

# The Harvester

Lifelines, the outdoor and experiential learning ministry of Cru

Psalm 25:5

*"Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long."*



"Happy Valentine's Day" says Aliza! Age 3

## Plotting the Course

As you may know, Dan and I are part of the Lifelines leadership board that oversees Lifelines on a national level. For the past six months we have been trying to determine the future of the ministry, particularly in light of what God has specifically called and gifted us to do. We have discovered that trying to do all the growth and management of a campus ministry, *and* maintain the certifications and professionalism of an outdoor ministry, *and* integrate experiential learning with spiritual growth puts us at a haggard pace without the time to truly excel in anything. So, we decided to look at what it is we do well – the part that is uniquely Lifelines - in order to use our gifts within the Body and serve to our maximum potential, glorifying God. Here it is:

1. Lifelines has a unique window into the lives of non-believers. By offering free outdoor trips, we are able to love and serve hundreds of lost students each semester, opening the doors to spiritual conversation and challenging misconceptions about Christ.
2. We effectively teach through experience. Thus, students see Biblical truths in action and practice them in a group context. The gospel is brought to life through experiential learning.

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## For Prayer

- Mar 3-11** Heather is taking a team of 13 to Guatemala over spring break to serve the orphans and families living in the dump, the prison, and the ghetto.
- Mar 30-1** Women's road trip to Maine, visiting other campus ministries en route: for eternal perspective & fellowship

For God's direction in placing Lifelines Resource teams nation-wide

For our students as they plan and lead an evangelistic hike up Tuckerman's Ravine

Praise God for the supporters who gave us a van to replace ours that died in August!!



*"That sounds so cool. I have never been on a date."* Said Julia's volleyball teammates wistfully when she described her friend's date with a Christian guy. Why? The girls have always just hooked up and had sex; never going "out."

## *Plotting the Course continued...*

God has called Lifelines to champion experiential learning and adventure ministry. The leadership of Cru has commissioned us to be a group of specialists who will resource the Campus Ministry globally in this endeavor. In ten years there will be a Lifelines resource team in all 10 regions of the Campus Ministry. These teams will focus on what Lifelines does best: opening doors among students on campus so that campus staff can connect with the lost, and helping students and staff grow personally, professionally and spiritually. We have also been asked to train staff throughout the U.S. to use experiential learning in their ministry, and to be a resource to the Cru Leadership Development team to help staff mature in Christ-likeness and to promote healthy group functioning on staff teams.

As the world population moves to the cities, Lifelines will offer wilderness experiences where students can encounter God away from the distractions of the city, as well as taking experiential learning into the city. We are also moving toward expanding our summer expeditions and offering them throughout the year.

So, what is different in practice? We are still beginning to discover that. For one, we will spend less time trying to build a ministry on campus and more time helping other ministries thrive. We will still have a personal ministry with students, but much of that will be to practice new outdoor programs and improve our facilitating skills. Our Lifelines staff throughout the northeast will be consolidated into one or two locations from which we can serve the whole region.



Lifelines Leadership Board, (3 absent)

## So, how are we taking the news?

We do believe this is God's direction for us and we are excited about becoming proficient in what we love, and in changing lives on a grander scale.

However, we also love our students and our home and don't yet know how that may change for the fall. Please pray for our decision making team and our family in the midst of this, and do call with any questions. We will keep you updated!



Our student leaders retreat in January was all about becoming the unique person God created them to be. In preparation, we hosted a night scenario where students received gifts along the path to their mission, Narnia style, and then discovered how those gifts were used together to fight the enemy (yes we had a real

## Gifted & Talented Program

battle in the woods!) and to accomplish the mission God had set before them (in our case, building a bird house.) We went on to discuss the results of an online strengths test that each one took, and to study God's plan for the Body of Christ as each one uses their gifts to grow up together into Christ, which is the head.

As a result, Alex, a junior, has volunteered with a local ministry to teach homeless men how to repair bikes; at the end of the training each man receives a bike. Zack, a sophomore, spent Valentine's Day on campus handing out free roses to women as they walked to class, as a reminder of their worth. These men are finding ways to use what God has uniquely given them in order to glorify Him.