

## **2009 Annual Report**

### **Chi Alpha Campus Ministries, USA**

Dennis Gaylor, National Director

The practice of ministry on today's college and university campuses does and should parallel the way we do missions. Seeing college ministry as missions doesn't simply refer to the need for evangelism on college campuses. Missions is more than that! In *Reaching the Tribes*, author Benson Hines says, "Just like world missions, campus missionaries not only get to introduce Christ to the unsaved but also help bring college students who are Christians to maturity, shape the worldview of Christ-followers, raise up and train lifelong leaders, glorify God throughout local campuses and districts and work to establish lasting, influential outposts of Christ's Kingdom to permanently serve these campus mission fields."

#### **Self-governing, self-funding, and self-perpetuating university ministry.**

Chi Alpha is committed to evangelism on campus, but to ensure ongoing influence and impact, we establish communities of collegiate believers. We do believe in the missions' indigenous principles of being self-governing, self-funding, and self-perpetuating, but how the indigenous principles work in the context of college and university campuses is a bit different than the traditional approach to church planting in America and overseas.

Most campuses are self-sufficient communities with their own housing, eating establishments, recreational centers, police departments, post offices, banks, bookstore, and other retail stores. When you step on a campus, you literally enter a different world. Many freshmen are not allowed to own vehicles or live off campus. Colleges and

universities are very transient communities, shifting dramatically every school year and completely every four to five years. Campuses have their own culture and need their own specific cross-cultural witness.

### **Chi Alpha 2008**

Chi Alpha was organized on 242 campuses nationwide, including 369 paid campus missionaries and 19,507 active students. We saw 2,539 students come to faith in Jesus Christ and 934 students water baptized in swimming pools, lakes, and fountains on campus. We received reports of 1,386 students who were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Almost 80% of our students come from many different religious and non-religious backgrounds but are attracted to the work of the Holy Spirit in our Chi Alpha meetings and desire to experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit. One of our campus missionaries in Montana, Dick Schroeder, launched a Web site to assist students in understanding the person and work of the Holy Spirit: [www.yougottheholyspirit.com](http://www.yougottheholyspirit.com). We also had 1,238 reported healings among our students. Numerous Chi Alpha groups set up a table in the open air and offer to pray for students. Many of these healings have occurred as a result of a prayer table on campus.

### **Is Chi Alpha self-governing?**

Yes, but not in the same sense as a typical church. Student-led groups without ongoing guidance have demonstrated a predictable cycle: quick start, short stability, and demise. There are exceptions, but this is generally how it works. The turnover of student leadership proves to be difficult for Chi Alpha to weather without an external course of stability. Thus, they need external leaders to come in and coach them.

**Chi Alpha prepares and trains leaders.**

We conduct an annual the Reach the University Institute (RUI) to train new campus missionaries. In 2008, we had 55 in attendance. Combined with this is a 9- to 10-month internship program nationally recognized on 18 campuses. In 2008, we had 49 campus missionaries-in-training participate on 11 campuses. These two training venues produce most of our new staff. We also have adapted church planting tools to Chi Alpha and offer a pioneering campus ministry track for those who have already attended RUI, participated in an internship, received national appointment, and raised their budgets. This facilitates the planting of new groups on campuses where we have never had Chi Alpha. While less than ten percent of our campus ministries are church based, we offer training for church staff annually. We produced booklets on launching a campus ministry and have almost completed a Web site with resources for churches. With Assemblies of God churches near most of our campuses, the potential for impact is significant. There are 1,500 community colleges with most administrations eager for a church to sponsor a religious student organization; however, few community colleges have any Christian presence or outreach.

**Is Chi Alpha self-funding?**

Yes, but not in the same sense as a typical church. Few students have full-time jobs, almost all are making minimum wage, and almost all of their income goes to support their education. Supporting a full-time campus missionary is beyond the scope of almost all student ministries. A student ministry can often fund its program costs through offerings but in some universities, it is illegal to receive offerings. Those of us who minister to college students must have an external source of funding.

### **Funding Chi Alpha Personnel**

National missionary appointment has provided a vehicle through which young men and women, singles, and families who are called to university ministry can serve. We have 151 nationally-appointed missionary units. We also have 65 district-recognized campus missionaries. One of our rapid growth areas is Campus Missionary Associates. We have 153 units. Investing in these called and qualified campus missionaries is strategic for the future of our church and society. Churches and individuals have given more than ten million dollars in 2008 to invest in our campus missionary personnel. About eight percent of these funds operate the national Chi Alpha office served by five missionary staff with national assignments.

### **Is Chi Alpha self-perpetuating?**

Yes, but not in the same way as a typical church. A Chi Alpha group at U of Michigan typically cannot pick up and transplant themselves to the U of Southern California. Admissions, scholarships, and credits make transferring difficult. So while students can evangelize other students on their own campus, they have a limited ability to evangelize students on other campuses. Thus, there must be some external organization coordinating ministry to all the colleges and universities across America. University communities are moving targets. The mission field moves on while the missionary stays local. Thus, the primary work of the campus missionary is to assist those who minister on campus to reproduce themselves before transitioning to the work world.

### **How we reproduce ourselves on campus.**

We reach students by being an evangelizing, discipling, multiplying community on campus. When we establish ourselves on campus where students live, study, eat, and

play, students come to faith and grow in their faith and reproduce their lives through others. This is accomplished by being a community on campus that worships God, prays for one another, studies and learns the Word, fellowships together, evangelizes, and engages in missions and service. We self-perpetuate through our commitment to be missional. In 2008, Assemblies of God U.S. and World Missions collaborated with Chi Alpha to host The World Missions Summit II. 800 U.S. and World missionaries represented their mission fields through interactive exhibits, missions experiences and plenary sessions. This student missions conference, attracted almost 4,000 attendees, most of them students. They were challenged to see all of their lives as belonging to God, and whether a student or a graduate, they must find their place in what God is doing. In particular 838 students responded to give a year and pray about a lifetime of missions.

With 18 million students studying on U.S. campuses, almost one million of them international students from most every nation of the world, we must give priority to reach this strategic segment of our population. Today's students are tomorrow's leaders in every aspect of life.