

A close-up photograph of a pair of blue denim jeans. A white rectangular card is tucked into the pocket. The card has two lines of text. The top line is in a bold, black, typewriter-style font. The bottom line is in a smaller, black, cursive-style font. The background shows the texture of the denim fabric, the yellow stitching, and a metal button.

**Building relationships,  
reaching students**

*Alumni express their passion for  
impacting the world by reaching  
university students*

Scotland,  
United  
Kingdom

★ Aberdeen

# Campus ministry in post-Christian Europe

*Sarah (Herman) Malcolm (M.A. 2003) and her husband, Rob, are Chi Alpha missionaries working with students at Aberdeen University, Scotland.*



Upon entering the Priory, your feet stick to the floor via a thin layer of sweat and spilled beer. Looking up, you'll see a mixture of symbols: stained glass, a cross and a DJ's turntable sitting in the pulpit. What is now a weekend nightclub for stressed and irreligious students was once a cathedral of worship.

Outside, on the same street, three other churches have suffered the same fate. Secularism is the cultural norm. There is no religious right or left because there is no religion.

Reaching students in a post-Christian environment is a highly exciting, creative experiment. Aware that students are uninterested in traditional

church settings, we look for ways to enter into their community. So we began outreaches in a pub on the same street as the transformed cathedrals. We played music, taught on spiritual themes and had discussion groups that centered on Christian life and teachings. That's how we met Martha.

She was so unassuming that no one saw what was happening beneath the surface. Before long she not only was attending our events but was becoming part of the fabric of our community. Frequent conversations ultimately led to her commitment to follow Jesus.

That was two years ago, and since then we have met many Marthas. Sincere, seeking students have found themselves belonging to our community before believing in Christ.

We have found that we need to listen before we speak. When

religion seems to have failed, what remains is a need for authentic relationships in which we listen to the hearts of the seeking.

That realization led us to experiment with what we now call Creative Arts Cafés. Instead of a pub, we meet in a local Starbucks to host a variety of events, from art exhibits to open-mic nights. At the end of each evening, I read from a blog on a spiritual theme. Students are finding a safe place to make friends, hear truth and enter a conversation about faith. The approach may seem simplistic, but our non-Christian friends now take off work to come to these cafés. Our expression of community is our first sermon about Jesus, which in turn gives power to the words we confess about his love and life-giving truth.



# It's all about relationships

*Matt Herman (M.A. 2004) and his wife, Tracy, are Chi Alpha pastors at Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. They began with five students in 2006.*

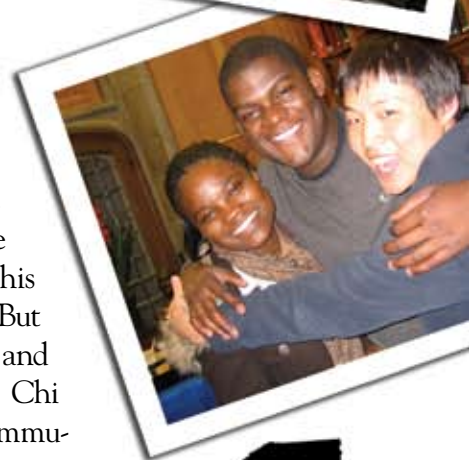
**D**riving more than twenty hours to New Orleans for a spring-break mission trip, we listened to the shouts of students in our twelve-passenger van as they played Catch Phrase. The goal of the game is to get your team to guess a phrase so you can “hot potato” the index to the next team. As the timer wound down and panic set in, one student yelled, “Chi Alpha is all about this!” to which the rest of the van responded, “Relationships!” In that moment I knew the first year and a half of our time on campus had been a success.

Tracy and I always wanted a challenge. We came to the Northeast because we knew that a large portion of influential universities and col-

leges were here, but few Chi Alpha ministries. At Cornell our conversations with students have centered around issues common to every college student: dating, careers, family, religion, etc. Every campus, however, is unique. Cornell students possess a potential that is cultivated by an elevated standard of learning in a wide variety of disciplines.

