

HALVORSEN MINISTRY UPDATE



Covid has changed much of our daily lives and, obviously, college ministry too has had to pivot. Large gatherings are now through Zoom (picture above: MIT students leading worship at the Boston Fall Retreat via Zoom). Meetings with a small group of students face-to-face are limited and weather-dependent. But God can never be thwarted. The Lord is still drawing students to himself and creating rich communities where students are growing in their faith. Below are stories from my fellow staff friends in Boston, who I am working hard to support and equip with new fully-funded missionaries. Thank you for joining me in this mission.

Starting out the Fall Differently

Nate & Sarah Sobeck, Cru staff at MIT and Harvard

“The fall semester is definitely different this year, but we continue to rest in who our God is... The Cru community at MIT spent Orientation Week welcoming freshmen, hosting a weekly ‘Crueday’ (Cru+Tuesday) large group event, meeting with freshmen one on one over zoom, connecting over our social media platforms, and kicking off the 2024s Life Group (small group Bible study)! [This time] was a full and encouraging. The first ‘Crueday’ event was called ‘Finding God at MIT.’ About 45 students showed up via zoom and experienced Cru through three students who shared their stories about coming to know Christ while at MIT.

God changes their whole direction

Malisa Ellis, Cru staff at Boston University

“‘Jill’ grew up in the foster system in LA and was adopted by her foster mom when she turned 4. Part of being in the foster system was that she got to go to a camp every summer. Jill loved the camp. And, though she knew it was a ‘Christian camp,’ she told me that she never heard the gospel in a way that made sense to her.

“Fast forward 12 years. Now, Jill is a first year at Boston University. Feeling totally overwhelmed by her engineering major, Jill reached out to one of her mentors in the foster system in LA. ‘Would you like me to find a way to connect you to Cru at BU?’ ‘Yes.’

“And so I met Jill initially through a website-email-virtual-cross-country adventure. When we finally tried to meet up in person, she was only available to meet in the one window I was unavailable.

“I asked Diana, a sophomore from Hawaii, to meet up with Jill. ‘Yes, I can do that, but I’m scared. What do I say?’ ‘Just get to know her,’ I told Diana. ‘Love on her. Ask her to share her story. Then tell her your story.’ Diana and Jill had a great time. And a week later, Jill had surrendered her life to Christ!

“Now, Jill, Diana, and I are meeting weekly. Week after week, I’m struck by the profoundness of God entering someone’s life, changing their whole direction and outlook. And there’s a beauty of God choosing to use us – choosing to use broken, messy people to communicate God’s love and beauty to others.”

A PLACE TO BELONG

Patty Dery, Cru staff at Boston University

“Just last week I was headed to campus to meet with two students, one a student leader and another a freshmen in our movement. It was 50 degrees and raining, but when I texted both students about an hour before they preferred to meet in a covered area on campus than switch to zoom.

“I keep being reminded how much people are craving in person connection. At the same time, I am so thankful for how God is moving through zoom and other virtual meeting platforms in this season. I wanted to check in with Patricia, the freshmen, to see how her year was going. Towards the end of our conversation Patricia said unprompted, ‘I feel like Cru is a place I belong.’

“This is something I have been praying for our students. We do a handful of our events social distanced in person, but we also do a lot on zoom and sometimes I wonder if people still feel like they are a part of a community. I am so thankful for how God is moving in this season and still providing places for people to connect and grow in their relationship with Him, even through virtual platforms.”

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for students experiencing extreme levels of anxiety about school, jobs, living situations, family circumstances, health, etc. And pray for wisdom for Cru staff and campus counselors caring for them.
- Pray for missionaries who are raising funds during this challenging time. Pray that they will be able to make their goals, as the need for missionaries are great. Pray for wisdom of those of us coaching them.
- Pray for our efforts to meet and minister students digitally and in new innovative ways.