into a population who is at particularly high-risk due to their high levels of impulsivity,” Whitbourne wrote. “At that level, mental health factors may trump socialization and/or biology to wipe out gender effects.”

Whitbourne urged students, parents, professionals, and college administrators to pay more attention to hookup activity and its virtually inevitable negative repercussions upon psychological well-being.

In an earlier work, another Columbia alumna also explored the dangers associated with sexual promiscuity.

In 2008, obstetrician-gynecologist Freda Bush co-authored *Hooked, New Science on How Casual Sex Is Affecting Our Children*, which noted American teens and young adults are carrying psy-

chological baggage from sexual encounters.

Bush and fellow obstetrician-gynecologist Joe McIlhane highlighted scientific research showing how sexual activity causes a release of brain chemicals that result in emotional bonding and a powerful desire for heightened intimacy.

In their 2011 follow-up, *Girls Uncovered: New Research on What America’s Sexual Culture Does to Young Women*, the pair presented stunning findings on the development of young women in a reckless sexual culture. Namely, the physicians explored the damages associated with careless sexual activity on psychological, social, physical, and spiritual health.

Bush, who earned a master of science from Columbia University in 1970, also is a contributing writer to *Faith Matters*:

*How African American Faith Communities Can Help Prevent Teen Pregnancy*. She is a frequent speaker with extensive medical and professional credentials.

In a radio interview, Bush warned that young people are not fully mature until their mid-20s. Thus, it is easy for sexually active teens and early adults to be sabotaged by emotions and hormone-driven feelings of attachment. As well, premarital sex can condition young individuals to associate sex with short-term relationships and to develop the habit of breaking up.

However, Bush also offered hope. Namely, “the brain can be remodeled and refocused,” she said.

Plus, marital sexual activity offers the promise of the happiest sex, Bush said. “You have to recognize that what is best for you is to delay,” she said. ■

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# THE VOICE OF ONE CALLING IN THE WILDERNESS

*Dr. Ben Carson Says Political Correctness Is Damaging the United States*

**Y** From low-income under-achiever to prominent neurosurgeon, Dr. Ben Carson personifies the American dream. However, in his latest book, *America the Beautiful: Rediscovering What Made This Nation Great*, Carson, Yale '73, warns readers that the dream could become mere fantasy if freedom of speech is silenced by political correctness and the nation loses sight of the values, freedoms, and faith upon which it was founded.

From eradicating God from the public sector, to appeasing politicians with kindness instead of truth, Carson cites acquiescing to the national status quo as an affront to the civil liberties many organizations and individuals purport to defend.

"The ability to think and speak freely was one of the major tenets upon which this nation was established, and I suspect that the founding fathers would turn over in their graves if they could see how such tenets are being violated on a regular basis today by people adhering to political correctness," writes Carson.

Throughout the book, Carson, the former director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, shares his experiences of growing up in poverty and being labeled a "dummy" due to poor grades. He also interweaves those personal moments with historical facts and Christian wisdom to demonstrate the greatness of America and the dangers of not speaking up for one's beliefs and values.

The physician, author, and public speaker unashamedly declares that the United States comes from a Christian her-



Art Cox/Patrick Henry College

**Surgeon Ben Carson, Yale '73, writes about America's fixation with political correctness in his new book, *America the Beautiful: Rediscovering What Made This Nation Great*.**

itage, and that the secular argument of eradicating God in the name of separation of church and state doesn't hold water.

"There is nothing at all in our founding documents forbidding or denigrating religious expression in public life," Carson writes.

Therefore, Carson doesn't shy away from expressing his own religious, politi-

cal, and social views—even in highly visible public situations.

In February, before President Barack Obama, Columbia '83 and Harvard Law '91, and hundreds of dignitaries and political leaders, Carson boldly spoke his convictions as the keynote speaker of the 2013 National Prayer Breakfast when he called political correctness "a horrible thing."

"I'm not ever out to offend anyone. But PC is dangerous. Because, you see, in this country, one of the founding principles was freedom of thought and freedom of expression. [Political correctness] puts a muzzle on people. And at the same time, it keeps them from discussing important issues while the fabric of this society is being changed. And we cannot fall for that trick. And what we need to do is start talking about things, talking about things that are important," he told breakfast attendees.

Carson was criticized because he questioned public policy at the breakfast. He called the national debt a big problem and offered a flat, tithe-like alternative that doesn't set out to punish those who earn more income. Carson also questioned the efficiency of the health care system. As a result, pundits called for him to apologize to the president for his remarks, which were deemed too political for the event.

In an interview with Fox News, Carson responded to the criticism, saying, "It really didn't matter who I was sitting in front of. I always pray before I give a

***"The ability to think and speak freely was one of the major tenets upon which this nation was established, and I suspect that the founding fathers would turn over in their graves if they could see how such tenets are being violated on a regular basis today by people adhering to political correctness."***



speech and I ask God for the right things to say. It's very rare these days for people to speak the truth. Everyone wants to go along to get along and, in the meantime, the fabric of our nation is being destroyed."

This spring, Carson stepped down as commencement speaker at Johns Hopkins University because of the controversy surrounding his past comments

opposing same-sex marriage. In a letter to Medical School Dean Paul Rothman, Carson said he didn't want to "distract from the celebratory nature of the day."

And that's exactly the kind of "muzzle" he spoke about at the National Prayer Breakfast.

Yet, while Carson raises his concern about the future of the United States, he also offers hope to Americans.

"Many recent polls have shown that most Americans believe that we are on the wrong path as a nation," Carson writes in his book. "They are discouraged about our future and the future of our children. I say be not discouraged, for God is on our side if we really trust in Him, as is indicated on every coin in your pocket and every bill in your wallet." ■

By Eileen Scott, Senior Writer

## OUR ERODING RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS

**Authors Tell Students to Defend Liberty, Speak the Truth in Love**

**I** In speeches during the spring semester, writers R.R. Reno, Yale PhD '90, and Eric Metaxas, Yale '84, exhorted college students and the nation to be aware of the growing sentiment against religious freedom.

"We're in the midst of climate change—one that's getting colder and colder toward religion," said Reno when he addressed students at Hillsdale College in Michigan.

From his professional purview, Reno has a broad scope of the narrowing "tolerance" for people of faith, particularly Christians who choose to vote and live according to their consciences. The editor of the journal *First Things* and the author of *Fighting the Noonday Devil*, he told the Hillsdale students, "What we're seeing today is a secular liberalism that wants to expand the prohibition of establishment to silence articulate religious voices and disenfranchise religiously motivated voters, and at the same time, to narrow the scope of free exercise, so that the new secular morality can reign over American society unimpeded."

Conversely, the United States strives to empower the religious rights of those in other countries through The Office of International Religious Freedom; which, according to its Web site, seeks to "promote freedom of religion and conscience throughout the world as a fundamental human right and as a source of stability for all countries; and assist emerging democracies in implementing freedom of

religion and conscience." Yet, Americans who attempt to live in that matter face judicial overturn of their votes for marriage and financial punishment for refusing to provide health care that can lead to the termination of pregnancies.

Metaxas, the author of several books, including *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr,*

*Prophet, Spy*, and the voice of the radio commentary *BreakPoint*, spoke out against such affronts to religious freedom before the Conservative Political Action Conference this spring. While denouncing the inequality of the HHS Mandate, Metaxas also likened the current state of religious freedom in this country to that

**"A secular orthodoxy has arisen, and every person of faith is called to battle against false ideas."**

**—Eric Metaxas, Yale '84**



**Writers R.R. Reno (L), Yale '90, and Eric Metaxas, Yale '84, are speaking out regarding diminishing religious freedom in the United States.**



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of early Nazi Germany.

Metaxas was inspired to explore religious liberty after doing research on German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed by the Nazis after being implicated in a plot to assassinate Hitler.

"Many people have said they see disturbing parallels between what was happening in Germany in the 1930s and America today on that issue. I'm very sorry to agree."

In May, Metaxas served as the commencement speaker for Palm Beach Atlantic University, where he challenged students to be ready to challenge false ideas propagated by a secular society.

"Every age has its battles," he said.

***"What we're seeing today is a secular liberalism that wants to expand the prohibition of establishment to silence articulate religious voices and disenfranchise religiously motivated voters..."***

***—R.R. Reno, Yale Ph. D '90***

"A little over fifty years ago, an Iron Curtain descended over Europe and that was the great battle of that time and of the many decades that followed. But in our age, a secular orthodoxy has arisen, and every person of faith is called to battle against false ideas, these false ideas that say we are not glorious creatures created in the image of a loving God, with an eternal purpose to love Him and one another."

Metaxas encouraged the students to take heart.

"God wants us to have courage and to speak the truth in love. If we don't speak the truth in love, it is not truth.

And, if we don't say anything, we're not loving," he said.

Also responding to the secular salvos fired across the bow of freedom, Reno outlined a battle plan to thwart the effort to confine the expression of faith, telling students, "First and most obvious, defend religious liberty in the courts; second, fight against the emerging legal theories that threaten to undermine religious liberty; and third, fight the cultural battle."

He reminded students of what he called the "remarkable capacity for communities of faith to endure," saying the church emerged 2,000 years ago in a pagan culture, absent of constitutional protection. And, with that

legacy in mind, he rallied students to bank on faith over popular opinion, and fortitude over accommodation.

"Right now, the Nones [those identifying as being without religious affiliation] seem to have the upper hand in America. But, what seems powerful is not always so. If I had to bet on Harvard or the Catholic Church, Yale or the Mennonites in Goshen, Indiana, the *New York Times* or yeshivas in Brooklyn, I wouldn't hesitate. Over the long haul, religious faith has proven itself the most powerful and enduring force in human history." ■

# IS GOD NECESSARY FOR MORALITY?

**Debate at Columbia University Features Apologist and Atheist**



Belief in a supreme deity provides a solid foundation for embracing morality.

Atheists, however, are only left with matter, energy, and the space-time continuum. Such elements are simply not enough to explain the existence of morality – or provide a basis for divine skeptics to claim atheism is compatible with the principles of objective morals.

Those were some of the key points from David Wood when the Christian apologist debated atheist Kile Jones May 6 at Columbia University. The debate was entitled, “Good without God: Is God Necessary for Morality?”

Columbia Faith and Action sponsored the event featuring Wood, who is pursuing a doctorate in the philosophy of religion at Fordham University, and Jones, the founder of *Claremont Journal of Religion* who is pursuing a doctorate in religion at Claremont Lincoln University. A leadership development ministry, Columbia Faith and Action is supported and resourced by Christian Union.

Wood highlighted the improbability of firm morality, ultimately, arising in a vast universe merely birthed from a dense, hot expansion that resulted in subatomic particles.

As such, he rhetorically questioned how atheists can believe that humans are little more than the byproduct of randomly connected molecules, but also claim compatibility with the belief in fixed moral truths.

“On the surface of Earth are these little lumps of cells called human beings who are only here because their ancestors managed to transmit DNA better than other lumps of cells,” Wood said. “These little lumps of cells are now convinced that they have incredible worth and dignity, that what they do really, really matters, and that their value is something so precious to them...”

Ironically, “how can we think of ourselves as morally responsible if that’s how we view the world?” Wood asked. Moral absolutes point to a moral lawgiver and are not party to relativism and subjectivism.

Nonetheless, Jones stood adamant in his assertion that the existence of God is unnecessary for morality.

“I don’t think God exists. It doesn’t help me, in any way, explain the way things are. All it does is add something to the equation,” he said. “The idea that we would need a God, a supreme leader, a supreme cosmic authority, to ground



**In May, apologist David Wood (L) debated atheist Kile Jones at Columbia University.**

morality or any other thing sounds rather Orwellian, to say the least.”

Jones insisted morality simply results from human progress, social advancement, and civility. “We have innate in each of us a desire to survive and thrive. That’s where ethics and morality come from,” he said. “There’s no need for any other explanation.”

Likewise, Jones sarcastically compared the concept of attributing morality to God to the prospect of offering “42” as a viable explanation behind the existence of morals. “I can equally say the answer is ‘42,’ a reference to *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Universe*,” he said.

In the sci-fi bestseller, the computer Deep Thought delivers “42” as the answer to the Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe, and Everything. “Forty-two makes no difference to the explanation,” he said. “God is like the invisible, undetectable tiger in the garden. It genuinely doesn’t help when we invoke God.”

Nonetheless, Wood countered that removing God from the framework of reality eliminates a viable rationale for the

existence of objective moral values, duties, and responsibilities. “As an atheist, all is permissible,” he said.

Essentially, atheists want to have their cake and eat it, too, Woods suggested. He pointed to the so-called skeptics’ dilemma, noting atheists reject valid arguments for the existence of God, but postulate flimsy ones to explain the pres-

ence and reasonableness of firm moral precepts.

In more colorful terms, Woods said atheists set their “skeptometers” high to dismiss arguments for the belief in God, but they significantly lower their levels of skepticism to accept rationales for moral practices.

“It’s not good methodology, and

it’s not consistent,” Wood said. “You don’t have objective moral values without God.”

Nonetheless, Jones responded how God is an undetectable entity, but morality is a sense all humans experience.

In response, Wood asked how many students in the audience had experienced God and how many had experienced morality. About half responded positively to the first query and virtually all to the latter.

“You must be all delusional, right?” Wood asked rhetorically.

As well, Wood highlighted how nature within the animal kingdom does not point to the prevalence of moral practices. “Nature harms all kinds of things,” he said.

As for Wood, his belief in a supreme deity plays a key role in his belief humans should be governed by a moral framework that takes the concerns of other people into consideration.

Ultimately, “I obey God because there is right and wrong,” he said. “I do right because I love God. I have moral obligations.” ■

# 'WHY I AM NOT AN ATHEIST'

*Ravi Zacharias Speaks before Capacity Crowd at Princeton University*

**P** A life without God is an existence without answers to some of its most penetrating questions and comfort for its most arduous challenges.

Acclaimed author and broadcaster Ravi Zacharias shared those perspectives when the international minister appeared at Princeton University on April 4 at the invitation of eight campus organizations.

In a lecture entitled, *Why I Am Not an Atheist*, Zacharias said atheism leaves its followers with no moral absolutes and scant hope.

"We really fail to understand where life goes if you choose to define it without God," Zacharias told the packed audience in McCosh Hall.

The lecture was sponsored by Princeton Faith and Action ([pfanda.com](http://pfanda.com)), Athletes in Action ([princeton.edu/~aia](http://princeton.edu/~aia)), Baptist Student Fellowship, Faculty Commons, the Graduate Christian Fellowship ([princeton.edu/~ivgrad](http://princeton.edu/~ivgrad)), Manna Christian Fellowship ([manna.mycpanel.princeton.edu](http://manna.mycpanel.princeton.edu)), Princeton Evangelical Fellowship ([pef.mycpanel.princeton.edu](http://pef.mycpanel.princeton.edu)), and the Wesley Foundation ([princeton.edu/~wesley](http://princeton.edu/~wesley)).

Zacharias spoke at Princeton during a visit to New Jersey that also featured an appearance on April 5 at Princeton Alliance Church in Plainsboro.

The native of India is a senior research fellow at Wycliffe Hall, an independent theology program within Oxford University. Zacharias previously served as a visiting scholar at Cambridge University, where he studied philosophers and literature of the Romantic era.

During his appearance at Princeton, the famed apologist highlighted the inadequacies of atheism, especially when its

followers try to probe deeper life issues without any transcendent points of reference. An atheistic worldview makes central questions about the meaning of humanity and the like virtually unanswerable, he said.

"How do we define the most essential



**Acclaimed author and broadcaster Ravi Zacharias appeared at Princeton University on April 4 to deliver a lecture entitled "Why I Am Not an Atheist."**

things in life?" Zacharias asked Princeton students rhetorically. "We struggle to explain life without all points of reference... without any transcendental, ontic points of reference."

Essentially, atheism points to meaning-

***"Among the ramifications to a life without God is the difficulty of anchoring morality. Without a transcendent lawgiver to establish morality, evil can be trivialized in relativism."***

lessness in response to life's chief queries, notably ones surrounding death, suffering, and justice.

In addition, a key missing ingredient from atheism is firm boundaries involving issues of morality.

A philosophical view that denies God as an absolute moral giver, in turn, trivializes evil and desacralizes human life. Standards become relative.

"Among the ramifications to a life without God is the difficulty of anchoring morality. Without a transcendent lawgiver to establish morality, evil can be trivialized in relativism," Zacharias said.

