

## In Northern Illinois & NW Indiana

MINISTRY UPDATE FROM BYRON & MICHELLE GRAHAM

February 2011



*La Fe '10 Chicago folks*

### Road trippin' it

In late December, 21 students from 5 campuses in Chicago (on left) squeezed into vans to road trip all the way to Dallas, TX for InterVarsity's national conference for Latino students. We rejoiced, as we had prayed for 10 students to come!

One of those students was Emilio, from Aurora University. Raised with a Muslim mom, a Catholic dad, and a believing grandparent, Emilio had a diverse upbringing but didn't know God personally. Spiritually hungry, the last thing he posted before leaving for La Fe '10 on his Facebook page said, "Success? Getting ahead? Forget both. How do I become more whole?" Just 5 days later he gave his life to Jesus. Upon returning to campus, he and another student from the conference have started a Bible study for Latinos on campus. There are already 6-10 students coming to it!



*Students pray for their campus*

### Transformed by Jesus

Winterfest 2011 - Invite Two. This is the challenge we gave all our student leaders... to share the Gospel story with 2 students who do not have a relationship with Jesus and to invite them to the Finding God track at this year's Winterfest conference. The result? About 450 students attended Winterfest, with nearly 50 non-Christian students among them. By Sunday, 17 students had decided to follow Jesus, while many others took a step forward on their faith journey.

Michelle had the privilege of working with 50 student leaders in the Witnessing Communities track. Students were challenged to consider how they could lead their InterVarsity chapters to be growing in witness. Most of the students committed themselves to "up the ante" in evangelism. Some made decisions to live in dorms where there is no witness. Some felt convicted to become devoted to prayer. Some realized they just needed to ask their friends if they were ready to follow Jesus. It was powerful to watch students gather around maps of their campus and pray fervently and tearfully for the Gospel to transform it. (see left) We look forward to the fruit that God will grow as a result.

### Family Update

The holidays provided opportunity to spend extended time with Byron's family in the south. We also were able to squeeze in a Tennessee Titans football game for Byron's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Getting through the winter months has been a different strategy for each of the kids. For Natalie: reading. For Josh: basketball. For Jason: flag football. For Tyson: playdates with preschool buddies. And they all were delighted that the blizzard provided opportunity to build a snow cave in the backyard!

Byron has returned to work after a restful Sabbatical. We are thankful for those 6 months of renewal!



*Go Titans!*

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### Prayer Requests

- For Latino ministry in the division to grow with new Bible studies starting this Spring
- For students who attended Winterfest, that their commitments would take root.
- For God to provide new staff who are gifted to plant new ministry, and for wisdom for us as we interview and hire new staff
- For God to bring a wave of new believers in the spring months.

### 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 [www.intervarsity.org/donate](http://www.intervarsity.org/donate).