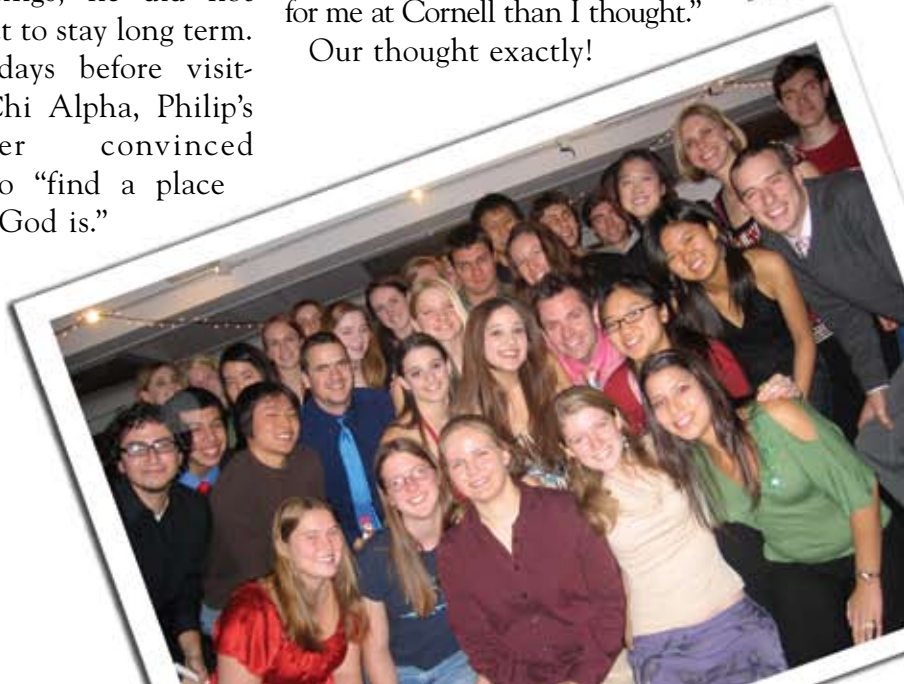
It is a mistake, though, to think that intellectually and socially gifted students always need to believe in their head before their heart. Most of the time, Cornell students need a hug and someone to walk with them through the natural transitions of life. They, like all of us, need one another more than anything else.

When Philip visited one of our meetings, he did not expect to stay long term. Just days before visiting Chi Alpha, Philip's brother convinced him to “find a place where God is.”



In fact, the only reason he chose our group is because we met close to his dorm room. But the warmth and care of our Chi Alpha community has encouraged Philip to ask questions, join a small group, and ultimately realize, “Perhaps God has more for me at Cornell than I thought.”

Our thought exactly!





# Encountering life in a land of decay



*In 2006 Michael (M.Div. 2001) and Pamela Berkowitz (M.A. 2001) pioneered a Chi Alpha campus ministry among the 42,000 students at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.*

The University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW–Madison) carries an international reputation of academic excellence stirred into liberal mayhem. It is one of the worst binge-drinking schools in America.

Fondly known as the Berkeley of the Midwest, Madison is home to the Freedom from Religion Foundation and is remembered for notorious riots in the sixties, its annual Halloween party and many failed ministries.

All of this sets the stage for an incredible opportunity to see stu-

dents reconciled to Christ and to transform our world.

UW–Madison calls itself home to more than 4000 international students from 200 countries. The world is literally at our fingertips. The academic reputation of UW–Madison beckons students to come believing they will change the world. We know we can change the world through them by loving them, walking through life with them, giving them a place to belong and revealing the person and power of Jesus Christ.

Sida, a Chinese Buddhist, came to UW–Madison last fall. He had heard of Jesus but was still searching for inner peace and hope. We made ourselves available to answer his questions and tried to sincerely love him throughout the semester. Finally

the moment came. He approached us one night after our weekly Chi Alpha service and said, “I know Buddhism is not the answer. Jesus is the answer.” His personal journey with God has just begun. This international business major from Beijing, China, now knows the loving God who has a plan for his life.

Sida is just one of many who have encountered the living God in a land of spiritual decay over these last two years. Sida will return to China not as a traditional Buddhist but as a transformed man and follower of Jesus Christ. God has placed us here to transform the world through his power, one student at a time.

Chi Alpha is transforming the world!