As such, Zacharias wholeheartedly rejects atheism. "I simply cannot find a rationally defensible way for moral reasoning," he said. "We are, at our core, moral beings."

Those who doubt God's existence often point to evil and suffering as rationales for not affirming a benevolent, omniscient deity. Nonetheless, such concepts are rooted in ethical reasoning, which, by definition, suggests a divine moral lawgiver. Without the actuality of God, it also is difficult to realize meaning and fulfillment, Zacharias said. "What meaning do we really attribute to God? Are we entitled to our definition of meaning?" Zacharias asked rhetorically.

In addition, a worldview that denies God, by extension, negates the prospects of purpose, justice, and eternal reward. "There is no hope," he said. "Death becomes the end. If death is the end, there is no difference between Mother Teresa and Adolf Hitler."

However, Christians can embrace the hope found in Christ's resurrection,

namely assurances of eternal life, comfort, and reunion, Zacharias said.

"The abandoning of God leaves you with some extra tough questions. Why am I not an atheist? You simply cannot build a life with life's deepest questions that

continue to haunt when you're running from God," Zacharias told Princeton students.

Zacharias is the founder and president of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, which is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, and features offices in six additional countries. His weekly radio program, *Let My People Think*, airs on 2,078 outlets worldwide. Other broadcast endeavors include a weekday radio program and a regular television program.

A prolific author in the disciplines of

comparative religions, cults, and philosophy, Zacharias holds a series of honorary doctorates, as well as a master of divinity from Trinity International University in Illinois.

Also during Zacharias' appearance, Vince Vitale, Princeton '04, fielded queries from students during a robust, enlightening question-and-answer session.

Among his extensive credentials, Vitale is a top scholar at The Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics, a partnership between Ravi Zacharias International Min-

istries and Oxford University's Wycliffe Hall. Vitale, who holds a doctorate in philosophy from Oxford, also is a member of the faculty of Theology and Religion at Oxford.

Ultimately, Zacharias told students the path to a fulfilling, meaningful life involves faith in an omnipotent God who wants to engage with each individual in a personal relationship.

"God is nearer to you than you realize," he said. "Find the glue that puts all of life together." ■

By Catherine Elvy, Staff Writer

## LOSING THEIR RELIGION?

*Brown Survey Examines Students' Faith, or Lack of It*

**B** Almost half of surveyed Brown University students arrived without practicing a religion and remain faithless on campus, according to a recent poll by *The Brown Daily Herald*.

In April, the student newspaper released the results of a survey that found 42 percent of undergraduates entered Brown without a religion and still consider themselves to be secular.

At least one U.S. social scientist found those results disturbing, highlighting the nature of how religious practices often promote the well-being of individuals and, ultimately, families and communities.

In particular, there are significant ties between the frequency of religious worship and most of life's key sectors, namely mental health, physical health, education, income, and longevity.

"Those who worship weekly do best," said Patrick Fagan, a social science researcher who holds a doctorate from Uni-

versity College Dublin.

As for the *Herald* survey, another 5 percent of respondents said they stopped practicing a religion after matriculating to Brown. In the spring survey of nearly 1,200 students, yet another 12 percent said they practice the same religion, but with less commitment.

On a brighter note, 9.5 percent of survey participants said they embrace the same religion they held upon entering Brown with more commitment, and 1 percent of respondents enrolled in Brown without a religion, but have since started practicing one. Some 29 percent indicated they practice the same religion with the same commitment level as they did before arriving at Brown.

For Fagan and other Christian leaders



**According to social scientist Patrick Fagan, almost half of Brown University freshmen arrived without practicing a religion and remain faithless on campus.**

with ties to top universities, the results of the Brown survey provide a troubling commentary.

In addition to serving as a senior fellow with the Family Research Council, Fagan worked as a deputy assistant secretary in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He is also the father of a pair of Princeton alumni.

Research highlights how faith plays a direct role in an individual's happiness and sense of well-being, according to Fagan, who reviewed a

series of studies probing the impact of religion for a report he published in 2006.

Membership in a faith community also can boost coping skills. As well, it promotes a favorable self-image and helps foster hope, benevolence, and a belief in divine grace, Fagan wrote in a report for The Heritage Foundation.

Likewise, numerous studies demonstrate a strong association between religious practice and decreased behavioral habits tied to cigarettes, alcohol, and recreational drugs, Fagan said.

As well, teens and undergraduates who

**"Teens and undergraduates who worship on a weekly basis have lower levels of depression and rates of sexual activity outside of wedlock."**

worship weekly have lower levels of depression and rates of sexual activity outside of wedlock, said Fagan, also the director of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute.

Fagan and other Christian leaders asserted that the importance of developing and practicing faith during collegiate endeavors cannot be underestimated. “The habits they develop can have lifelong effects,” said Fagan.

Chuck Hetzler, ministry director for New York City Christian Union, echoed those comments and highlighted the critical nature of reaching undergraduates with Christ’s gospel.

“Students are more openly exploring what they believe at this time in life,” said Hetzler, who previously served as the Christian Union’s teaching fellow at Princeton.

On a related note, Kent Dahlberg, a longtime campus minister who served with Cru at Brown from 1983 to 1988,

said a series of practical reasons conspire against spiritual training and advancement for many undergraduates.

“In many ways, elite-school college life is, by design, a protective bubble that insulates young people from feeling a deep sense of need,” said Dahlberg.

“Nevertheless, God can be at work amidst all of that security and ease, drawing people to Himself through positive experiences and relationships, as well as through unexpected difficulties that break through a comfortable self-satisfaction and self-assurance.”

Kent and Denise Dahlberg lead Integrate at Dartmouth College, a campus ministry focused on professors, administrators, graduate students, alumni, and community leaders.

Many professors, administrators, and coaches do not openly practice or encourage religious involvement. Likewise, Ivy League students are “awash in a sea of opportunities and distractions,” Kent

Dahlberg said. “It is easy to forego religious activities for more compelling involvements.”

As for Brown, the majority of students who practice the same religion with the same commitment identify as Catholic or Jewish, according to the *Herald*. “Being welcome and feeling a part of something makes you feel at home again,” Peter Fernandez, Brown ’13, told the *Herald*.

Along related lines, Cassandra Hough, a Princeton alumna of 2007 and founder of The Love and Fidelity Network, said she has witnessed scores of Ivy-League students, ultimately, graduate stronger in their faith.

“The spiritual, cultural, and academic climate focused them to take ownership of and defend their faith,” said Hough, a Catholic.

That is critical because the worldview students embrace will “inform how they make decisions about what is right and wrong,” Hough said. ■

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The Ivy League Christian Observer is a publication of Christian Union.

# RESEARCH: RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS ARE TOP OF THE CLASS

*Analysis by Dr. William Jaynes Has Surprising Results*

**B** A recent meta-analysis of public, religious, and charter schools by Dr. William Jaynes has revealed some bold conclusions.

“If Harvard, Princeton, and other Ivy League universities want to find some of the best students in the country, a disproportionately large percentage of these students are likely to come from Christian and other private religious schools,” said Jaynes, Harvard ’93.

Jaynes released the results of his groundbreaking study during a speech for Notre Dame University faculty this spring. A senior fellow at the Witherspoon Institute in Princeton, New Jersey and a professor at California State University Long Beach, Jaynes conducted an extensive study of prayer and the Bible in public schools. In 2010, he wrote a book on the topic, *A Call for Character Education and Prayer in the Schools*.

Jaynes’ recent three-year, meta-analysis study on education was the first to analyze the three educational options. His research also yielded shocking findings regarding the comparison of public and charter schools.

“I was quite surprised that students from charter schools did no better than their counterparts in traditional public schools,” he said. “I really expected public charter school students to outperform pupils in traditional public schools.”

When comparing all three institutions, Jaynes found that students attending religious schools outperformed their peers by one whole grade level.

Regarding behavioral measures such as school fights, suspensions, and obeying teachers, Jaynes concluded that religious private school students further outperformed public and charter schools.

“Clearly, there are advantages to both teachers and students being able to openly express their faith,” said Jaynes, who conducted the study, in part, to identify the impact of religious schools upon the educational environment within the country.

“Christian schools have been a major contributor to American educational

history. In recent years, it seems that the federal government has chosen to overlook the role these schools play in helping children succeed, particularly in the inner city,” he said.

According to Jaynes, the racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps are 25 percent narrower in private religious schools than they are in public and charter schools. His analysis also noted a higher level of racial harmony in Christian schools.

Some of the advantages of the religious schools lie in the teaching approach, and in the higher expectations that teachers in those schools have of their students, Jaynes said.

The overall research, according to Jaynes, reveals that “Christian schools should have a place at the table in terms of teaching children.” However, that place is often vacated because of the so-called separation of church and state.

“The phrase ‘separation of church and state’ never occurs in the Constitution,” said Jaynes. “Those in the public schools claim to teach that the United States should have diversity. But there is an irony in this assertion, because the public school’s control over K-12 schooling is as close to a monopoly as one finds in the United States. It sure does not seem that most public school educators welcome diversity in schooling that would include religious private schools.”

But separating students from the Bible seems to have a negative effect, especially in the academy. According to Jaynes’ prior research on Bible literacy, students could benefit from a core religion course.

“The positive relationship between Bible literacy and academic achievement is likely related to the fact that a working knowledge of the Bible is very important if one is to grasp more easily American history, the history of the world, and a large bulk of classical literature. Many authors assume that their readers have a working knowledge of the Bible. Shakespeare alone cites the Bible over 1,300 times,” he said.

Ultimately, the research speaks for itself, and according to Jaynes, it’s time for society to listen.

“It would appear wise for society to appreciate more fully the benefits of religious knowledge, faith-based practices, and Christian schools,” he said. ■



**Bill Jaynes, Harvard ’93, recently released the findings of his study that compared public schools, charter schools, and religious schools.**

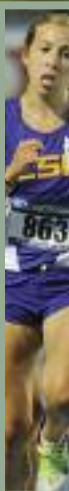
***“Christian schools have been a major contributor to American educational history. In recent years, it seems that the federal government has chosen to overlook the role these schools play in helping children succeed, particularly in the inner city.”***

# GOING FOR THE GOLD FOR THE BIG GREEN

## *Abbey D'Agostino Is a National Champion In Multiple Events*

A captain on the women's track team at Dartmouth College, Abbey D'Agostino is competing for the glory of Christ, running "in such a way as to get the prize" (1 Corinthians 9:24).

D'Agostino '14 is making history, not only for Dartmouth, but also for the Ivy League with all her awards and accolades on the track. A four-time individual national champion, a nine-time All-American over three seasons of competition, and the Division I Indoor Track Athlete of the Year, D'Agostino is one of the nation's top distance runners and could be competing her way to the next Olympic games, after missing out on a trip to the London games by just two-tenths of a second.





This Topsfield, Massachusetts native runs a 4:30.03 mile, which is the seventh fastest by an NCAA woman all-time, and that's not even her best event. She concluded the 2013 NCAA Indoor Championship Meet by becoming the first American woman ever to win both the 3000m (8:55.41) and 5000m (15:28.11) in a career, and she did it in just one meet. At the NCAA Outdoor Championships on June 6, she captured the 5000m national title with a time of 15:43.68.

Later in June, she finished sixth at the U.S. Championships and will have to wait until next year for a shot at the national team.

"I would love someday to make the Olympic or National team," she said. "I am trying my best to live in the present, however, and trust that these opportunities will only arise if they are within God's plan for me. For now, I am just thankful for the gift and enjoying the many opportunities God has given me to glorify Him through running thus far."

"I am learning to trust whatever is God's will for my races, rather than imagine the possible outcomes. For me, this platform is an incredible way to strengthen my personal relationship with Him and to glorify His power to others."

"Abbey is an inspiration," said teammate and fellow co-captain Arianna Vailas '14. "She has been given a gift, and she is using it to inspire so many others. God has given her an incredible opportunity to glorify Him through her running."

Vailas, a fellow junior distance runner, said D'Agostino has done the impossible, and credits her success to her incredible work ethic.

"I don't think she understands the profundity of the effect she has on people," Vailas said. "People watch her run and they don't know how to react. They've never seen anything like it. She's doing incredible things, proving the power of God's love on and off the track."

All of the Dartmouth women's track team captains—D'Agostino, Vailas, Kate Sullivan '13, Megan Krumpoch '14, and Janae Dunchack '14—are members of the university's Fellowship of Christian Athletes Huddle. The ladies embrace their role and use it to glorify God. In the last three years, women's track members' involvement in FCA ([www.dartmouthfca.org](http://www.dartmouthfca.org)) and team prayer has only grown.

"We want to use our role not only on the track when we perform, but as leaders that can be examples of Christ and spread His kingdom, too," D'Agostino said.

Denise Dahlberg, FCA Volunteer Coach and Discipleship Group leader to D'Agostino and Vailas, described her as highly respected and loved by her teammates.

"Her style is that of a servant leader," Dahlberg said. "In the midst of personally excelling, she is equally committed to helping her teammates excel, cheering on each of her fellow athletes and supporting them however she can."

Raised in the church, it wasn't until her freshman year of high school that D'Agostino started to think about and learn about the Word of God through her cross country team captain and an invitation to participate in the high school Young Life ministry. After falling out of touch with that relationship, she went through an insecure phase her junior and senior years.

"Coming to Dartmouth as a freshman, there was such a great representative of Christians on our team," D'Agostino said. "I didn't really understand what it meant. I was aware of Christian ideas and fundamentally what that meant, but more in a legalistic sense. I wasn't motivated to apply it consistently in my life."

All of that began to change one day when Vailas invited D'Agostino out to lunch with Dahlberg and an instant connection was made.

"I didn't want to accept that I might change," D'Agostino admitted. "But then I began to learn more about myself and appreciate myself by learning more about God's truth."

During 2012's "sophomore summer," which requires Dartmouth students to attend the summer session after their sophomore year, Dahlberg took advantage of this class staying on campus and started a Discipleship Group to develop the community of believers. D'Agostino credits this intimate group for exposing her more to God's truth.

"Before, Abbey came a few times to FCA, but not regularly," Dahlberg said. "During 'sophomore summer,' I did an in-depth Bible study focusing on developing their per-



Tim O'Dowd



Dartmouth Athletic Department

**Abbey D'Agostino '14 is an NCAA national champion and a leader with Fellowship of Christian Athletes at Dartmouth.**

sonal walk with God. Abbey was a part of that and from there she has continued to be an active part of Disciple Group and [we] have grown close.”

Vailas and D'Agostino spent a lot of time over the summer together between workouts and D-Group, developing a friendship with its foundation in Christ.

“Her faith grew steadily and confidently as she took the time to reflect on the blessings and the challenges in her life at that time,” Vailas said. “She surprised me with her enthusiasm for the workbook that Denise suggested we read, and the fervor with which she undertook frequent reflection on her life, constantly trying to improve any weak aspects she perceived in her character and build up the relationships that supported her.”

Dahlberg said that Abbey and her Christian teammates are known as persons of faith and trust the Holy Spirit to help respond to teammates’ questions, pray for them, and invite them to Huddle, Disciple Group, or church.

“I do my best to serve others by relating to them on the same level,” D'Agostino said. “One-on-one cohesion with the group is really when I feel God’s presence and I feel immersed in that love.”

Vailas attested that the most important quality of being a leader is the ability to be an example both on and off the track.

“I feel confident that the track and cross country teams are being led by strong Christians who exemplify God’s Word and encourage those who look up to them to do the same,” Vailas said. “Whether they say so explicitly, or simply live by Christ’s example.”

By doing so, they challenge teammates not just to be better athletes, but also better people.

“I’m so grateful to be on a team where my teammates and my

closest friends keep me accountable for the same values that they hold,” Vailas said.

For D'Agostino, her leadership has been impacted by her discipleship within FCA.

“We can’t devote ourselves to perfection, but rather, excellence,” D'Agostino said. “I’ve developed through FCA the importance of excellence in what you choose to do and what you are called to do, instead of measuring your success compared to others or in the world’s standards. That’s how I try to model myself.”

“Abbey is a calm, focused, thoughtful woman with an infectious smile,” Dahlberg said. “Her unassuming presence makes her very approachable. Although she is a fierce competitor, her greatest joys are spending time with her friends and helping others, rather than reveling in her athletic successes.”

In any thought of success, D'Agostino will give thanks to God for providing the people—her coach, teammates, and parents—who helped along the way.

“You will not find a more humble person,” Dahlberg said.

