



THE CAMPUS VIEW

JUNE 2014 ISSUE

an update from Christian Campus House at Eastern Illinois University

THE END OF A VERY DIFFERENT, AND VERY GREAT YEAR!

by **ROGER SONGER**

One year ago this month I wrote in our newsletter about “Generation iY” and the unique and difficult challenges we had faced trying to understand and minister to this newest generation of students. That article was filled with a lot of talk about the struggle side of interfacing with “GeniY. That article probably sounded quite grim. However . . .

I am thrilled to report that a lot has changed in just one year. Yes, we are still ministering to the same generation, and many of the same challenges remain. But two streams have joined together to make this one of the best years we have experienced in ministry here at CCH for quite some time. The first stream flows from the intentionality with which our staff and student leaders have approached the process of both understanding this generation, and then modifying our methods and practices to reach them. God has richly blessed our efforts, and what we did in ministry this year seems to have really connected with our people. The second stream flows from the amazing group of freshmen and transfer students who came into our

ministry this past Fall. This influx of new students brought with them excitement, a sense of commitment, and a demonstration of genuine community that quite literally breathed new life into this ministry. As these two streams converged, they combined to produce a powerful and productive year of ministry.

Let me give you some examples of what made this year so great. At the beginning of our year we stressed our one- word mission statement, “ENGAGE” (Engage Christ, Engage Community, Engage Campus) and they put that mission statement into practice.

First, this group loves engaging in community. After every event (Sunday morning worship, Wednesday Night Bible Studies, etc.) they hang around to be with one another—sometimes for hours after the service is over. There was no attitude of “church is over, let’s get out of here!”

Second, they were very pro-active and creative in engaging our campus. They “chalked” the sidewalks of EIU with messages of encouragement, hope, and with scripture. They per-

formed “man-on-the-street” video interviews, polling students’ opinions on faith, love, and God. They took a couch to the center of campus and put up a sign inviting their peers to stop, sit, and talk. And some of those couch-conversations were amazing.

And third, they really did engage Christ. We saw a lot of serious digging into the Word. And we saw fruit. We had 20 baptisms this year. And the amazing thing is that 13 of them occurred in the last 5 weeks of school. We really ended the school year with a “bang!” and with excitement for next year. And that excitement for next year was ESPECIALLY evident at our COM (student leaders) retreat in April. Our whole staff was wowed by how much enthusiasm our new leaders already have for NEXT school year. They can’t wait to get started!

This whole year was so good! It was so encouraging! God produced so much fruit! Yes, we simply cannot wait to see what HE has in store for this ministry NEXT school year.

RIDING THE WAVE

by Andrew Donsbach, Student

Looking back at the 2013 – 2014 school year at Christian Campus House, I don't even know where to begin. This past year has been a whirlwind, passing faster than any year before, but it was also a huge year of growth for both myself personally and the ministry as a whole.

At the beginning of the year, Roger shared a story with the student leadership team (COM) and challenged us to act on the story throughout the year. He shared an analogy of a surfer riding a wave. When in the water, the surfer must look back to see the wave coming, but more importantly, the surfer must identify the crest of the wave and get on top of it if he wants to ride it all the way to shore. Roger felt like God was telling him that, as a ministry, we needed to wait for the wave and ride it when it arrived. He could not have been more spot-on. The wave was coming, and luckily we've been riding it all year long.

COM was excited for the opportunity that we felt God had placed in front of us, and the enthusiasm in the ministry was through the roof before school had even begun.

A group of students went to the National Student Conference in early August to prepare for the upcoming year and learn new ways to be intentional on campus. This conference was an incredible way to build better community and grow together early. Just a few short weeks later, school was in session and relationships were forming very early on. The new class that entered Christian Campus House brought with it a new level of excitement. Student became involved very quickly, getting outside their

comfort zones and making new friends easily. People also began serving in the ministry from day one. I have seen an exciting level of servant-hearted students develop this past year, using their passions to further God's kingdom.

The first trip that Christian Campus House takes each year is Fall Retreat in mid-September. Our speaker this year challenged us to go deeper and sharpen one another, like the Bible calls for in Proverbs 27:17. Continuing with the momentum that had already built in the ministry, the idea stuck. Throughout the year, Godly, selfless friendships have formed, allowing students to go deep together, encouraging one another and going through life together in vulnerability. The depth that comes from these friendships has proven to be life-giving and impactful for the kingdom. God has used these relationships to reach new people, and the ministry has seen what seems like one baptism after another throughout the year. People are coming to know Jesus and declaring it to the world... how exciting!

Most importantly, I feel like students, staff and the ministry as a whole have really exemplified the greatest two commandments given to us: people are loving God wholeheartedly, and people are loving one another. Over the past year, I have seen students, including myself, begin to become more concerned with loving people than with winning the cultural war that Christians often get caught up in. That's what Jesus called us to do and it's exciting to see the fruit of our faithfulness! ■

Sticky Note Encouragements

Recently several of our students expressed some thoughts and praises for the school year on "Post-It" notes and stuck them to a wall in the building. Here are a few of the great things they see going on at Christian Campus House!

I'm thankful for the strong Christian friendships that have developed at C.C.H.

Praise God for community & relationships

The God centered groups that have formed from and in classes and small groups.

Praise God for staff!

GOD, THANK YOU FOR THE AMAZING FRESHMAN (AND TRANSFER) CLASS THIS YEAR!!!

Praise God for COM leadership

I praise God for the leadership here that has poured so much into me and has taught me so much.

People beginning to seek faith fully and not follow blindly

for the talents of the students in this ministry

Thankful that God has been so evidently growing people

powerful, Spirit-led, thought-provoking conversations at National Student Conference that sparked the semester