

In Northern Illinois & NW Indiana

MINISTRY UPDATE FROM BYRON & MICHELLE GRAHAM

December 2011



Students encounter Jesus and deeper community with other Latinos at Encuentro 2011

Encuentro = Encounter

"I can't believe I almost didn't come!" Jackie stood next to me beaming as she thought over the events of the weekend. Encuentro had been a line in the sand for her. As a freshman, Jackie arrived on campus a believer, but had made a deliberate choice to run from God. When a friend had invited her to LaFe, InterVarsity's ministry to Latino students, Jackie came and reluctantly registered to attend Encuentro, our weekend conference for Chicago-land LaFe students. As our speaker emphatically reminded students of God's relentless grace and our undeserving natures, Jackie felt the Lord calling her back to Him. She knelt down and re-committed her life. It was an **encounter** with God that she won't soon forget.

As she shared with me about her decision, she continued, "And now I'm going home over the break and will be with family members who don't know Jesus." We prayed together that the Lord would make her life and words a vivid picture of the saving grace of Jesus. Join us in praying that the 30 students who attended Encuentro would transform their campuses and families with the good news of the gospel.

Growth through New Faith



Vision 2 Action students worshipping above

"I think I'm ready", I heard her say. *"Ready? For what?" I wondered.* We had just finished an hour-long book discussion about what it looks like to follow Jesus fully. She had seemed so comfortable with the idea that it didn't occur to me that maybe she wasn't a Christian. But Danny, her campus staff, had known her story and wasn't phased. "Would you like to pray right now? We can do this together... right here," he said. A smile spread across her face as she said, "I'm ready, but I'd like to do it alone. I have a lot I need to say to God." We parted ways with the understanding that Jessica's eternity was about to change. And sure enough it did. The following day she gave her life to Jesus, and just two days later she attended Vision 2 Action, our one-day training conference for Black students. Her first days as a daughter of the King were spent worshipping, praying and learning from God's Word. Because of your partnership in giving and praying, Jessica is one of many students who have crossed from death to life this Fall!

Family Update

Fall has raced by with a flurry of family activities. Natalie's softball team won the Division 3 championship. Joshua has begun a new interest in competitive swimming. Byron successfully survived another season of coaching soccer for 8 year olds. Jason's favorite position was as goalie. And Tyson still enjoys the care-free life of a preschooler... the only concern is when the next play-date will be. A highlight was a family day in Chicago, taking advantage of 'free museum day'. Believe it or not, it included standing in a tornado, dissecting an eyeball, making ice cream with liquid nitrogen, and bantering with our waitress at Ed Debevic's. After 16 years of ministry, Michelle is finally going to enjoy a 6 month sabbatical beginning in January. She hopes to do a lot of reading, learning, and writing during that time.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for the 3 new staff hires: Greg, Anne, & Jerica as they gather a support team in order to begin work on campus
- That the Vision 2 Action and Encuentro students would reach out to other key students on campus

FINANCIAL REQUEST:

It is a joy to watch God transform students. However our ministry costs are exceeding our current support levels. Would you consider a year-end gift to help fund God's work on college campuses?



A fun field trip to museums in the city

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Thank you!

... for your faithful financial prayer and support as we minister with InterVarsity.

To make a contribution please send checks to "IVCF" Attn: Donation Services / P.O. Box 7895 Madison, WI 53791.

Please include a note indicating your gift is for Byron & Michelle Graham. To give online, visit donate.intervarsity.org