Long distance running is as much about mental preparation and training as physical. Her coach Mark Coogan has helped her learn to be focused, strategic, and mentally tough when she runs.

Another part of her mental training lately has been a goal to memorize more Scripture. Sitting on her desk are two passages from the book of Philippians: “I can do all things in Him who gives me strength” (4:13); and “...without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God (1:28).”

“Through running, God is always humbling me, and I thank Him for those situations,” D'Agostino said. “When I’m not having the best day, He is insistently showing me that He has given me the talent as a gift.”

Through connecting with the team, using her own experiences, and not shying away from challenges, God is not only blessing D'Agostino with the talent, but also using it to shine His glory.

“God couldn’t have chosen a more selfless, humble being to represent Him,” Vailas said. “I’m so happy He’s chosen Abbey to bless with that gift.”

“Because I only truly came to faith within the past year, my

***“Abbey is an inspiration. She has been given a gift, and she is using it to inspire so many others. God has given her an incredible opportunity to glorify Him through her running.”***

***—Arianna Vailas, Dartmouth '14***

perspective of running has changed — the ability now to see God’s role in my running has allowed me to realize that my success would never have been possible without His blessings,” D'Agostino said. “It has renewed my overall motivation to run and glorify Him through this gift.”

*This story was adapted from an article on a blog hosted by Fellowship of Christian Athletes (www.fca.org). ■*

# PASSING THE BATON

## Princeton Relay Team Wins Indoor Championship

**I** When the men's distance medley relay team from Princeton University won a national title at the NCAA indoor track and field meet, the victory was sweet, especially for Princeton Faith and Action ([www.pfanda.com](http://www.pfanda.com)).

Three of the four members participate in the leadership development ministry supported and resourced by Christian Union.

In March, the Tigers secured the distance medley relay to claim their first national indoor title since 2002. Seniors Peter Callahan, Russell Dinkins, and Austin Hollimon and junior Michael Williams pulled ahead of Penn State University by nearly a second to finish in 9:33.01.

"It was huge for these guys," said Mark Catlin, Christian Union's teaching fellow at Princeton. "For Princeton to win a national championship in track was incredible."

Catlin leads a Bible course comprised of members of Princeton's track team, and longtime members of the course include Williams and Callahan, team captain.

In fall 2009, Ministry Fellow Scott Jones, Cornell '04, launched the group at the request of two sophomores who wanted to bolster the spiritual strength and cohesiveness of members of Princeton's cross-country squad.

During the 2012-13 year, more than a third of the 27-member cross-country team participated in Catlin's Bible Course. Though cross country only competes in the fall, most of the runners also compete in indoor and outdoor track.

Hollimon is especially active in the leadership development ministry; he attends Catlin's course for senior men, and he plays the drums for Truth Thursdays, Princeton Faith and Action's (PFA) gatherings that reflect the cultural heritage of students of the African Diaspora.

The foursome who competed in the distance medley relay for Princeton claimed the national title during the 2013 NCAA Division I Men's Indoor Track and Field Championships, which were held at the University of Arkansas. During an onsite interview with Flotrack, Callahan described the victory as a longtime goal. "I'm thankful we were able to have a good race and bring a medal

home to Princeton," said the native of Evanston, Illinois, and history major.

"We've been training together for a long time. This has been a dream for us for a long time."

Hollimon echoed those comments, noting his team pulled together to execute a spectacular win, despite intense competition. "My job was to get us out of the bunch and into the top group," he said. "We've got a national title, and God is good."

Hollimon also credited Callahan's role in Princeton's razor-thin victory.

"As I told the guys at ESPN, we have all the faith in the world in Peter Callahan," he said. "We knew if we got [the baton] to him in position it was going to be our championship to win."

Likewise, Princeton Athletic Communications described Callahan as a "slingshot as he left the competition in the dust as the bell sounded for the final lap." It also noted Hollimon, who competed in the U.S. Olympic trials in the 400-meter hurdles in 2012, raced the fastest 400-meter leg of the 12 teams at 46.35.

Callahan, an All-America and sub-four-minute miler, served as a major catalyst for the Tigers. After a big indoor season in 2012, Callahan did not compete in cross country and spent most of the indoor season recovering from an injury.



**In March, the men's distance medley relay team from Princeton University won a national championship. (L to R) Michael Williams '14, Austin Hollimon '13, Russell Dinkins '13, and Peter Callahan '13 finished in 9:33.01 to help the Tigers secure their first NCAA indoor title since 2002.**

Not surprisingly, another individual celebrating Princeton's amazing season was Fred Samara, Penn '73, head coach of the men's track and field team and a former Olympian.

The athletes also credit their participation in Princeton's faith community, including PFA, for their spiritual development and determination.

"I have met so many men and women of tremendous faith. PFA and Bible courses were so much a part of that," said Hollimon, also a drummer with Princeton United Gospel Ensemble. "I am tremendously blessed."

In turn, James Fields, a Christian Union ministry fellow at Princeton, noted Christ is central to Hollimon. "Austin exemplifies the Christian character and mature leadership that God is developing within all of our students at Princeton Faith and Action," he said.

Track team member Michael Palmisano '13 said the Bible course "has been wonderful for the spiritual growth of all of our men."

Jones, who oversaw the course for two years, agreed. "It's been really cool to see how the Bible course has shaped the culture of the team, to see the guys really own the course," he said.

Winning a national title was great, but Catlin noted the run-

***"I'm thankful we were able to have a good race and bring a medal home to Princeton. We've been training together for a long time. This has been a dream for us."***

***—Peter Callahan, Princeton '13***

ners from his Bible course also are pressing toward the mark spiritually.

"It was an intense year," he said. "We really challenged these guys to be men of God." ■



**Princeton's distance medley relay team: Austin Hollimon '13 (top left), Peter Callahan '13 (top right), Russell Dinkins '13 (lower right), and Michael Williams '14 (lower left).**

# AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN

*Valedictorian Seeks to 'Do Justice, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly...'*

**D**A Dartmouth valedictorian, Joel Malkin '13 has achieved considerable success during his college career. Yet, as Malkin addressed family, friends, and peers during commencement this June, his words reflected a humble character of gratitude that left no room for boasting.

"I am a 22-year-old who doesn't think he can give advice this morning, and I'd like to take this opportunity to do nothing but honor those who enabled us to graduate today," said Malkin, dressed in the uniform of a newly commissioned U.S. Marine Corps Officer.

The second lieutenant went on to thank the Dartmouth faculty, administration, and employees for their roles in helping the class of '13 reach their goals, and expressed gratitude and love for family and friends.

"The opportunities, the experiences, and the fond memories that Dear Old Dartmouth has given us are a great blessing. For that, we as a class are grateful to all of you," he said.

In a recent article for *Dartmouth Now*, Malkin was also not ashamed to give credit to his Savior for the gifts and talents he possesses.

"I thank God and Jesus Christ my Lord for the opportunities that were given me when I matriculated. I consider myself to be very blessed," he said.

Malkin, who graduated with a 4.0, was a member of lightweight crew, Navigators ([www.dartmouth.edu/~navs/](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~navs/)), and Christian Impact ([www.cru.org](http://www.cru.org)). The classics and linguistics double major was also a Rufus Choate Scholar and served as a Thetford mentor for elementary school students.

Still, despite the accolades, humility is the hallmark of Malkin's leadership style, having gleaned wisdom from mentors in



Eli Burakian - Dartmouth College

**Dartmouth valedictorian and Marine Corps Lieutenant Joel Malkin '13 gives his commencement address.**

campus ministry and those within the USMC Officer Candidate School.

***"I thank God and Jesus Christ my Lord for the opportunities that were given me when I matriculated. I consider myself to be very blessed."***

"The focus on caring for others, rather than building my career or reputation, is a key lesson I've learned from ministry

participation in Christian Impact," said Malkin.

Additionally, he recalls the advice given to him at Officer Candidate School by a senior enlisted Marine.

"He told us we needed humility because our job was to support the Marines under our command and give our all to make them successful. Servant leadership is the Marine mindset," said Malkin.

And a Christian mindset is what has helped Malkin balance the demands of school, extracurricular activities, and Marine training with skill. Scripture is his anchor, keeping him grounded in what is important.

"In Micah, the Bible says, 'Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.' That means, in part, to prioritize your walk with God, prioritize love for other people, and don't focus on your achievements too much," said Malkin.

Additionally, Malkin credits good time management, focus, and personal motivation with helping him succeed.

"Finding joy in what I do is not inherent to the work I'm doing," explained Malkin, referring to Ecclesiastes 3:13. "It's outside of work; it's a gift from God. Work, even work you struggle to enjoy, can become an act of worship; it can become something you do out of gratitude to God for the skills and abilities He has given you."

Malkin says he found Dartmouth to be a "faith-building experience," one that required him to face being away from his Christian family and to make the conscious choice to continue a Christ-centered lifestyle. Malkin also found the

fellowship and support offered by Navigators and Christian Impact to be a lasting influence.

“An important lesson I learned from staff members of Christian Impact was that ministry is not so much a structured system as it is an intentional mindset,” he said. “It’s the conscious commitment to value, respect, and care for those

around you. It’s not a position within an organization, it’s a lifestyle. I plan to carry that lesson with me the rest of my life.”

And it’s obvious that the valedictorian—who didn’t think he could give ad-

vice to his graduating peers—has led by example with Christian obedience and humility and stands ready to emulate servant leadership as he serves his country as a Marine and as a follower of Jesus Christ. ■

By Emily Belz, *WORLD Magazine*

## THE ‘WORD’ ON THE STREET

### Columbia Law School Alumna Finds E-Devotional



*Editor’s note: The following story was reprinted with permission from WORLD Magazine ([www.WorldMag.com](http://www.WorldMag.com)).*

Bethany Jenkins, an effervescent 32-year-old with a face for television, in 2009 was finishing at Columbia Law School and preparing to take the bar. She had three job offers. A prestigious New York law firm wanted her. A federal judge offered her a clerkship. And MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, a top-rated cable news show, offered her a job as chief of staff. The recession was acute at the time, so one job offer was a luxury, let alone three. After a sleepless night, she turned all three down. Jenkins had decided instead to write a daily devotional. She passed the bar, but she prepared herself to work at a coffee shop.

“Am I crazy?” she asked a group of friends over lunch in Union Square the day after she turned down the jobs.

Jenkins, a Floridian who grew up a Southern Baptist but now attends Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York, has never been to seminary. She didn’t have experience writing devotionals. She knew she had some skill at writing or she wouldn’t have been offered the judge’s clerkship. But her past in the political and corporate world has been key to what has become a successful ministry to urban professionals: She understands

the way they think, and she has the brains to keep up with the best of them. Prior to law school, Jenkins worked on Capitol Hill, at the State Department, and then most recently at the New York Stock Exchange, a background she describes as “street cred” for her work now. After turning down the three jobs, she created the Park Forum, an organization whose motto



**As she approached graduation from Columbia University’s law school, Bethany Jenkins turned down three amazing job offers. Instead, she created the Park Forum and pens a daily devotional for Wall Streeters.**

is, “As the park is to the city, so the Word is to life.” Today she has a role few women can claim: She writes a daily devotional that Wall Streeters read. Called 843 Acres

(the area of Central Park), it has about 1,800 subscribers, mainly in New York, and its reach is growing.

Though Jenkins’ journey wasn’t simple, from the top of the New York world to an unemployed aspiring writer to an author with a daily readership, she never had to take that coffee shop job to support herself. At the lunch where she asked her friends if she was crazy for turning down three prestigious jobs, one of those friends on the spot said if Jenkins could get 501(c)3 tax-exempt status, the friend and her husband would give Jenkins enough seed money to get her started for a few months. Jenkins started crying, and the friend told her, “We’re doing this.” Jenkins got 501(c)3 status two months later (startlingly fast), and the friend now serves as the chairman of the Park Forum’s board. Redeemer Presbyterian Church, though it has no official relationship to the Park Forum, has provided Jenkins with logistical support, and the pastors serve as Jenkins’ theological mentors.

When I met with Jenkins at a coffee shop in midtown Manhattan, she was in the middle of working on her Lent series and reading Puritan theologian John Owen and Catholic writer Henri Nouwen to glean material. Every day when she wakes up, she’ll often lie in bed and listen to a recording of a reading of the Bible passage for that day’s devotional. She works from home and writes in the morning, then fills the rest of the day with everything else: She’s the Park Forum’s only full-time staff. “You’re the mailman, you’re the fundraiser, you’re the writer. I’m the trash taker out. I go to Staples. I’m in-house counsel,” she said. She wants it to stay a small operation because

she likes the simplicity of Park Forum's mission. The organization's 2013 budget is a modest \$80,000, which covers her salary, a part-time staffer's salary, and invitation-only Bible-reading events the organization hosts in New York.

Working in the corporate world, Jenkins learned that executives wanted to read snappy summaries of information, so the devotionals never exceed 400 words. In the past when she traveled to Davos, Switzerland, with a chief executive, she had to read sheaves of information and write up "one-sheeters" for him. The desire for a quick read is even more pronounced and widespread now as attention spans shrink. Jenkins said she has had to study what gets men reading devotionals. "I think they're a harder market," she said.

From 1984 until his retirement in 2007, Mark Campisano was the top tax lawyer for McKinsey & Company, one of the biggest consulting firms in the world, based in New York. Jenkins' devotional goes out daily to interested Christians at McKinsey, and Campisano writes a short introduction to the e-mail that relates the devotional to business life at the company.

"You start the day thinking about some part of the Bible," Campisano said. "Which is valuable because you've got so many other thoughts and stresses and claims on your attention." He often reads the devotional on the subway. Campisano said the other Christians he knew at McKinsey had a hard time finding time to meet in person, so the virtual community through the Park Forum has been helpful.

From Campisano's perspective, executives at the top of the business world are hungry for the deep theology he finds in 843 Acres—seeing "firsthand how unsatisfying a successful career can be." Work pushes out all other aspects of life, he said, and divorce is common. "Bethany—one of the big things she's been discussing in recent months is idolatry... career, money, beauty."

For the Advent season this past year, Jenkins brought in a slew of guest writers to take the wheel of 843 Acres: Sally Lloyd-Jones, the author of the *Jesus Storybook Bible*, author Eric Metaxas, Pacific Crossroads' Rankin Wilbourn, and Redeemer Presbyterian Church's Timothy

Keller and his wife Kathy (Kathy Keller has been a close mentor to Jenkins). And the organization Jenkins created, the Park Forum, has expanded beyond an e-mail devotional: Her invitation-only evening readings of Scripture in New York are packed out. In her spare time, Jenkins is working on a book on women's roles in the church that she hopes will be published in the next year or two. Jenkins isn't egalitarian on that topic, but she does have challenges to the way theologically conservative Christians talk about women.

"Jesus says that in heaven there will be no marriage or giving in marriage, and He Himself will be our pastor. And yet all of the women who are writing right now about biblical femininity are writing in the context of family and church," she said. "I'm single, I'm not married, so the question is, does the Bible only have something to say to me for the four hours I go to church? ... I'm basically arguing, no that's not true, there's a view of gospel-centered femininity that's beyond church and family."

In her writing for 843 Acres, Jenkins works off of the Bible reading plan of 18th-century Scottish minister Robert Murray M'Cheyne and often incorporates in the devotional allusions to current events or snippets from Puritan theologians, which she sometimes rewrites to be simpler and clearer.

"I recognize most of our readers are on the subway or moving, so I don't want language to be an obstacle. ... I know SAT words... but you don't use that," Jenkins said. "You have to think about who's the reader, instead of what do I want out of it. People who want to be writers, most of the time it's what they like to do. 'Oh, I want to write a book.' They're not really thinking about the recipient end of it, about would it be helpful, would it be encouraging, would it be identifiable. Because I do this every day, I've gotten into a practice—I'm not very good at it—but it can't be about me. The moment it's about me, is the moment that [readers] unsubscribe, unsubscribe."

Jenkins continued: "I never wanted the Park Forum to be bigger than the Word. There's no Isaiah 55:11 guarantee on the Park Forum. There is on the Word itself."

To subscribe to 843 Acres, visit [www.theparkforum.org](http://www.theparkforum.org). ■



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# 'HUMBLE DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST, ELOQUENT PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL'

*George Whitefield Influenced Founding of Penn, Princeton, Dartmouth*

**P**enn Nearly 300 years ago, George Whitefield was born in Gloucester near the mighty River Severn and the historic docks that serve as links to England's navigational legacy.

