

RUF REPORT

News of Reformed University Fellowship in the Northeast and Midwest

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Third Year Cheer

I have been telling you what good work the ministers I visit have been doing, and it is true. They are amazing campus ministers. But this year the third-year men are really hitting their stride. This is the third year for six of the 19 men I supervise. The goal for the first year is to get settled, ordained, and funded. The second year they try to figure out how to grow the ministry. This year we are seeing huge progress. At Penn State, Iowa, and Nebraska they completely overhauled how they begin the semester. They began or renovated a pre-semester retreat, meeting freshmen when they arrive, and daily activities for new students. The result is a big jump in freshmen joining their groups.



Christmas party for Pitt students at Derek and Luda's house

The ministries at those schools were already running when the ministers arrived three years ago, but Derek started the Pitt RUF. I had my first look at his large group meeting this fall. Every seat in the room was taken, students were warm, friendly, and welcoming, and student leaders are showing impressive initiative for a new ministry. Scott Mitchell took over my ministry at Lehigh. For the first time he is feeling that he has a solid grasp of things, and is no longer pulled along by inertia. Kevin took over a small RUF at Yale. Yale is proving a challenge, but no one is working harder than Kevin. I am confident that God will bring fruit there soon.

Last fall Steven Badorf at Johns Hopkins had a similar problem. Steven is a veteran campus minister. A textbook

freshmen outreach plan perfectly executed yielded a dismal response. Students started showing up in the spring, however, and this fall there has been a big jump in student participation. Let's pray for a similar work of God's Spirit at Yale.

Fall Travels

This year I am responsible for one less campus than last year, but it seems I was on the road more. As I look back, I think every trip and meeting was important and helpful. Here are just a few highlights:

- Two great interns at the University of Maryland. Elvis comes from Alabama, and Tiffany comes from Iowa. Chris Garriott (the campus minister) says, "They are like fish in water!"
- My first visit to Northwestern University near Chicago. Jason and Ashley Harris have a solid grasp of the culture of this high-pressure campus.
- My first visit to Michigan State. Shawn and Jami Newsome and their two little girls had just settled into their house. Shawn is learning how to reach this campus.
- A chance to speak to the Western Canada presbytery and explain the ministry of RUF. I met many wonderful people there.



Rob and Jenny Ilderton with Millersville students

- News that we may have two campus ministers for RUF in Monterrey, Mexico!
- Meetings with pastors in several states to work on expanding RUF onto other campuses.
- Karen Brown has been an extraordinary help in the office. She does all the paper work so that I can focus on the ministers and their students.

Thanks and Funds

God has blessed RUF in many ways. But topping the list are the thousands of people who pray and give to support this ministry. You are God's Christmas gift to campus ministers and college students! Thanks for sharing in this important ministry with us.

Every year we depend on generous December giving to meet our expenses. Please help if you are able. Donations should be made out to "RUF" and sent to this address:

Reformed University Fellowship
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 104
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Focus on Eddie Park



Like the rest of New England, Brown University is no longer a hotbed for Christian values. Less than two centuries after alumnus and Baptist missionary Adoniram Judson graced its campus, Brown has exchanged its Christian ideals and embraced a post-church environment. RUF Campus Minister Eddie Park hopes to restoke the flame as he engages in ministry on a college campus that was once located in the heartland of American Christianity.

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The son of an Assemblies of God preacher, Eddie grew up immersed in a ministry world. Though Eddie didn't understand and couldn't participate in much of the worship, conducted entirely in Korean, he nonetheless learned valuable lessons in this context. As the only youth in the youth group, Eddie learned the Bible one-on-one with an English-speaking mentor. To this day Eddie views his mother as "a stalwart example of persistence in ministry" and commends both his parents for their encouragement of his own persistence in ministry.

Upon graduating from Brown in 2002, Eddie pursued both an M.Div. and a Th.M. degree at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and continued to work side-by-side with the RUF campus minister at Brown during his four years in seminary. In 2007, Eddie married Annie, a for-

mer RUF intern, whom Eddie met at an RUF training. The couple became official campus staff in the same year with Eddie serving full-time and Annie part-time. Three years later the Parks are filling these same roles.

When Eddie first started working at his alma mater, RUF was relatively new to Brown. During Eddie's senior year, RUF developed from an existing campus ministry of a small Korean presbytery. At the time, the make-up of the group was about 75% Korean, but has since grown in engaging other parts of the student body. At this time, RUF Brown includes approximately 45 students from a variety of backgrounds.

