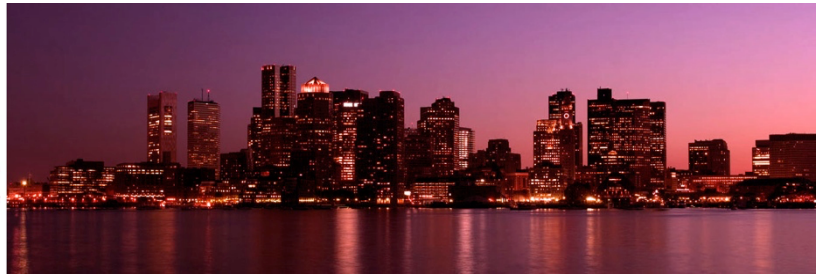


Mar 20, 2022

Brian & Malisa Ellis – Serving with Cru in Boston

Change Boston



How Rachel & Danyca Became Friends

In Mid-January, I (Malisa) sat across from a brand-new believer named Rachel as she was bursting into tears. “I am going to transfer schools because I don’t have any friends here.” She was really scared; she was lonely and isolated and thought she could go all these other places and potentially have better community. But less than a week later, things had completely turned around. Let me tell you more of the story...

We’ve noticed that students often don’t know how to communicate that they want deeper friends and deeper community. This is especially true coming out of these last two years of pandemic craziness. Yet they long for community.

Rachel had a desire to see community built but didn’t know how to ask for people to be her friends or to be part of a rich community. On the surface, Danyca looked different: She’s

bubbly, friendly, and warm, and you might not know that under the surface she was feeling that she wasn’t belonging in the deep way that her heart was wanting her to belong. Both Rachel and Danyca had the same desires and the same problems.

I had been having conversations with both girls separately. I knew Rachel was going to our winter conference, and I knew it was going to be a great experience for her, and that she was excited about it but also nervous. She really needed a friend. I texted Danyca, who told me she really wanted to go, but didn’t think she could. Danyca had just been praying about the conference. She wanted to go but when she got online to try to sign up, she realized that she couldn’t afford it and so had backed out from signing up. Gently, I asked if the finances were the reason for her hesitation. She burst into tears: “I just started crying, Yes - it’s totally finances.” And so, I offered her a scholarship to go to our winter conference. Danyca was so thankful and signed up right away.

This is the kind of thing that your partnership makes possible - it lets us say “Yes” to students, and lets our students say “Yes” to Jesus.

Rachel and Danyca were so excited when they found out they were both going. They went to the winter conference. Rachel took the step of faith in the afternoon when it was free time to ask Danyca to have coffee with her.

From that point on, they were comfortable enough and felt safe enough with their friendship to talk about how they wanted deeper community and to commit to each other. “Let’s start forming that community with each other and with other people at Simmons so that the edges of campus will know who Jesus is.”

A couple weeks after the winter conference, I was meeting with a group of 7 of these Simmons girls to talk about their vision and hope for Simmons and Juliette, one of the freshmen, said “It’s like we’ve been talking about, Malisa, in the book of acts. Acts 2 verses 42-47 says that the first Christian community was so strong that the Lord was adding to their number daily. The community was living out their faith in a way that was attracting people who didn’t know Jesus. That’s what I want for our campus.” Danyca and Rachel both chimed in, “Yes, exactly. That’s the community we want too!”

Loving our adventurous Lord,

Brian & Malisa

Would you pray:

- For Simmons University and this little huddle of women who are young in their faith but bold to live out this picture of Acts 2 community?



Danyca and Rachel at our Winter Conference



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