Just as the fast-flowing River Severn is famed as the longest waterway in the United Kingdom, one of its sons also is remembered for charting a far-reaching course that shaped the rich spiritual heritage of both the New and Old Worlds.

The spring issue of *Penn Current* highlighted the contributions of Whitefield, an Anglican minister best known for his role in spreading the Great Awakening revival across the British colonies of North America and his ancestral homeland of England.

The University of Pennsylvania publication also noted Whitefield and longtime pal Benjamin Franklin were instrumental in the creation of the Ivy League institution.

As a tribute to the influence of the celebrated evangelist in Penn's roots, the university features a statue of Whitefield in the Dormitory Quadrangle. It reads, "Humble Disciple of Jesus Christ, Eloquent Preacher of the Gospel."

Whitefield, who studied at the University of Oxford with John and Charles Wesley, also was a founder of Methodism.

But he secured his place in history after attracting thousands to his eighteenth century preaching tours of towns,

including Philadelphia, across the fledgling British colonies. The meetings became known as the Great Awakening of 1740.

The revivalist, who believed personal study was indispensable, played a role in shaping the educational landscape of the



University of Pennsylvania

**The University of Pennsylvania features a statue of celebrated evangelist George Whitefield in the Dormitory Quadrangle.**

future United States, namely by helping in the creation of the religious schools that became Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Dartmouth universities.

Whitefield was an original trustee of the Charity School of 1740, which was created on the grounds of his revival meeting house at 4th and Arch streets.

The school, a forerunner of the University of Pennsylvania, offered free instruction "in the knowledge of the Christian religion and in useful literature" to low-income children.

Franklin purchased Whitefield's meeting house as the site for Franklin's Academy of Philadelphia, which became the College of Philadelphia and, later, the University of Pennsylvania.

Whitefield solicited the first donations to Penn's Library, according to *Penn Current*.

Whitefield's keen interest in education also helped birth other primitive schools that became the roots to the Ivy League. He was instrumental in establishing the "Log" college, which played a role in the creation of Princeton University, and he helped orchestrate supplies for the Indian Charity School, a forerunner to Dartmouth College.

For the 200th anniversary of his birth in 1714, a group of Penn alumni commissioned a statue of Whitefield to honor him for his role in the founding of Penn. Unveiled in 1919, the memorial is located in the Quad in front of the Morris and Bodine sections of Ware College House. Famed sculptor and former Penn professor R. Tait McKenzie created the statue.

The inscription on the panels of the memorial's pedestal includes this quote from Franklin: "I knew him intimately upwards of thirty years. His integrity, disinterestedness, and indefatigable zeal in prosecuting every good work I have never seen equalled and shall never see excelled."

Franklin, who was shaped by the teachings of his close friend, was an advocate of Christianity being taught in history classes at Penn.

As important, some scholars suggest Whitefield's boisterous preaching may have played a significant part in unifying the disparate colonies into a future united nation, according to The Providence Forum.

Whitefield died in 1770 in Massachusetts at age 55. ■



# DISTRIBUTING JOY AND SUNSHINE

## Students Win Third Place in Micro-Finance Challenge

**C** In *Art and the Bible*, theologian Francis A. Schaeffer writes that Christians should use arts “to the glory of God, not just as tracts, mind you, but as things of beauty to the praise of God. An art work can be a doxology in itself.”

This spring, Dileen Ee, Cornell '16, is experiencing the reality of how her talent can be used to glorify God. Ee and fellow freshman Dora Heng participated in the Cornell Micro-finance \$5 Challenge, where participants were tasked to create the most social benefit with just five dollars.

Being a visual artist, Ee designed cards that inspired “joy and sunshine.” She and Heng distributed the cards around campus with the intent that the uplifting sentiment would be passed on. Therefore, Ee designed the card to separate so that a recipient could keep one part and pass on the other.

Ee and Heng won third prize for their card, but more importantly, they received inspiration that what they created for a contest could be used for God’s benefit.

Heng admits the pair weren’t consciously thinking of using the cards for Christian outreach when they first developed them. “If I had the chance to do so, I would have done it differently with outreach in mind, because the card really opened doors to conversations and receptiveness,” she said.

However, upon seeing the kindness the cards reflected, Ee and Heng realize their potential in spreading the gospel in the future.

“Dora and I both felt that this iterative card design could be used either as a simple movement to spread Christ’s love and joy around in school, or as publicity materials for future evangelistic events,” Ee said.

The students were surprised by how the cards were received by their classmates.

“I think that’s a simple instance which speaks depths of how art opens our minds so subconsciously. As C.S. Lewis alludes to,



**Cornell Freshmen Dileen Ee and Dora Heng won third place in the Cornell Micro-finance \$5 Challenge for their greeting card design.**

we need art and good novels to ‘sneak past watchful dragons,’” said Ee.

“I think there is a place for art in mission and outreach,” said Heng. “If we can use our talents for service, in a way that seeks to follow after the heart of God, there is great meaning in that.”

Ee is also keenly aware of how Christ is

expressed through her own artistic efforts, whether or not they have a Christian theme. However, she said that expression is not limited to artists.

“Since everything is created for the intent of His glory, art is by no means special in being applied to that end,” said Ee.

“We are all artists in our own rights, whether it’s art, writing, or inventions. But precisely because we are made in God’s image, our creative potential ultimately reflects the creative activity of God, whose work of art is the universe in its entirety. God has created us to be creative just like Him, and is gracious enough to give us that freedom to create and delight.”

Ee was never formally trained in art, and said she doesn’t have the “credentials” that are typically required to work within the art field. Therefore, she credits God with the positive reception her designs and projects have received, such as working as an art associate for a fashion magazine and leading art teams when she was in high school.

Although Ee will study economics and/or computer science during her time at Cornell, she does plan to continue using her God-given talent to serve the Lord in meaningful ways. For example, she plans to continue making self-designed and handmade cards for her friends, which, she said, gives the gift of undivided attention to others.

“[My talent] is most definitely a gift from God,” said Ee. “It’s all about the story of grace to the undeserving. And, the more I recognize that it all comes from God, the more I want to channel the gift back to His good.” ■

**“As C.S. Lewis alludes to, we need art and good novels to ‘sneak past watchful dragons.’ ”**

**—Dileen Ee, Cornell '16**

# HELPING TO HEAL A NATION

## Students Form Organization That Enhances Medical Education in South Sudan

**B**ROWN What began as a friendship between a Brown University student and a South Sudanese medical student has grown into a joint venture to support the education of the first generation of physicians emerging in a developing nation.

Andrew Ikhyun Kim, Brown '13, an aspiring surgeon and global health advocate, met South Sudanese medical student Chol Makur while the two were participating in a global health innovations program in Kenya last June. As they got to know one another, Kim also got to know the hardship existing in South Sudan due to a history of civil war and unrest.

As a result, the two friends founded the non-profit, social venture Students for Students ([www.sfss.org](http://www.sfss.org)). Together, Kim and his peers are working to support medical education for struggling up and coming physicians who dream of healing their homeland.

"The medical students of Juba University in South Sudan are training to become the country's first generation of physicians," said Kim. "Some of the students, like Chol, have persevered as child soldiers and refugees, completing their primary and secondary schooling against all odds."

Kim said many of Chol's classmates are homeless and lacking food. Additionally, they don't have the laboratories and other essentials for medical education.

"Every day is a struggle to meet these needs, and the dream of becoming a doctor drifts further from reach," Kim said. Nevertheless, these medical students remain determined to overcome the past and heal those in need today.

"Students for Students (SFS) was created because we believe that the first generation of doctors in South Sudan deserves to succeed and support their country, in spite of the odds," said Kim, a small group leader with Chi Alpha's Branch Christian Fellowship at Brown.

South Sudan suffers from some of the

world's worst health indicators. According to Kim, the ten million plus population has only 120 registered doctors, and nearly one in four children dies before reaching age five.

"The greatest obstacle to addressing these health problems is the severe lack of skilled health providers," Kim said.

Through Students for Students, medical students at Juba University, Harvard, and University of Washington are working together towards advancing medical



**Aspiring surgeon Andrew Kim, Brown '13, helped found an organization that aids fellow medical students in South Sudan.**

education in South Sudan. Their efforts are helping to provide housing, textbooks, and support for the struggling aspiring physicians.

"We, as students from both the United States and South Sudan, share the same aspirations to improve health care in the world," said Kim, the president of SFS.

SFS uses a cooperative business model, with U.S. students focusing on fundraising and development and the South Sudanese students working on project design and implementation.

Additional alliances and key partners include the Ujenzi Trust; Massachusetts General Hospital Division of Global Health and Human Rights; the Washington Global Health Alliance (WGHA); and Riek Machar, the vice president of South Sudan.

SFS has secured a plot of land donated by Machar that is roughly 15 minutes from the University of Juba Medical School campus. The goal is to build accommodations for approximately 300 students. Together, SFS, Massachusetts General Hospital, and the medical students have already built one house with solar electricity for seven previously homeless students.

The nonprofit is also coordinating a multi-institution medical textbook drive involving Brown, Harvard, and other colleges in order to establish a medical library and learning center in Juba.

In his role with SFS, Kim balances many responsibilities such as fundraising, development, and project management, all while maintaining his own studies at Brown. Yet, despite the demands upon his time, Kim's work with SFS seems a natural progression as he looks toward his future in the medical field.

"I hope to pursue a career in specialized surgery, perhaps neurosurgery, with the long-term vision of working in the field of global health.

My primary passion is in increasing access to healthcare around the globe, particularly with regard to human resources for health," said Kim.

In the meantime, Kim is already taking steps to realize his vision through SFS, and through his compassion for others.

"Serving as president of SFS has been my most meaningful experience at Brown as it led me to recognize my ability to contribute to a solution for a complex issue. I hope to foster this passion for improving health access years from now, when Chol and I are both surgeons." said Kim. ■

# 'A COMBINATION OF MOTHER TERESA AND MEAN JOE GREENE'

*Compassionate Physician Honored by Ivy Football Association*

**B** As a missionary physician, Tom Catena is driven by his deep faith to endure hardship and sacrifice in a remote, war-ravished sector of Sudan.

Earlier this year, the Ivy Football Association honored the former Brown University standout for his distinguished service as a medical humanitarian at its biennial dinner in Manhattan. During the black-tie event, the association recognized Catena and other Ancient Eight players who have distinguished themselves as leaders since graduation.

"I look at the work I do as, not something so extraordinary, but just a way to pay back a small bit of what I have been given in this life," Catena, Brown '86, told football alumni during their reunion in February in the Broadway Ballroom of the New York Marriott Marquis.

"That's what I hope to keep doing."

Those paying tribute to Catena included Tom Cole '86, who recalled his former teammate as attentive to the needs of his squad. Cole, an attorney in Philadelphia, also described the nose guard as the center of the Bears' defense.

Jerry Massa '77 highlighted Catena's eventual decision to set aside monetary rewards and self-interest in career decisions after realizing his calling was from a higher level.

Likewise, family members in Upstate New York remembered Catena's hard-working, intense nature – qualities that were present on and off the athletic fields of Brown. The mechanical engineering major, a Rhodes Scholar candidate, earned *Associated Press* All-American and All-Ivy honors.

As a senior, "Catman" helped the Brown defense post shutouts in four of its seven Ivy League contests. Catena's faith also stood out at Brown.

"He was my spiritual mentor, my super-tough teammate, my big brother, my comic relief. He led a Bible study in our fraternity and always led by example," George Reilly '87 told *Brown Alumni Magazine*. "If you could combine Mother Teresa and Mean

Joe Greene, you'd get Catman."

During the dinner to celebrate Ivy League football and pay tribute to the career contributions of former players, Catena was humble about his service to the casualties of bombardments in Sudan's war-torn, southern region.

"I feel like I have led an incredibly blessed and charming life. ...I grew up in this great little town in Upstate New York. I had the chance to attend the greatest university in the world."

Catena pointed to the "beautiful and proud" people of Sudan's rugged, red Nuba Mountains as real heroes, given their ongoing struggles against a genocidal regime, hunger, and disease. He serves as the only permanent physician at Mother of Mercy Hospital, a 350-bed facility in the province of South Kordofan. Since 2011, human rights organizations have denounced Sudanese attacks on civilians, and they have warned of ethnic cleansings.

For Catena, the impact is immediate and personal as he is the only surgeon at the only hospital in the region capable of dealing with war injuries. As such, the Duke University medical alumnus of 1992 is on 24-hour call.

In 2012, Catena told *TIME* his Christian faith drew him to the embattled Nuba Mountains. "The idea is to serve," Catena told the magazine. "You use Christ as your guide, your mentor. This is what He did. He came to serve, not be served, and I try to follow that."

Catena began full-time service in Africa with U.S.-based Catholic Medical Mission Board in 1999, following a residency in Indiana and a four-year stint as a U.S. Navy flight surgeon. He initially relocated

to Kenya and eventually to Sudan, where he helped establish Mother of Mercy in 2007.

Likewise, Catena's faith played a central role in his decision to remain in the region after the outbreak of war, even when his missionary overseers presented him with evacuation plans.

"This is how it has to be," Catena recalled in a video interview for the Ivy Football Association, adding he decided to remain by the "grace of God."

During his visit to New York, Catena spoke with his hometown newspaper, *The Daily Gazette (of Amsterdam, New York)*, about his service at Mother of Mercy despite threats of attack. "It's rooted in my Roman Catholic background," he said. "Caring for people is part and parcel with being a Christian. The Gospels say to care for the least of these. That's all I'm doing."

In 2011, the Sudan government launched attacks on Nuba rebels, which became an all-out assault on the population. Experts say Sudan is interested in the oil reserves in South Kordofan, and tensions have run high since South Sudan seceded, according to news reports.

As part of the Ivy Football Association dinner, associates collected about \$45,000 to support the hospital, which faces shortages of water, food, and medicine.

And those funds will help Catena fulfill a lifelong passion.

In 2010, he told *Catholic Digest* he simply desires to serve the needy. "I had always wanted to do some type of mission work where I could put my faith in action," Catena said. ■



**The Ivy Football Association honored Tom Catena, Brown '86, for his distinguished service as a medical humanitarian.**

# MICRO-FINANCE MAKES A MACRO IMPACT

*Organization Founder Recalls Influence of Chinese Bible Study*



A random invitation to attend the Chinese Bible Study at Cornell changed the life of Iris Wen '07. And today, she has a vision to impact poor nations for Christ.

Wen is the founder and director of Videre, a micro-finance organization that empowers entrepreneurs to develop gospel-based businesses that enable local communities to grow economically and spiritually. The name Videre means vision, and Wen's vision is "to use business

the poor when she arrived at Cornell. In fact, she was raised by atheist parents to believe in hard work and self-reliance.

"I thought if people are poor, they must be lazy," said Wen. Therefore, honoring her parents' expectations, Wen began Cornell with a pre-med focus.

However, she soon realized that she didn't like medicine. At that time, Wen started attending Chinese Bible Study on campus.

"I didn't know about Jesus," she said. "Christianity was just about being a good person."

After a local pastor spoke at Chinese Bible Study about the grace of God, it was clear to Wen that Christianity "wasn't about how hard you work to get to God; it was about knowing that Jesus died on the cross for you." Wen saw the simplicity of the truth. However, she didn't understand how to change her life.

In the meantime, Wen did change her major from medicine to business and spent the summer after her freshman year on campus taking classes.

She socialized and partied with the non-Christians who also stayed that summer. But one night she stopped and questioned what she was doing.

"It was the first time I felt I wasn't alone, yet so lonely," said Wen. "I ran out into the rain and walked to the foot bridge by the waterfall," she said. "I just stood there and screamed out to God. I didn't know...what else to do. I couldn't stop crying."

"I know I'm not who you want me to be," Wen shouted to God, "I don't know what to do."

Suddenly, Wen said, God spoke to her, saying, "Be quiet and know I'm here." She didn't know those words are found in Psalm 46.

Believing that she had to fix all of her problems, Wen kept asking God what to do. The answer came back that she couldn't do anything. Jesus had already done it all.

"That was the experience when I personally encountered God," said Wen.

As a sophomore, Wen became more interested in business and was surprised by her emerging interest in the poor. She also pondered what it meant to be a Christian in business.

"Business and relieving poverty seemed opposite," she said.

Although Wen had prayed about opportunities and even went to India to work in micro-finance, when graduation came, she chose investment banking with the intention of paying off her loans before helping the poor. And while she calls the 16-hour days and all-nighters at work a "great experience," God continued to speak to her heart.