In addition to Brown students, this RUF also attracts students from the nearby Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) as the RISD Christian Fellowship leadership dissolved around the same time the original Brown campus ministry lost pastoral support. Eddie describes his students from both campuses as highly idealistic and full of big vision with a desire to change the world. "It's a very activist culture; everybody's got a cause," he remarks.

As campus minister, Eddie has taken on the role of helping to inspire students with a vision for Christ and His kingdom that considers its ramifications on society, government, and other large arenas. Eddie expresses a desire to share "a slow, steady love that doesn't ramrod people with Christian ideals" and encourages his students to work *through* the gospel and think about Christian realism in addition to Christian idealism. Eddie also challenges the overly ambitious nature and performance-orientation of his students and reminds them to rest in the gospel.



Brown/RISD RUF freshmen

Like most other RUF campus ministers, Eddie's week consists of large group, leadership meeting, one-on-one student meetings, and small group Bible studies. However, RUF Brown is a bit unusual in how they approach small groups (family groups). On most campuses, small group Bible Studies occur on various nights in various locations throughout the campus, but at Brown every Sunday all of the RUF students gather for worship and fellowship before splitting into smaller family groups. To some, this structure may seem redundant, like a second

large group, but Eddie sees it as a way to reach students in his particular cultural context as highly visionary Brown and RISD types seem to thrive on big events.

Over the years, Eddie has seen the gospel affect students in powerful ways. Eddie fondly remembers the testimony of a RISD senior who became a Christian after becoming friends with several RUF students. In them she saw a joy, a different kind of rest and satisfaction than she observed on the rest of campus. On the other hand, Andy, a current senior and RUF worship leader, came to RUF as a Christian but disillusioned with his previous youth group experience. "I'm tired of Christians asking me to do things," he complained to Eddie his freshman year. Eddie and Jason, an upperclassman, patiently invested in Andy and watched him soften over time. He now has a renewed vision for Christian service and is eagerly sharing his gifts and pursuing relationships with younger men as well.

Earlier this year, Eddie added the ministry role of father when Annie gave birth to their son, William, on the couple's third wedding anniversary. As most RUF events start around William's bedtime, Eddie and Annie are still trying to think of ways for the RUF students to meet and interact with the new addition to their family. Fortunately, they live close to campus, and so some students have had the opportunity to visit William in their home. Aside from trying to acquaint the students with little William, Eddie is learning to face the reality that there's not as much time to get things done. Fortunately for Eddie, who has shared this truth with many ambitious students, there is rest in the gospel!

For more information on Eddie and the RUF ministry at Brown and RISD, please check out their website: www.rufbrownrisd.org.

— by Kristen Boe

The Homefront

Daniel was only back from Afghanistan for two months when he was sent to Georgia for three weeks of training. Big news: he bought a house! Peter and Megan are settling into life at Wheaton. Peter tells me he is living the easy life there, since he does not have three jobs in addition to school, but I am skeptical. Big news: they are expecting a baby in June! Christopher finished his management training for the Foreign Service, and is now learning French. He will move to the Congo in February.

Stephen is busy as a junior at Lehigh University. In addition to classes, he is leading a Bible study, organizing social events, and part of the worship team in RUF there. He is also raising funds to go on a mission trip with Le-

high RUF to Greece. Benjamin is enjoying biology and geometry, other subjects not as much. Ruth is again teaching her online Advanced Placement English class, and LitWits – a class at the co-op Benjamin attends.

This summer we extensively renovated our bedroom – a project which took several months. We love the fresh look and hope the insulated windows and walls will make it warmer.

We are looking forward to having all of our boys and all of Ruth's brothers here for Christmas this year. We love the full house!

Christmas Reflections

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring.
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before His grace,
Then life and health come in its place.
Angels and men with joy may sing
All for to see the new-born King.

— *Sussex Carol*



We just had an election, and I think everyone agrees it was momentous. The conservative view is that Americans signaled Washington to stop eroding our liberties.

I have been teaching Romans in Sunday School. We just covered the passage where Paul shows that Christ has set us free from bondage to sin. Civil liberties are important, but real freedom comes only in Christ. And when we are free from sin, we gain life and health – blessings no government can bestow.

So now at Christmas we sing and celebrate the coming of Jesus into the world to save us. May you and your loved ones have the best Christmas ever!

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