

The Harvester

March 2018

Dan & Heather Litchfield

Lifelines Cru



**"I wish I had come twenty years ago."
—Mark, campus director**



**"This should be a requirement for every
staff." —Mia, senior Cru staff**



**I grew personally, I grew professionally, I
absolutely loved it!" —Anna, camping
ministry in Alaska**



**"I have truly developed a heart to seek
and save the lost." —Michael, Cru intern**



Just *Do It*.

In February we hosted our annual Facilitator School down in North Carolina. As usual, it was one of the most fun and the most exhausting weeks of my year. The 15 participants were from all over, including those who led other outdoor ministries and a number of Cru staff from the campus ministry, international ministries, City ministry, and other Cru strategies. What I love most about the Facilitator School is that we mostly train through experiential activities. The photos at left show a few of the topics we cover: methods of facilitation, addressing the elephant in the room, communication, and evangelism. Even as we teach facilitation skills, we trainers are actually facilitating growth in the participants as a group, so they experience, see modeled, get to practice, and then lead, all the concepts for themselves. Our goal is to create an environment in which people can grow, inviting them to walk in the light and invest in grace and truth relationships with each other. This year's group opened their hearts wide—walking humbly and taking risks to be their true selves, and depending on the Lord in faith. It is awesome to see how God multiplies fruitfulness through the opportunity to train others to be more effective ministers of the Gospel. We provide the structure for God to work on our characters and relationships and He graciously prunes us to be more fruitful.

Prayer and praise

- Please pray for our team's move this spring and for all of Lifelines' ministry transitions.
- Pray for God's sovereign will to be done in our own lives as we sense His calling to serve broader communities.
- Pray for our Plymouth State students and volunteers who will carry on the ministry by connecting with our team long-distance.
- Pray for the upcoming women's retreat that our team is hosting for the University of Maine this coming weekend.
- Praise God for our youngest child, Aliza, who has chosen to be baptized this coming Sunday!
- Praise God that He loves us, sees us and hears our prayers.

"If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also."
—John 12:26



Our staff team visiting Bowdoin College in Maine. We recently spent four days scouting campuses and meeting students and ministry leaders throughout the greater Portland area.

While I was in North Carolina, Dan and our team leaders from across the country were together for their annual meeting. What Dan planned to be a time of development, vision casting, and reunion for our leaders was redirected by one of Cru's national representatives. For the past year and a half, Cru has been restructuring—trying to simplify the organization of this huge ministry. During Dan's Team Leaders Meeting, we were told that, as part of the restructuring, Lifelines staff would no longer be reporting to Lifelines directors and HR people. Instead, our staff will report to the Campus staff in our newly formed regions. Although we will be at liberty to use the outdoors, our Advisory Council which assesses and thinks big picture for the ministry, and all of our internal Lifelines reporting, recruiting, and connecting, will be dissolved. That means that although Dan will keep his job as our local team director, his position as National Field Director no longer exists, and rather than reporting to a Lifelines "boss," he will report to a campus ministry staff person.

As you may imagine, this has caused some turmoil in our lives and has caused us to reevaluate our direction in ministry. We feel called by the Lord to a lifetime of ministry, and are sensing that our bigger vision for outdoor and experiential ministry may be our own, not Cru's. For years we have sensed God urging us to expand to other people groups, which we imagined would happen through the vehicle of Cru. Now we are considering the possibility that that calling may not happen in the way we expected.

As we pray, our team is preparing to move to the Portland, Maine area, where they will be in proximity of a greater number of schools and students. From there, they will continue to resource Cru campuses throughout New England using the outdoors and experiential learning. They will also aim to open ministries and partner with other existing ministries on new campuses that have no Cru presence. In many ways, we do not expect to see any significant operating or missional changes for a while, if ever. We trust that God still has a good plan for Lifelines.

However, we would ask that you join us in prayer as we seek the Lord's will for us personally. We are more open than ever to God's leading, and are excited about serving Him wherever he calls.