One night, Wen left work at 2 a.m. with such a heavy burden, she just walked the streets of New York City and prayed.

"God gave me a vision of the moment Abraham and Isaac were walking up the mountain," said Wen. "I saw them walking up the mountain on one side and the ram on the other side. They were going to meet on top. I knew immediately that Abraham was stepping out in faith. God was already providing on the other side. I understood that there was a ram coming for me. If I just took a step, God would provide the ram."

Wen took that step and quit her job, turning down a lucrative promotion. But then came her "ram."

Wen quickly met entrepreneurs from Texas who wanted to start a micro-finance organization that would be used as a platform for sharing the gospel. That organization became Videre.

And today, through the work of Videre, Wen is walking in faith and advancing God's kingdom. It's a vision that is crystal clear. ■



**Iris Wen (R), Cornell '07, is the founder and director of Videre, a micro-finance organization.**

as a platform for expanding God's kingdom."

In countries like Ghana and Sudan, Videre provides micro-financing, helps with the creation of business plans, and teaches Bible-based principles. In turn, graduates of the program are required to teach classes and provide gospel-business training within their communities.

Videre also helps businesses develop kingdom-impact strategies such as donating profits to enable local children to go to school; praying with customers; and establishing programs to help the homeless and disabled.

However, Wen didn't intend to serve

# CHOOSING LIFE AT YALE

## Pro-Life Organization Will Host Regional Conference

**Y** A small student organization at Yale hopes to make a big statement this fall with its conference, *Vita et Veritas 2013: Promoting a Culture of Life and Truth*.

Hosted by Choose Life at Yale from October 17-20, *Vita et Veritas* will welcome students from the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions.

“A large battle in the pro-life movement is fought in dialogue, engaging with ideas and philosophies of supporters and opponents alike,” says conference coordinator Courtney McEachon ’15. “By hosting a pro-life conference at what can perhaps be called a ‘liberal bastion,’ we are opening up the opportunity for the pro-life debate to happen on a large scale.”

Although Choose Life at Yale (CLAY) is relatively small (25 members) and not well known on campus, McEachon said the few can impact many.

“By hosting this large conference, we will not only make our presence known and hopefully gain more pro-life student members, but also demonstrate the intellectual rigor of the pro-life cause,” she said.

The conference will include topics such as *Why Liberals Should Be Pro-Life*, *Reclaiming Feminism*, and *A Former Abortionist Speaks Out*. An interfaith panel discussion will feature participants from various religious and philosophical perspectives. Presentations on the legal aspects of abortion are also planned.

Among the invited panelists are Monsignor Phillip Reilly of Helpers of God’s Precious Infants, Islamic author Suzy Ismail, and Kelsey Hazzard, president of Secular Pro-life and a legal fellow at Americans United for Life. Aimee Murphy, founder and editor of *Life Matter Journal* will serve as moderator. The conference is co-sponsored by Intercollegiate Studies Institute, Students for Life for America, and Christian Union.

McEachon said provocative topics for discussion were chosen to attract students who don’t consider themselves pro-life. While the conference is built around open discussion, CLAY ([chooselifeatyale.square.space.com](http://chooselifeatyale.square.space.com)) intends to use the opportunity to reveal the hidden truths about abortion.

“With the former abortionist’s talk, we would like to expose the underbelly of the abortion industry as a lucrative business rather than a humanitarian effort, as it is often promoted,” she said.



**Courtney McEachon, Yale '15, is the conference coordinator for *Vita et Veritas 2013: Promoting a Culture of Life and Truth*.**

The atrocities of abortion recently made headlines with the trial of Dr. Kermit Gosnell, who was convicted of murdering a baby who survived an abortion and involuntary manslaughter of a patient.

**“By hosting this large conference, we will not only make our presence known and hopefully gain more pro-life student members, but also demonstrate the intellectual rigor of the pro-life cause.”**

**— Courtney McEachon, Yale '15**

“Now more than ever, Roe is in the news and in the consciousness of the press. With the recent expose of Dr. Kermit Gosnell and further scientific discoveries, the life of the unborn and the

atrocities of abortion cannot be ignored,” she said.

The pro-life students at Yale are poised to keep the discussion going after the conference and hope to establish an Ivy Coalition for Life. The coalition started to come together last year at the March for Life in Washington, D.C. when leaders of the various pro-life groups in the Ivy League met at the Capitol.

McEachon says the pro-life effort would benefit from extended support across universities. For example, she sees the coalition uniting to produce parallel opinion-editorial pieces in the campus magazines, organizing unified poster campaigns, and sharing recruiting and outreach strategies.

While pro-life events and displays have ignited controversy and protests on campuses in the past, McEachon is not put off by the possibility. In fact, she plans to use any such occurrence to the organization’s advantage.

“Protests would only increase the publicity and lead directly to the dialogue we are looking to have,” she said. “Though angry, obstinate protests are a hindrance more than anything else. If we find channels to engage with our protestors, one facet of our conference’s mission will be fulfilled.”

And the central mission of the conference would be fulfilled, said McEachon, if *Vita et Veritas* served to “inspire college

students from various campuses also to go forth with pro-life activism.”

For more information on *Vita et Veritas* or to register, visit [www.life-andtruth2013.com](http://www.life-andtruth2013.com). ■

# MARCHING FOR MARRIAGE

**Event on National Mall Held Three Months before Landmark Decision**

**I** Students and alumni from the Ivy League joined with pro-family organizations at the March for Marriage this spring in Washington, DC. The event was held on March 26 as the Supreme Court heard testimony regarding the constitutionality of California's Proposition 8 and the Defense of Marriage Act.

At stake was a 2008 California ballot proposition that recognized only a marriage between a man and a woman. Even though the people of California voted to pass Proposition 8, courts in that state later overturned it.

On June 26, however, the Supreme Court handed down decisions regarding Proposition 8 and the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Regarding the California case, the Supreme Court remanded the lower court's decision, which found Proposition 8 to be unconstitutional under California Law. That, in effect, opens the door for "homosexual marriage" in the state.

The court also ruled that Section 3 of DOMA was unconstitutional under the Fifth Amendment. The result is that both legally married same-sex couples and heterosexual couples are to receive equal benefit under the Constitution. However, the ruling does not apply to individual state's rights to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.

"This is yet another blow to marriage and to children, who need both a mother and a father to thrive emotionally," stated Christian Union Founder and President Matt Bennett, Cornell '88 and MBA '89.

"The decisions were losses for marriage and for the democratic process. But we can take heart that the court did not create a constitutional right to same-sex marriage," said Caitlin Seery (Princeton '09), director of programs for the Love and Fidelity Network. "Laws in 37 states that affirm marriage as the union of one

man and one woman still stand. And Americans everywhere will continue to discuss, debate, and vote about marriage, and it is our hope and belief that they will continue to uphold the truth."

Despite the unfavorable rulings that would come down three months later, the March for Marriage provided an opportu-

"I felt called to stand up for marriage because so few of my peers will vocally support traditional marriage," said Josh Ginsborg, Yale 16. "Many people in my generation see the importance in protecting the sanctity of marriage, but are unwilling to stick their necks out in fear of being its only proponents."

On campus, Ginsborg says, he is in the minority since "almost everyone is very accepting of same-sex marriage. I can't help but feel as if people view me as bigoted for holding my beliefs."

The Love and Fidelity Network brought 40 students to the event.

"The Love and Fidelity Network believes that a flourishing society depends on a strong marriage culture to provide the next generation with the environment in which they are most likely to flourish," said Seery.

And it was an eye on those future generations that inspired many marchers to let their voice be heard. As Ginsborg pointed out, it wasn't a battle against homosexuality, but a defense of the sacredness of marriage and the welfare of children.

"I hope [same-sex marriage supporters] will understand that they are not hated or looked down upon," said Ginsborg. "Christians are not trying to condemn those who disagree with them; rather,

they are trying to protect something they believe is one of God's greatest gifts to humanity after His Son."

And the institution created by God in the Garden of Eden needs to be protected and affirmed.

"We need to be the living proof that a strong, vibrant marriage movement and culture not only exists, but is flourishing," said Seery. ■



**Students and leaders from the Ivy League participated in the March for Marriage in Washington, D.C.**

nity to send a message to America as thousands of supporters of marriage walked from the National Mall to the U.S. Supreme Court to let justices know that their ruling will have far-reaching, long-term implications.

The event was organized by the National Organization for Marriage. Christian Union was among approximately 40 sponsors of the march.

# THE BOMBS HEARD 'ROUND THE WORLD

## Harvard Students Rally in Prayer Following Marathon Attack

**H**ARVARD As their city was shaken to its core by the Boston Marathon bombings and subsequent manhunt, many Harvard students and ministries responded to the crisis with passionate prayer and compassion.

With more than 100 Harvard students, faculty, staff, and alumni among the marathon runners and many more attending as spectators, concern on campus was great following the terrorist acts on April 15. The next evening, Harvard's Undergraduate Council hosted a candlelight vigil on the steps of Memorial Church—but the calm did not last long. A few days later, some students heard gunshots and sirens as police pursued the suspects in Cambridge and the entire city was in lockdown mode. Harvard was officially closed on Friday, April 19.

In the Quad that night, Gabriela Espinoza-Candelaria and a group of students prayed to align their hearts with God's heart, laying down their grief and interceding for the city of Boston and the comfort of those who had been deeply affected by the tragedy. Espinoza-Candelaria '14 attributed her motivation to bring together students to the comforting words of Psalm 62:8, "Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. *Selah.*"

With the university on lock down, it was not possible for students to all gather in one place. Shaun Lim '16, a leader with Harvard College Faith and Action, organized a gathering in the Yard where freshmen dorms are located. Jisu Yoo '15, also a leader with Harvard College Faith and Action (HCFA), coordinated a prayer meeting in the Bullitt Room of Quincy House, where approximately 25 students united. HCFA is a leadership development ministry resourced and supported by Christian Union. Yoo also invited a couple of her friends from Harvard's Asian American Christian Fellowship (<http://hraacf.org>). In their prayers that evening, Yoo recalls the emphasis on God's glory, as well as reflections on how, in the midst of tragedy, the glory can be turned back to God.

"We were grieving not just for our nation," said Yoo, "but especially for the

perpetrators and their family. Once the perpetrators' ethno-religious background was known, we prayed that the nation would not respond with hatred towards Muslims and people from the Middle East."

In addition to organized gatherings, there were many impromptu prayer sessions held throughout the campus.

"When the bombings happened, I furiously tried to get a hold of my friends who had attended or participated in the marathon," said Vivian Chan '15 of Asian American Christian Fellowship (AACF). "A group e-mail thread helped us respond together in prayer and unity."

"Prayers and reflections on evil in the world colored that week. I realized with horror that some suffer through these situations frequently. It was a reminder of how precious life is and how we cannot take it for granted."

Stephanie Choi '13, a runner in the Boston Marathon and a member of the AACF executive team, suggested a fundraising effort for Boston One, a fund to assist victims and families affected by the tragic events of April 15. Each year, AACF raises money by doing a servant auction. During this auction, students auction off items of service, such as an hour of help in moving. A portion of the money raised this year was given to Boston One.

In the aftermath of the bombings, Brianna Bueltmann '16 was struck by the support of the international community. On the Internet, she saw a group of Syrians expressing their condolences, as well as Afghans holding a sign saying, "From Kabul with Love."

"I was very moved by the images I saw of people who encounter such hardship far more frequently than we and are too

easily forgotten." said Bueltmann, "Yet they still had such compassion in responding to our own plight."

Leah Parker '15 felt the same way.

"Why is this not our response when tragedy hits them?" she said.

In Harvard's Class of 2016 Facebook group, students were invited to create signs to thank Boston's supporters, shar-



**Harvard students thanked the international community following for the support they received following the Boston Marathon bombings.**

ing personal messages of gratitude or encouragement in the language of preference. Students then took photos with their signs to share their message with the international and national supporters alike. About fifty students participated in this event, which was held on April 21 on the plaza in front of the Harvard Science Center.

The images were shared via Facebook, as well as Tumblr (<http://withlovefrom-boston.tumblr.com/>). The event was a healing and reassuring experience for those involved, providing students with an opportunity for reflection. They thought not only about the tragedy in Boston, but also the tragedies happening around the globe.

"It was like a chain reaction," reflects Bueltmann, "Everyone was so happy to participate, and I was filled with joy. It was arguably one of the best afternoons and hours of my semester." ■

# IN A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

## Students from Leadership Development Ministries Serve the City



About 70 students from top-tier universities gathered in Manhattan to participate in Christian Union's fourth spring-break trip for undergraduates involved in affiliated Christian leadership development ministries.

community service appealed greatly to me," said Kate Maffey, Princeton '16.

"It was not always fun or enjoyable work. At times, it was frustrating. But, with prayer and surrounded by fellow Christians, I was able to see how it was important in God's plan."

While much of their efforts centered on tutoring children in the organization's after-school program, the undergraduates also staged "Praise Time," high-energy worship sessions involving singing and dancing.

"It was really rewarding," said Christian Union Intern Dave Kurz, Princeton '12. "A lot of the kids needed help with homework. They were very energetic."

Among other projects, students helped distribute meals at the New York City Rescue Mission, while others served at The Bowery Mission.

Allan Marube, Princeton '16, was especially touched while serving as a student leader at the New York City Rescue Mission.

"Working in a homeless shelter, it dawned on me that there is much to unlearn and much to learn again. In my service to the homeless, I saw vividly that there were certain things I could not do. The food, I could prepare, but the broken heart, I could not mend," said Marube, a native of Kenya.

Marube said he realized, ultimately, only God can impart life, joy, and peace to the downtrodden. "I saw the trip as an opportunity to share Christ's love and to grow through meaningful, Christ-centered experiences," he said.

As for outreaches, about 20 students ventured to Central Park one afternoon to conduct spiritual surveys that led to opportunities for them to share their faith.



About 70 students involved with Christian Union-sponsored leadership development ministries served in Manhattan over spring break.

The trip offered seven major service projects, including three focused on relief efforts in hurricane-battered Rockaway Beach and one providing crisis pregnancy intervention and support.

"The students really appreciated opportunities to serve," said Teal McGarvey, a ministry fellow at Harvard University. "A lot of these students will end up in New York at some point, and it's important they understand the city and how they can influence its culture for Christ."

Students from Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale universities participated in the trip, which was held March 16 to 22.

"I wanted to spend my spring break doing some sort of service. Working with a ministry that emphasized God's role in

The spring venture allowed students to get a taste of New York City through hands-on service projects. They expanded their leadership skills by engaging with the city's multi-cultural residents and fel-

low believers.

Among the more popular projects for the week, some students chose to volunteer with Operation Exodus Inner City, an organization that serves underprivileged children in the Washington Heights com-

***"I saw the trip as an opportunity to share Christ's love and to grow through meaningful, Christ-centered experiences."***

***—Allan Marube, Princeton '16***

"We were able to articulate our faith," said Kurz. "We really tried to meet people where they were and engage with them."

While the students primarily focused on service opportunities, they also took time to attend a working professional's voca-



tional panel, and participate in worship services across the city.

Brian Zhang, Harvard '15, said he especially benefitted from hearing about the work experiences of the Christians on the vocational panel. "This was an inspiring chance for me to think through how my own work can be glorifying to God," said Zhang.

As well, Zhang said he appreciated the opportunity to participate in an early morning prayer meeting of area businessmen. "It reminded me of God's presence, even in a bustling city like New York," he said.

Likewise, "a highlight of this trip was interacting with the vibrant and diverse

Christian community in New York City," said Zhang, a physics major from California.

Not surprisingly, students also took time to enjoy Manhattan's immense wealth of culture, history, and entertainment. Sightseeing activities included the Brooklyn Bridge, Times Square, and Central Park. The group worshipped on Sunday morning at Redeemer Presbyterian Church. The experiences helped to underscore New York City's reputation as a culture shaper for the nation, and even the world.

Overall, they were especially touched by the opportunities for bonding. Fostering a sense of Christian identity among

students of its leadership development ministries is a key goal of Christian Union, which anticipates these future leaders will need to encourage one another and coordinate efforts as they seek to bring a godly influence to culture.

"They enjoyed coming together and serving in very concrete ways. They really enjoyed meeting other Christians from other campuses," said Jesse Peterson, a ministry fellow at Columbia University. "They quickly became a family."

Ryan Spaude, Princeton '16, best summed up the mission of the trip. "You do not have to go to a foreign country to do mission work," he said. "The need is in your own country and your own backyard." ■

## AN ALTERNATE SPRING BREAK

### *Cru, InterVarsity, and Other Penn Organizations Sponsor Service Opportunities*

**P** *Editor's note: The following story is reprinted with permission from The Daily Pennsylvanian.*

Instead of vacationing in Cancun or California over break, some groups of Penn students opted to help drug addicts

their efforts and bonding with one another.

Members of Penn Cru ([phillycru.org/campuses/penn](http://phillycru.org/campuses/penn)) took part in eight days of service in Philadelphia. They partnered with Victory Outreach Church of Philadelphia and The Simple Way nonprofit organization to help the needy in poverty-stricken areas of the city.

proached addicts on the Philadelphia streets, offered help, and prayed for them.

"[You] definitely just go to neighborhoods where you don't go at home," Cru City Director Andrew Young said. "Every three out of four houses are boarded up ... they're just crack houses."

According to Young, the week was both



on the street.

Despite the challenges of their work, the students enjoyed seeing the impact of

Some students helped construct and repair homes for recovering addicts, prostitutes, and drug dealers. They also ap-

challenging and impactful for students. He noted that March 8 was a particularly difficult night for some—when 40 to 50

people on the trip went to an open drug-dealing corner of the city and offered their help.

“For the many of us, we’ve never seen the dark underbelly of that drug scene,” Young said.

Penn Alternate Spring Break, a student organization, also sponsored community service trips to West Virginia, North Carolina, New Orleans, and Virginia.

In Almost Heaven, W. Va., 13 students spent four days building houses and bonding.

“The best part is that it’s 13 random people you wouldn’t normally meet at Penn,” site leader and College and Wharton junior Alec Barnes said.

By the end of the week, each student in the group was really good friends with one another, Barnes added.

Penn’s InterVarsity Christian Fellowship ([www.pennintervarsity.org](http://www.pennintervarsity.org)) sponsored a March 2 day of service, “Jesus, Justice, Poverty,” that occurred over break.

Each student participating in the event could choose to take part in one of three activities entitled *learn*, *serve*, and *experience*.

Those in the *experience* activity approached the homeless on the Philadelphia streets and listened to their stories. Students who chose the *learn* option partnered with Sunday Breakfast Mission, a men’s shelter that offers a disci-

pliship program to its longer-term residents. In the final choice, *serve*, volunteers spent the day working at a soup kitchen.

“The whole day was focused on reconciling how homelessness and service relates to our Christian faith,” College sophomore Brittany Dickens said.

Students in Penn Hillel’s Alternate Spring Break program traveled to New Orleans for a week of gardening and volunteering with nonprofits outside of the city.

As a whole, students enjoyed working with the needy and one another.

“[It] was really great to be around college students who took the time to care for others,” Dickens said. ■

By Emily Belz, WORLD Magazine

## ALUMNITESTIFY OF GOD’S GRACE

*Princeton Faith and Action and Legacy Host Princeton Reunion Events*

**P** Believers with ties to Princeton University should dare to dream big when they pray for revival to spread across the influential campus.

The service, featuring alumni testimonies, was just one of several activities hosted by Princeton Faith and Action (PFA) and Legacy to coincide with Princeton’s Reunions 2013.

tian Center, Jasko recalled his fervent prayers as an undergraduate to see as many as 10 percent of Princeton’s students follow Christ – a seemingly impossible goal during a period when as few as 100 undergraduates openly embraced faith.

A few years later, as a student at Princeton Theological Seminary, he wrote a paper entitled “God at Work: Religion & Revival at Princeton University, 1746-1979.” The paper has been widely circulated and studied, serving as a source of inspiration for many believers.

“There’s power released when we agree with one another in prayer,” said Jasko, senior pastor of Monmouth Worship Center in Marlboro, New Jersey.

And those prayers of yesterday have certainly been answered. At Princeton, it has been estimated that as much as 15 percent of the undergraduate body is involved in Christian campus organizations.

At the reunion event, Jasko encouraged believers to pray for 20 percent of more of students to affirm Christianity.

“God has answered our prayer. Why stop at 12 percent? Let’s go to 20 percent



**During Princeton Reunions 2013, an alumni panel featuring George Vergis '83, Betsy Johnson '03, and James Armstrong '88 was hosted by Princeton Faith and Action.**

That was the message from Ken Jasko, when the Princeton alumnus of 1978 and Assemblies of God pastor spoke on June 2 during a worship service at Nassau Christian Center.

Princeton Faith and Action and Legacy are leadership development ministries supported and resourced by Christian union.

During his appearance at Nassau Chris-

or 30 percent,” said Jasko.

After earning a degree in biology from Princeton, Jasko served as a campus pastor and assistant pastor at Nassau Christian Center. Today, he holds the title of Sectional Presbyterian for the Assemblies of God, a job that involves overseeing 28 churches in East Central New Jersey, and he is a board member for Doulos Community, a Christian relief ministry in Africa.

Also during the service at Nassau Christian, Julian McPhillips, Princeton '68 and Columbia Law '71, encouraged believers to be Biblically literate and share the gospel.

“We should have the vision to bring the message to a hurting world,” he said. “The consequences are great for this life and the one to come. There will be a degree of accountability.”

Carola Hernandez-Cappas '11 of the Grace and Mercy Foundation and Bill Miller '53, chief executive officer and chairman of Aereon Corp., also spoke during the annual alumni service.

In addition to the testimonies presented at Nassau Christian, PFA and Legacy hosted a brunch on June 1 in the Frist Campus Center as part of the university's reunion weekend.

Earlier that day, James Armstrong '88, Betsy Johnson '03, and George Vergis '83 spoke during an alumni panel discussion entitled “How I Am Living out My Christian Faith Today.”

During the panel, Vergis urged students and alumni to be proactive in sharing their faith.

In particular, Vergis makes it a point not to bypass opportunities to witness about his decision to commit his life to Christ. “I don't ignore that anymore,” he said.

Vergis told students to meditate on the words of I Peter 3:15: “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But, do this with gentleness and respect.”

Likewise, Vergis told the students to pay special attention to promptings from the Holy Spirit. “This is the Holy Spirit working,” Vergis said. “Don't ignore the Holy Spirit.”

James Armstrong, chief technology officer for Symmetricom Inc., told students to consider their lives as testimonies to their colleagues. “Be truthful. Be kind. It has a power on people,” he said.

For Johnson, fulfilling her calling to her young children, ultimately, meant leaving a residency program.

But, “being a mother requires a devoted honing of every talent, virtue, and energy. It has pushed the limit of all of my managerial expertise and time management,” she said. “It's a critical role and calling. These are immortal souls. They will live forever.”



**Princeton Faith and Action and Legacy, leadership development ministries supported and resourced by Christian Union, hosted a brunch during Reunions 2013.**

“Work comes and goes. Be a person who is ethical and led by the Lord.”

Armstrong urged the audience to be involved in a local church, and he aims to demonstrate for his children that he is willing to pay a cost for his faith. “Sometimes, I think the biggest thing a father can do to lead his children to the Lord is to show that faith costs something,” he said.

Physician Betsy Johnson, a mother of four young children, echoed those comments, telling students and alumni to seek God for their divine assignments.

Staying home with her children also has provided “so many opportunities for working in diverse and influential ways,” Johnson. “My children are not going to blossom unless I'm there.”

Likewise, students should heed the wisdom and directives outlined in Jeremiah 29, she said. It instructs, “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare, you will find your welfare.” ■

## ALL IVY

**'College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be'**

Columbia Professor Andrew Delbanco, (Harvard '73 and PhD '80) presented the William Jewett Tucker Lecture at Dartmouth this spring. The lecture was entitled "College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be." Delbanco, director of the Center for American Studies at Columbia, has published a book by the same name.



**Columbia Professor Andrew Delbanco (Harvard '73 and PhD '80) is the director of the Center for American Studies at Columbia.**

*Columbia University*

Richard Crocker, dean of the William Jewett Tucker Foundation and chaplain of the college, said Delbanco addressed "the radical challenges facing America's colleges, and implications for the future of our democracy."

Delbanco has also written about the morality of education and the academy's disassociation with its Christian roots.

**Alumnus Develops Victorious Living App**

Attorney and entrepreneur Joseph Holland recently released a new victorious lifestyle app for the iPhone called iHardware. The app offers a variety of inspirational tools, motivational videos, and interactive functions.

"The spiritual mix of time tested truths, real life and fictional role models, and seamless interactivity takes the user to higher ground," said Holland, Cornell '78, MA '79, and Harvard Law '82.

Holland, an All American football player at Cornell, is the author of *From Harlem with Love: An Ivy Leaguer's Inner-City Odyssey*.



**Joe Holland (Cornell '78 and MA '79 and Harvard Law '82) has released a new iPhone App.**

**Protest Leads to Day of Reflection**

This spring, an on-campus event for prospective students who had received admittance was interrupted by protesters who chanted, "Dartmouth Has a Problem!"



*Dartmouth Staff: Jacob Weiss*

**A Dartmouth event for prospective students was interrupted by protesters this spring.**

The problems cited were issues of homophobia, racism, and sexual assault. In response, classes were later suspended so a day of reflection could be observed. Two weeks later, "Beyond the Brochures," a student-run conference on campus climate, was held at Dartmouth to discuss issues of cultural bias on campuses. Other Ivy League schools participating in the discussion included Harvard, Columbia, and Yale.

## BROWN

**A Heart for the Homeless**

Students involved with Brown University's Catholic ministry recently helped serve with the Amos House, a homeless shelter in Providence. In April,

**In April, students with Brown University's Catholic ministry regularly prayed for the victims of the Boston Marathon bombing.**



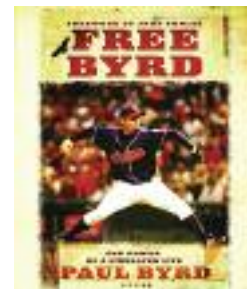
volunteers with Brown-Rhode Island School of Design Catholic Community ([catholic.brown.edu](http://catholic.brown.edu)) worked alongside residents to help paint a room and do some clerical work. In related news, Catholic students at Brown gathered in April at the Faunce House for a noon vigil to pray for the victims of the Boston Marathon bombing.

**Former MLB Pitcher Speaks at Brown**

Athletes in Action at Brown University ([www.AIA-Brown.org](http://www.AIA-Brown.org)) recently sponsored an appearance by former Major League Baseball pitcher Paul Byrd.

Byrd, who pitched for eight major league teams and compiled a win-loss record of 109-96, appeared April 18 at Brown's Andrews Dining Hall, where he discussed many of the personal and spiritual battles he faced during his 19-year professional career, including challenges with pornography.

He wrote *Free Byrd* as an account of how he turned to his faith in God to help overcome the temptations associated with professional sports.



**Former Major League Baseball pitcher Paul Byrd appeared at Brown University for an event sponsored by Athletes in Action.**

**Cru Attends 'The One Event'**

Students involved with Cru Brown ([cru-brown.org](http://cru-brown.org)) wrapped up a busy semester by attending a worship gathering to fuel spiritual renewal in Providence, Rhode Island.

Students from the campus ministry at Brown University joined with believers from a wide range of backgrounds at The One Event on May 4 at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

In April, the ministry took part in the Brown International Organizations' World Cultural Dinner, and it held a tea in March to study ways to reach out better to international students.

**In May, students involved with Cru gathered to pray for spiritual renewal in Providence, Rhode Island.**



## Ministry Fellow Exhorts Graduates

A Christian Union ministry fellow delivered the benediction for Princeton University's annual Pan African Graduation.

James Fields prayed during the ceremony on June 2 to celebrate the graduation of students of the African diaspora. Fields, who took his text from Hebrews 13, challenged graduates to seek God's provision and direction to accomplish His will.



**James Fields, a Christian Union ministry fellow at Princeton University, delivered the benediction for Princeton's Pan African Graduation.**

Fields said he was honored and humbled to address graduates, friends, family, and faculty in Richardson Auditorium. The Carl A. Fields Center hosted the event, which was co-sponsored by the Center for African American Studies.

## Campus Kindness at Dartmouth

Students involved with Christian Union's leadership development ministry at Dartmouth participated in a "campus-kindness" outreach in the spring semester.



**Students involved with Christian Union's leadership development ministry at Dartmouth College distributed 500 candy bars around campus before the start of exams.**

Freshmen and sophomore members of the ministry's social committee distributed 500 candy bars to coincide with the college's annual Green Key Weekend, which is held before the start of exams.

"It was very well received," said Caroline Albanese, a ministry fellow at Dartmouth. "The students seemed really

touched and encouraged."

Earlier in the semester, the ministry supplied affiliated students with 500 copies of Rev. Tim Keller's *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* to share with friends and colleagues.

## High Stepping on The Today Show

Members of Princeton University's HighSteppers showed off their talent with a performance on NBC's *The Today Show* in May.

Millions of viewers watched the HighSteppers stomp, clap, slap, and shout in Rockefeller Plaza on May 14.

The group included some undergraduates who are involved with Princeton Faith and Action (pfanda.com), a leadership development ministry supported and resourced by Christian Union.



After discovering the HighSteppers from YouTube videos of competition performances, *The Today Show* staff asked the group to perform in Manhattan for the show's Varsity Week.

## COLUMBIA

### Secularism: Columbia's Religion?

Yale Law Professor Stephen L. Carter was one of the speakers at this spring's Veritas Forum at Columbia University. The theme was: "Secularism: Columbia's Religion? Unpacking Core Assumptions about God, Truth, and Intellectual Diversity in the Academy."



Carter, Yale '79, addressed questions sur-

**Professor Stephen L. Carter, Yale '79, was a speaker at the Veritas Forum.**

Elena Siebert

rounding faith and truth and whether the premises of the modern university marginalize answers that are not secular in nature. The William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Law at Yale, his courses include law and religion, and the ethics of war. In 2011, Carter wrote *The Violence of Peace: America's Wars in the Age of Obama*.

## Dr. Sugrue Gives Faith and Reason Lecture

Alumnus Dr. Michael Sugrue spoke on the Confessions of St.

Augustine during a Faith and Reason Lecture sponsored by Columbia Catholic Ministry on April 10.

**Ave Maria University Professor Dr. Michael Sugrue, Columbia PhD '92, presented a Faith and Reason lecture at Columbia.**



Sugrue (Columbia M.A. '83, M.Phil '84, PhD '92) is a professor of history and the chairman of the history department at Ave Maria University and has formerly taught at Princeton and Columbia. He is a recipient of the Chamberlain Fellowship, the President's Fellowship, the John Jay Fellowship, and the Meyer Padva Prize.

## 'Trafficked' Is a Call to Action

Girl Be Heard, a human rights organization, partnered with local ministries to present "Trafficked" on March 30 at Barnard College. Through drama, the event sought to bring attention to the atrocity of human trafficking and mod-



ern-day slavery. Girl Be Heard seeks to empower young women to find strength and have the confidence to change their lives. The New York City Urban Project and Price of Life co-partnered with Girl Be Heard "to call people to faith and action against sex-trafficking and modern-day slavery."

## CORNELL

## Picking up the Slack on Slope Day

“Slope Day” at Cornell, a century-old celebration of the academic year’s end, was observed on May 3. While commonly known as a day of carefree partying, several campus ministries used the occasion to serve others.



**While some students partied on Slope Day, several ministries at Cornell sponsored service opportunities.**

Cru, Campus On A Hill, Cornell Faith and Action, and Chinese Bible Study were among the ministries to participate. Students with Cornell Faith and Action served their classmates by passing out water and picking up trash.

“The university has taken note of the service of Christian students on Slope Day, and has welcomed their participation as positively contributing to the campus culture,” said Asha Garretson, a Christian Union ministry fellow.

## Ed Marinaro Story Wins Prize

Businessman and author Joseph Cervasio, Cornell ’69, was cited as a 2013 Essex County (NJ) Legacies Writing Contest award winner for his essay, “A Symbol of Hope.”

The story revolves around his former teammate Ed Marinaro ’72, a Heisman Trophy runner-up who later starred in television shows such as “Hill Street Blues” and “Sisters.” Cervasio wrote a first-hand account of how Marinaro’s post-game gesture helped restore hope in the heart of his younger brother.

Cervasio is the author of *Bad News*

**Joe Cervasio, Cornell ’69, wrote an award-winning short story about college teammate Ed Marinaro ’72.**



on the Doorstep, which is being adapted as a screenplay, and *Now or Never: The 11 Secrets of Arimathea*.

## Cornell Faith and Action

On May 10, Cornell Faith and Action was officially recognized as a student organization at Cornell. Recognition allows the leadership development ministry to rent rooms on campus and participate in university events.

“We praise the Lord for the recognition we have now received from the university and

**Cornell Faith and Action received official recognition as a student organization in May.**



hope that our identity as Cornell Faith and Action will be an instrument through which the Lord will display His love and power on this campus,” said Asha Garretson, a Christian Union ministry fellow.

Cornell Faith and Action is supported and resourced by Christian Union.

## DARTMOUTH

## Religion Professor Attends Pontiff Prayer



**Professor Christopher MacEvitt, Princeton PhD ’02, is preparing for a course on sacred cities.**

preparing for a course he will teach on sacred cities. People brought flags and banners to wave, and some broke into tears as he spoke, wrote MacEvitt on his blog.

Christopher MacEvitt, an associate professor of religion at Dartmouth, was among the thousands of people who attended the Angelus prayer delivered by Pope Francis at St. Peter’s Square on March 17.

MacEvitt, Princeton PhD ’02, was in Rome

## Casting a Vision for Missions

Agape Christian Fellowship hosted a Vision School to mobilize believers at Dartmouth and educate students about evangelism and missions. The program included presentations by guest speakers who have served on the mission field.



**Agape Christian Fellowship hosted a Vision School this spring.**

Carl Myers and Katherine Hwang of InterCP, an organization dedicated to outreach to unreached people groups, were speakers in May and June. Students also participated in worship, intercessory prayer, and small group discussions. The overall goal of the Vision School is to “encourage the students to pray for the unreached nations and to mobilize more workers to participate in short and long term missions.”

A Christian Union grant helped support the events.

## Controversial Bishop Is Baccalaureate Speaker

Retired Episcopal Bishop V. Gene Robinson was the 2013 Baccalaureate speaker at Dartmouth. Robinson, an open “homosexual,” was elected Bishop

**Gene Robinson, the first known practicing “homosexual” to be consecrated bishop, was the Baccalaureate speaker at Dartmouth this spring.**



of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire in 2003 and retired this past January. A senior fellow at the Center for American Progress in Washington, D.C., he recently published *God Believes in Love: Straight Talk about Gay Marriage*.

## True Believers in Religion, Science

In an interview in the Summer 2013 issue of *tricycle* magazine, scientist Rupert Sheldrake, a Frank Knox Fellow who studied at Harvard, talks about the distinction between believers in religion and believers in science. Sheldrake contends that the religious faithful understand that their beliefs are a matter of faith, whereas believers of science fail to see that their beliefs are faith-based.

**Scientist Rupert Sheldrake speaks of the distinction between believers in religion and believers in science in a recent magazine article.**



Sheldrake said, “Many scientists are unaware that materialism is an assumption; they simply think of it as science, or the scientific view of reality, or the scientific worldview. They are not actually taught about it, or given a chance to discuss it. They absorb it by a kind of intellectual osmosis.”

## Study: Faith and Mental Illness

Faith may bolster treatment for patients with mental illness, says David H. Rosmarin, PhD, an instructor in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and a clinician at McLean Hospital.

“Our work suggests that people with a moderate to high level of belief in a higher power do significantly better in short-term psychiatric treatment than those without, regardless of their religious affiliation,” stated Rosmarin.

According to a release by the hospital, 159 patients participated in the



**Harvard instructor David H. Rosmarin, PhD, concludes that faith may enhance treatment for patients with mental illness.**

study, which stated that patients with no or only slight belief in God were twice as likely not to respond to treatment than patients with higher levels of belief.

## Ex-Mormon Discusses Conversion

In April, Harvard alumnus and former Mormon Richard Sherlock (Harvard MTS '72 and PhD '78) appeared on the Catholic television show *The Journey Home*.

**Ex-Mormon Richard Sherlock (Harvard MTS '72 and PhD '78) talked about his conversion to Catholicism on EWTN, a Catholic television network.**



Sherlock discussed his conversion from Mormonism to Catholicism.

Sherlock, a professor of philosophy at Utah State, also chronicled his testimony on the Web site, *Why I'm Catholic*, stating, “Conversion must be a matter of both the head and the heart, both the intellect and the spirit. But it must be a whole reorientation of one's life, a whole that transcends just the sum of the parts.”

## PENN

## A Full Measure of Gospel Music

The University of Pennsylvania's premier Christian a cappella group performed its spring concert for students from area campuses and members of its neighboring West Philadelphia community.



**Full Measure performed its spring concert at the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral.**

Full Measure ([full-measure.org](http://full-measure.org)) presented a concert, “Daybreak: The Old Has Gone, the New Has Come,” on April 6 at the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral. Support from the Christian Union helped fund the concert, which featured 11 songs as well as skits.

Organizers said they planned the event to celebrate God's sovereignty and compel others to know Christ more through music. The group's newest compact disc is entitled, *As We Wait*.

## Rogers Joins Obama Administration

President Barack Obama recently tapped Melissa Rogers, Penn Law '91, to head his Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Recently, Rogers was the director of Wake Forest University's Center for Religion and Public Affairs and a senior fellow with The Brookings Institution.

In March, Obama, Columbia '83, Harvard Law '91, chose Rogers to become his administration's point person for outreach to religious groups. Rogers' other credentials include stints as general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty and director of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.



**President Barack Obama, Columbia '83, Harvard Law '91, recently selected Melissa Rogers, Penn Law '91, to head his Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.**

## A Prayer Tent at Penn

PennforJesus, part of Campus Renewal Ministries, recently offered a 24-hour prayer tent at the University of Pennsylvania.

Students and staffers with campus ministries utilized the prayer tent, which was open on the College Green during the week prior to Easter. A highlight of the week occurred on March 27 when campus minister Michael Chen ventured to the prayer tent with his guitar. About 20 students gathered with Chen at 10 p.m. to sing and fellowship. Chen, Dartmouth '01, is campus pastor at City Church Philadelphia and a minister with Coalition for Christian Outreach.



**PennforJesus offered a 24-hour prayer tent at the University of Pennsylvania during the Easter season.**

## PRINCETON

## Gospel Ensemble Goes Out on High Note

The Princeton University Gospel Ensemble celebrated another successful year with an exhilarating concert in April.



In April, Princeton University Gospel Ensemble celebrated the end of the semester with a concert featuring contemporary gospel and a cappella music.

The student-directed group performed before a packed audience at Nassau Christian Center. The ensemble boasts a repertoire that includes high-energy spirituals, hymns, contemporary gospel, and a cappella.

The free concert also included tearful recognitions of the group's seniors, including one who credited the choir's dedication to Christianity for his decision to attend Princeton.

## Seeking Justice in Haiti

As part of its Seek Justice campaign, Manna Christian Fellowship ([manna.mycpanel.princeton.edu](http://manna.mycpanel.princeton.edu)) raised \$7,800 to help build a school and soccer field in La Source, an impoverished town in Haiti.

On March 30, Manna held a screening of *La Source*, a documentary about Princeton



University janitor Josue Lajeunesse's project to provide clean water and assist with other projects in his home village in earthquake-ravished Haiti.

The humanitarian, who is an honorary member of the Princeton undergraduate class of 1998, also was featured in *The*

*Philosopher Kings*, a documentary highlighting the stories of eight janitors at universities across the country.

## Alumni Reunite for Pro-Life, Pro-Family Event

About 50 students, alumni, and supporters attended the Pro-Life, Pro-Family Alumni Gathering during Princeton Reunions 2013.

The Anscombe Society ([blogs.princeton.edu/anscombe](http://blogs.princeton.edu/anscombe)) and Princeton Pro-Life ([princeton.edu/~prolife](http://princeton.edu/~prolife)) sponsored the event on May 31 in Butler College.

Caroline Bazinet '14, president of Princeton Pro-Life, was a speaker at an event during Princeton Reunions 2013.



Among the speakers, Princeton University Professor Robert George, Harvard Theology '81, Law '81, encouraged participants to stand up for traditional marriage and sexual integrity.

Other speakers included Caroline Bazinet '14, president of Princeton Pro-Life, Audrey Pollnow Schaengold '13, president emeritus of Anscombe, and Caitlin Seery '09, director of programs for Love and Fidelity Network ([loveandfidelity.org](http://loveandfidelity.org)).

## YALE

## Island Party Features Former American Idol Contestant

Beta Upsilon Chi at Yale held the BYX Island Party on April 20. The event, the fraternity's largest of the year, included live music by former American Idol contestant Tim Halperin, a BYX brother from Texas Christian University.

Aside from the social interaction, the event was designed to demonstrate to the Yale community that Christians can be serious about their faith, and still relax and have fun. A grant from

Christian Union helped to subsidize the event.



## Yale Newspaper Features Team Sober

This April, the *Yale Daily News* ran a feature article on Yale basketball players Javier Duren and Brandon Sherrod.

While the article portrayed the duo's athletic success, it also highlighted their commitment to Christianity and sobriety.

Team Sober was featured in the *Yale Daily News* this spring.



As the founders of TeamSober, the sophomores have been instrumental in influencing students to pledge not to drink if they are under 21 and not to overindulge in alcohol once they reach the legal age. The article, which was titled "Sober Soldiers," also told of how the two got to know one another based upon their families' mutual commitment to Christianity.

## Yale Fined for Not Reporting Sex Offenses



Yale was fined \$165,000 for its failure to disclose four sex offenses committed on the campus.

This spring, Yale was held accountable for its failure to disclose four sex offenses committed on the campus. The university was fined \$165,000 by the U.S. Department of Education. According to a report in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the offenses took place in 2001 and 2002. The *Chronicle* reported that the fine is "the latest incident in a flurry of recent regulatory activity in which federal officials have singled out universities for their handling or reporting of sexual violence on their campuses."



# THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE CHRISTIAN UNION



*Following is the mission and vision of Christian Union, printed in each issue of the Ivy League Christian Observer to keep new readers informed of the ministry's purpose and passion.*

## INTRODUCTION

The United States is unusual in the industrialized world for its possession of significant spiritual devotion, but lack of Christian vitality among cultural innovators. Many of the most influential leaders in academia, the arts, business, education, government, media, medicine, and law are decidedly secular in their individual outlooks. Regretfully, the Christian community itself is mostly to blame for this sad state of affairs. More than a hundred years ago, large segments of the Christian community decided that intellectualism and positions of cultural influence were to be avoided and, therefore, left those arenas to secularists. Now, Christians lament that so much of the culture is directed and shaped by those holding values contrary to the gospel of Christ. Of course, this should be no surprise.

## WHY THE MINISTRY EXISTS

In 2002, Christian Union was founded to rectify this imbalance by developing Christian leaders to impact the larger culture. The ministry strategically focuses on a highly influential and unreached segment of the U.S. population—current and future leaders who shape many of the decisions that affect the daily lives of all Americans. Such influencers are found in two primary places: the top tier of academically-oriented universities and a handful of powerful, “global” cities in the United States.

## UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN UNION

One of the two branches of Christian Union is known as University Christian Union, and it develops Christian leaders at eight university campuses with extraordinary influence. Research has shown that just eight of the 2,500 universities in this country produce 50 percent of the most powerful leaders. It's incredible to consider that a tiny segment of only

100,000 college students—out of 21 million nationwide—on just a handful of campuses will occupy 50 percent of the most strategic roles in the United States. Graduates from these schools also will exercise tremendous impact on the international scene.

Currently, these campuses are extremely secular in their outlooks, representing a slow-motion train wreck that has been negatively impacting this country and world for a generation. More than 90 percent of the students on these campuses have no regular Christian input in their lives. The campuses are Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Penn, Princeton, and Yale universities.

Even with the help of local churches and godly national campus ministries, the proportion of Christian involvement and strengthening on these key campuses has not changed in 50 years. There is no good reason to expect the United States will substantively change spiritually in the next 50 years if these campuses are not dramatically changed in our present day. New approaches and energy need to be poured into making it a priority for the Christian church to ensure the lives of future leaders are strengthened with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the mission of Christian Union is to develop Christian leaders at these colleges to reshape dramatically the direction of the nation.

## CITY CHRISTIAN UNION

In addition to University Christian Union, the second branch of the ministry, City Christian Union, concentrates on a handful of the country's most influential cities, starting with New York City. Other cities of focus to be given increasing attention in the future include: Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington D.C., and Boston. By many measures, these cities are



**Christian Union Founder and President Matthew W. Bennett, Cornell BS '88, MBA '89.**

extremely prominent nationally and internationally but, unfortunately, also are generally secular in orientation. Heroic efforts have been made in these cities in the last few decades to strengthen Christian communities, and much more needs to be done to see these cities become known for their love for and devotion to Jesus Christ and His purposes.

## FOUR VALUES OF THE MINISTRY

In its mission, Christian Union has four values of paramount concern that characterize its approach. First, Christian Union works deliberately to engage students and marketplace professionals. To have a realistic chance of seeing such individuals develop into Christian leaders in just a few short years, the ministry utilizes workers of substantial caliber to mentor and teach. The Christian Union's ministry workers are called “ministry fellows,” and they possess exceptional professional and educational credentials. Many hold advanced seminary training, including master of divinity and master of theology degrees, and several possess doctoral degrees. Others have substantial experience at some of the top companies in the world, including Merrill Lynch and McKinsey and Co. Years of educational training and life experiences give ministry fellows the ability to mentor successfully students and professionals, as well as instruct them in biblical depth, theology, a Christian worldview, and the integration of faith into academic disciplines and vocations.

Secondly and perhaps more importantly, Christian Union emphasizes the relevancy of seeking God wholeheartedly. What's the point of having a Christian in a position of cultural influence if his or her devotion to God, faith, and spiritual strength is so weak that the individual's values do not significantly differ from sec-

ularist peers? Daniel of Bible fame serves as an inspiration. He was organized and purposeful in his leadership, which was to be expected of a man second in command in the most powerful nations in the world in his day: Babylon and Persia. He also was known to be extremely intelligent, which is why he was selected to enter the king's service in the first place, learning the literature of the Chaldeans. Yet, he also possessed a devotion to God so strong that even under the threat of death, he would not eat food defiled by idols, bow down to the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar, and cease praying three times per day. While teaching students and professionals to be good leaders organizationally and developing their intellectual knowledge of the Christian faith, the Christian Union also instills a deep appreciation for the importance of seeking God wholeheartedly day and night. Participants learn to pray fervently, practice humility, read the Scriptures often, repent of sins daily, and obey the Spirit promptly, persevering day in and day out in love and devotion to the only true God of the universe. Only with such qualities will Christian leaders have the spiritual power by the Spirit of God to fulfill His purposes for their lives.

Thirdly, the Christian Union networks participants for the purpose of cultural engagement. Christians can make mistakes on both ends of the spectrum. Either, they are fully engaged in the culture, but lack Christian companions and contacts and become weak spiritually and unable to call on a wider range of resources for impact, or they have many Christian friends, but do not expend the energy to interact with the larger culture that needs the salt and light of Jesus Christ. For Christian leaders to be successful, they need a network of close, like-minded friends who love and urge them on as followers of Christ. They also bring additional resources to bear in key cultural struggles, and they need to be outwardly focused, looking for ways to engage and improve the larger culture and make sacrifices for the purposes of Jesus Christ.

Lastly, the ministry is organizationally disciplined in its approach. Several leaders in the ministry possess master of business administration degrees, and their

expertise helps the ministry to be strategic and purposeful in its goals and objectives. Every quarter, the ministry compares its progress against goals in a series of key indicators. Jim Collins' monograph, "Good to Great in the Social Sector," has been a

personal mentoring as described below. It culminates in a leadership project that each student individually conceives and implements. The initiative needs to impact the campus environment for good and can take a variety of different forms.



tremendous aid in providing direction for a disciplined, metric-driven approach.

### ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS

As of summer 2013, University Christian Union is active at Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Columbia, Penn, and Cornell and it plans to expand to Brown in the near future. Christian Union fulfills its mission on these campuses through a variety of strategically conceived activities. The following are the ministry's principle offerings on campuses.

#### Leadership Certification Curriculum

Christian Union employs a proprietary two-year curriculum to develop students intellectually, spiritually, and socially for the purposes of cultural engagement. The curriculum comprises 2,000 pages of reading, participation in Bible Courses, attendance at weekly lecture series, and

Among them, students may engage social leaders on campus to reduce reliance on alcohol or the hook-up mindset, interact with professors who have been advocating anti-Christian worldviews, or reach out evangelistically to peers.

#### Bible Courses

The centerpiece of the ministry on campus consists of Bible Courses comprised of eight to ten students of the same sex and a Christian Union ministry fellow as the leader. These are extraordinarily popular, and there is often a waiting list for students to join. Students need sponsorship to be able to join a Bible Course, so there is great need for additional support to touch the lives of more young people. (For information, see [www.christian-union.org/sponsorship](http://www.christian-union.org/sponsorship).) Every undergraduate sponsored means one more student receives the opportunity to develop into a Christian leader.



### Weekly Leadership Lecture Series

Every week on campus, the students are taught in a lecture setting by Christian Union's ministry fellows or special lecturers from across the nation and beyond. Topics include biblical depth, theological grounding, Christian vocational or academic integration, and other subjects. To succeed as Christian leaders, students need deep teaching from the Scriptures and role models of Christians in various vocational fields. Weekly lectures provide the necessary intellectual strengthening for success.

### Personal Mentoring

Educational theorist and University of Chicago Professor Benjamin Bloom discovered years ago that one-on-one instruction dramatically increases a student's learning when compared to conventional teaching methods. Reducing class sizes down to four or five students only modestly improves learning. However, one-on-one input radically improves

understanding because tutors are able to give tailored feedback and allow students to master a subject before moving on to other concepts. Because of the impact of one-on-one interaction, Christian Union ministry fellows provide personal mentoring to guide students spiritually, and to provide leadership coaching.

### Conferences

To augment instruction students receive through the above activities, the ministry also hosts a variety of conferences and retreats during the academic year and longer programs during the summer months. World-class theologians, leaders, and speakers convene to inspire and teach students in a context of worship, fervent prayer, and relationship building. The power of these week-end or week-long gatherings is so strong that often more Christian growth and strengthening happens during a conference than through a whole semester of other programming.

### ACTIVITIES IN NEW YORK CITY THROUGH CITY CHRISTIAN UNION

Ministry to New Yorkers began in 2005, but only recently is New York City Christian Union able to make a stronger impact because of the hiring of both a director and an event manager. The ministry is expanding its impact through the following programs:

### NYCU Bible Courses

The New York City Christian Union Bible Courses are similar to the ones offered to students on campuses, except that the application of the biblical text is geared toward working professionals and parents. The emphasis on relationship building and deep biblical teaching remains the same for the purposes of spiritually strengthening the participants.

### NYCU Salons

Christian leaders need periodic interaction and inspiration from the leading intellectuals and influencers of the day in order to make the impact for which they have been called. Salons are periodic gatherings of 10 to 20 participants, hosted by an NYCU member, to hear from a leading, Christian cultural influencer.

### CONCLUSION

Christian Union exists because of Jesus' words in Luke 12:48: "Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required." All who have received much in terms of education, industry influence, wealth, and prestige need to be inspired, strengthened, and equipped to use what



they possess for the purposes of God for the world. He blesses His people so that they can turn and be a blessing to others. We look forward to the day when the United States is dramatically changed because of the selfless leadership of countless devoted Christians using their positions of leadership for the purposes of Jesus Christ.

For more information about Christian Union, see [www.christian-union.org](http://www.christian-union.org). ■

***Because of the impact of one-on-one interaction, Christian Union ministry fellows provide personal mentoring to guide students spiritually, and to provide leadership coaching.***

# TOLSTOY'S FAMILIAR CRISIS OF FAITH

Few things are more paralyzing to believers than that particular gloom that dawns whenever a vague, gnawing sense of the unreality and irrelevance of the claims of Christian faith begins to crystallize in daily experience.

Leo Tolstoy, after publishing *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* and receiving worldwide fame and accolades, experienced a jolting crisis of faith in his early 50s in which he questioned the significance of everything he had accomplished and lived for up until that point. Frantically seeking out the meaning of life, he recorded his initial findings in the short work *Confession*. One passage in particular struck me as giving poignant voice to an experience many Christians stumble upon in their own seasons of disillusionment, but probably struggle to express coherently:

[The people around me in my youth] led me to the conclusion that I had to learn my catechism and go to church but that it was not necessary to take it all too seriously...My break with faith occurred in me as it did and still does among people of our social and cultural type [i.e. the intellectual elite]. As I see it, in most cases it happens like this: people live as everyone lives, but they all live according to principles that not only have nothing to do with the teachings of faith but for the most part are contrary to them. The teachings of faith have no place in life and never come into play in the relations among people; they simply play no role in living life itself. The teachings of faith are left to some other realm, separated from life and independent of it. If one should encounter them, then it is only as some superficial phenomenon that has no connection with life...[A person] can live dozens of years without once being reminded that he lives among Christians, while he himself is regarded as a follower [of Jesus]. Thus today, as in days past, the teachings of faith, accepted on trust and sustained by external pressure, gradually fade under the influence of the knowledge and experi-

ence of life, which stand in opposition to those teachings. Quite often a man goes on for years imagining that the religious teaching that had been imparted to him since childhood is still intact, while all the time there is not a trace of it left in him.



A certain intelligent and honest man named S. once told me the story of how he ceased to be a believer. At the age of twenty-six, while taking shelter for the night during a hunting trip, he knelt to pray in the evening, as had been his custom since childhood. His older brother, who had accompanied him on the trip, was lying down on some straw and watching him. When S. had finished and was getting ready to lie down, his brother said to him, "So you still do that." And they said nothing more to each other. From that day S. gave up praying and going to church. And for thirty years he has not prayed, he has not taken Holy Communion, and he has not gone to church. Not because he shared his brother's convictions and went along with them; nor was it because he had decided on something or other in his own soul. It was simply that the remark his brother had made was like the nudge of a finger against a wall that was about to fall over from its own weight. His brother's remark showed him that the place where he thought faith to be had long since been empty; subsequently the words he spoke, the signs of the cross he made, and the bowing of his head in prayer were in essence completely meaningless actions. Once having admitted the meaninglessness of these gestures, he could no longer continue them.

Thus it has happened and continues to happen, I believe, with the great majority of the people.

***"Quite often a man goes on for years imagining that the religious teaching that had been imparted to him since childhood is still intact, while all the time there is not a trace of it left in him."***

***—Leo Tolstoy***

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***Tolstoy reminds me that doubt and apostasy are rarely only, or primarily, matters of intellectual coherence and argumentation. When the decisive transition from faith to unbelief becomes real in conscious experience, it is not usually a single idea or new insight that causes such a jarring movement in ideology.***

This passage haunts me. I find it tragically on target, in possession of that vivid ring of truth that is only possible to those who have firsthand knowledge of such internal events. I have myself felt nauseatingly near to this situation in seasons when certain vague moods were present, brought on by the seeming unreality of a faith that appears to stand in antithetical dissonance with my experience of the world. I have also witnessed many fellow believers slowly, unremarkably walk away from Jesus as a result of such perpetual disenchantment, barely even aware of what was happening to them at the time.

Tolstoy reminds me of several important insights here. First, nominal Christianity, for all of its seemingly unthreatening ordinariness, is the most spiritually destructive dynamic in the world. It breeds despair in those who are aware of the complexities, difficulties, and moral darkness of the world. It encourages the abstracting of faith from “real life” and thus prepares the way for apostasy when suffering or internal angst arise. Those who confess with their lips that Jesus is Lord over all, but who deny him by their actions are the greatest hindrance to the kingdom of God in the universe. As John Calvin never tired to point out, it is radical *obedience* to Christ that is the great opener (and sustainer) of our spiritual eyes; lethargy and complacency is deadly.

Second, Tolstoy reminds me that doubt and apostasy are rarely only, or primarily, matters of intellectual coherence and argumentation. When the decisive transition from faith to unbelief becomes real in conscious experience, it is not usually a single idea or new insight that causes such a jarring movement in ideology. Rather, such shifts are normally caused by the long-term internal pressure of a thousand cumulative experiences of unreality, irrelevance, and disquietude brought on by a lack of seeking God, finally boiling over to the point where it is no longer tolerable to the human spirit to say that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to all who believe. Faith simply does not explain or help to manage my perceptions and experiences of the world any longer. It is not tenable. “So you still do that” is now a more compelling existential argument against the unconsciously discredited vision of God written by Paul in

his letter to the Romans.

Lastly, Tolstoy demonstrates that what we need most in the Christian life is an ongoing, tangible, Spirit-produced *sense* of the reality of the gospel’s beauty and power as we follow Jesus together in community with others. Just as doubt can be encouraged and provoked by seeing that faith is just as unreal and nominal for others as it is for me, so the life-giving power of faith can be nurtured, not only by my own experience and knowledge and seeking after God, but also by experiencing God through others who are legitimately sharing in and actively connected to His divine life. Tolstoy motivates me to pray Paul’s request on behalf of the Ephesians with new zeal and intensity:

*For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 1:15-20) ■*

*Nick Nowalk, a Christian Union teaching fellow at Harvard University, earned a Master of Divinity degree at Bethel Seminary. He spent two years as a pastoral apprentice at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis under John Piper in The Bethlehem Institute, and concurrently taught a number of theology and Bible classes at the undergraduate and graduate level. Nick studied at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary prior to joining Christian Union in 2008.*

**BROWN**

- Pray for ministry staff members as they prepare to greet the freshman class of 2017. Pray that God will use them in profound ways as they share the Good News and make disciples.
- Pray for Christian faculty and staff members, that they will boldly share their faith with colleagues and students who cross their paths and that they will not grow weary in well doing.

**COLUMBIA**

- Pray for the students who stay on campus over the summer and for Bible study and fellowship opportunities. Also intercede for Columbia students who are home for summer break, that their faith and devotion would continue to increase.
- As the various Christian organizations engage students from different cultures and religions, pray that many will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

**CORNELL**

- Pray that incoming freshmen will be made to feel welcome and find edifying friendships.
- Pray that students with depression will be able to share their struggle with someone and find help.
- Many students find the summer a difficult time as they are away from the structure of academic life. Pray that they cope with this lack of structure and get the rest and recuperation they need.

**DARTMOUTH**

- Pray for the female students at Dartmouth, that God would provide godly role models who will mentor and disciple them.
- Pray that campus ministry leaders will get much needed rest this summer. Pray for those who will be raising support for the upcoming year, and for others who will be traveling or taking part in ministry work away from Dartmouth.

**HARVARD**

- Pray for unity among the Christian organizations on campus and for a powerful, united prayer movement to emerge. Pray for Christians to develop fruitful relationships with non-Christians and members of Harvard's staff and administration.
- Pray that each Christian athlete will set aside time for personal daily devotions and that they effectively balance heavy academic workloads, demanding athletic requirements, and social activities.

**PENN**

- Pray for the Class of 2013 as its members enter the workforce. Pray for smooth transitions and for Christian alumni to find a church body and fellowship so they can be used by the Lord to impact culture for Christ.
- As the fall semester soon begins, pray that Christian students would fully depend on God and trust Him fully during the academic year.

**PRINCETON**

- Pray for Princeton Evangelical Fellowship's summer Bible study as staff and students work through the book of Galatians. Pray that they grow in grace and knowledge, and also lift them up as they prepare to minister in the upcoming academic year.
- Pray for Christopher L. Eisgruber, Princeton '83, as he begins his first year as the university's 20th president.

**YALE**

- Keep in prayer students who will be traveling overseas during the summer to work or participate in missions. Pray for God's protection over them, as well as for strength and boldness.
- Pray for students remaining in New Haven, that through the Yale Summer Christian Fellowship, they may encourage each other and grow closer to Christ through prayer and the study of Scripture.

# Thank you!

Through your generous giving,  
Christian leaders are being  
developed to change culture.



CHRISTIAN  
UNION



## Valentina Paiva Acosta COLUMBIA CLASS OF 2015

**Hometown:** Atlántida, Canelones, Uruguay

**Major:** Earth and Environmental Engineering

**Campus Activities:** Veritas Forum; Office of Admissions' Multicultural Recruitment Committee

"I was the first female member of Christian Union at Columbia when the ministry launched here in 2011, and I am deeply thankful for the leadership training I am receiving. One highlight from this year was growing as a Christian scholar through the Bible course on Romans. The material included connections between Romans and Exodus, and the continuity between the Old and New Testaments.

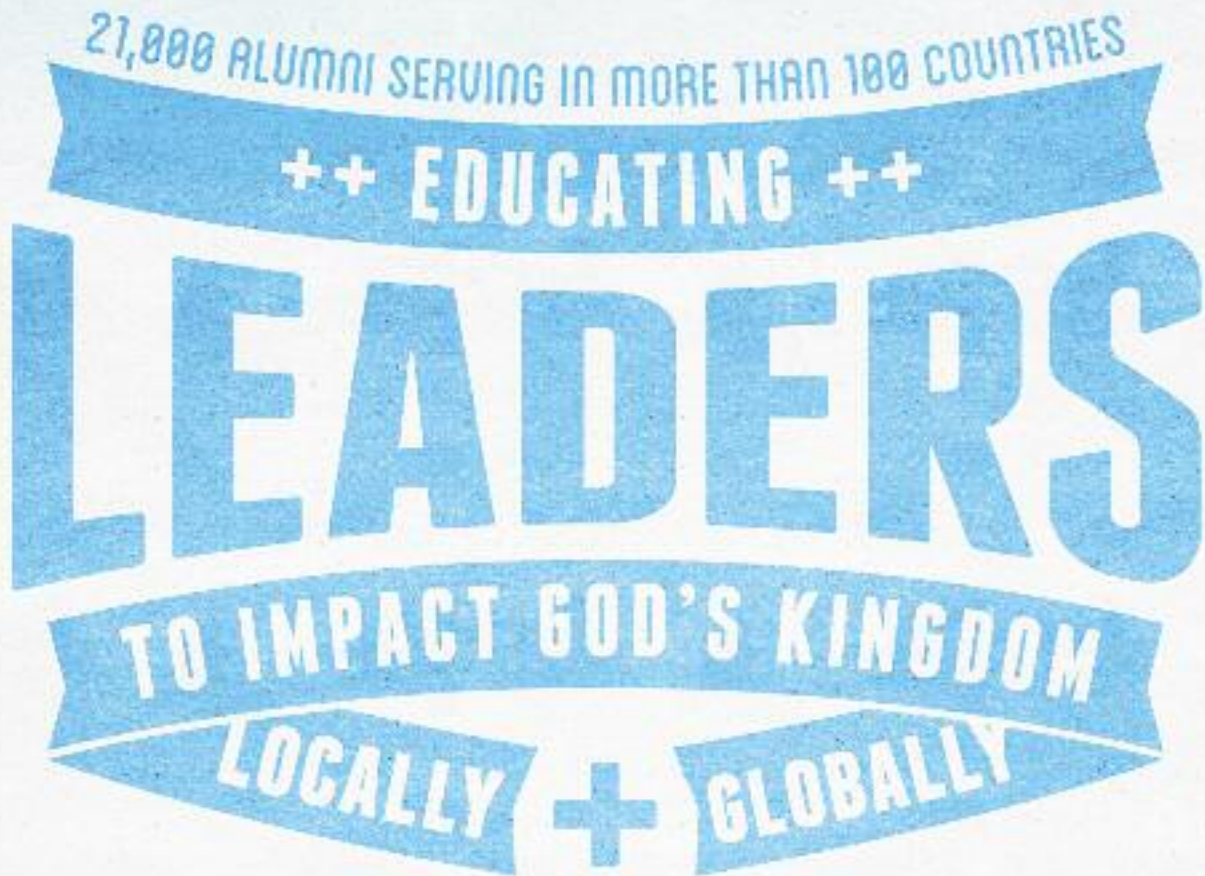
The course content was so in-depth I was empowered to speak up in my Contemporary Civilizations class, which includes Romans in the curriculum. My professor was quite offensive in his take on the Scriptures, but I was prepared to explain and defend the reliability of the Scriptures in front of my class, even down to the Greek meaning of words in the text.

It's important to be able to explain the Christian perspective in intellectually motivating discussions. There is a lot at stake at a university like Columbia, where so many students go on to be influential. Thankfully, God is changing lives here at Columbia—it is a blessing and an honor to be a part of it."

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[Giving@ChristianUnion.org](mailto:Giving@ChristianUnion.org)

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*Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS) is in Deerfield, Illinois, with extension sites in Akron, Chicago, Columbus, Indianapolis, Madison, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and south Florida.*



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