



NATIONAL REPORT

SPRING 2017

Moved by Love

Each summer, college students from across the U.S. invest their summer vacation to join the inner city ministry of Cru[®],

partnering with urban ministries, to impact cities for Christ. Through a program called Summer in the City[®], they receive training for initiating spiritual conversations, cross-cultural ministry, and evangelism. They serve the homeless, at-risk youth, and immigrants. This

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gives them opportunities to respond with Christ-likeness toward people of diverse backgrounds. As they learn about God's heart for the poor, they grow in empathy and compassion.

Last summer, Emily, of Appalachian State University, traveled to Barcelona, Spain, to work with the Cru Inner City partner known as Agape+. One evening, she and her

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team brought snacks and juice out to people who were experiencing homelessness. They spoke with a friendly, talkative man named Chris, who was from Poland.

Chris expressed gratitude that they took time out of their day just to sit and talk with him. “People are never like that,” he explained. He asked them, “Why come to Barcelona just to help people like me?” Confused, he asked this question at least five times.

As they talked, the students realized that Chris came from a background where rich, successful people are at the top, and people like him are at the bottom in the eyes of society. He couldn’t understand why this group would “stoop to his level” and spend time with him. This gave them the opportunity to explain Christ’s love to him. Emily and the others shared how they experienced Christ’s love and compassion, and how this motivates them to show this same love to others. They also explained that they are not above him in any way because God loves all of us equally and created each of us in his image.

Chris thanked them for taking the time to talk to him. Afterwards, Emily remarked, “It really opened my eyes to the loneliness he and other excluded people must feel. I was surprised that it was so uncommon for someone to simply come and start a conversation with him.” She added, “I had never imagined that starting such a deep conversation would be so easy!”



College students traveled to Barcelona to engage in cross-cultural spiritual conversations during Summer in the City

Your giving and prayers gave Chris the chance to see that he has value in God’s eyes and that Jesus died for him! Thank you for your part in giving Chris the opportunity to experience God’s love for him.





Each year, thousands of students across the country receive Bible-based training and mentoring in one of our S.A.Y. Yes! Centers

From Struggling to Sharing

When school started in the fall, Alisha began bringing her three children, Jacqueline, Kamila, and Ethan, to S.A.Y. Yes!® at the Agape Center in Chicago. S.A.Y. Yes! is an after-school mentoring ministry for children where they receive help with their homework, as well as spiritual training through Bible lessons.

Alisha was in “survival mode.” She was working the night shift at a hospital and a second job just to make ends meet. Then, she received notification that the home she’d been renting was in foreclosure. If that wasn’t enough, the water was shut off because her landlord hadn’t paid the bill.

She scrambled to find temporary housing. Then, her car was in an accident. Alisha was a new Christian but needed assurance of her faith as well as community support. “We’re struggling with our spiritual walk,” Alisha told Linda, a staff member at the Agape Center, who began meeting with her weekly for discipleship. “Her struggle as a single parent with

limited resources seemed to make her fertile soil for God’s message of hope,” Linda recounted.

In March of that same year, almost 80 college students on spring break traveled to Chicago for Urban Immersion™, a short-term mission of Cru, to learn about God’s heart for the poor. One of the students, Sarah, shared a children’s gospel tract with Alisha’s Son, Ethan. After hearing the gospel laid out

so simply, and believing it to be true, Ethan prayed to express his faith in Christ! Even more exciting, Ethan’s oldest sister, Jacqueline, had been praying for Ethan to come to faith!

Alisha’s whole family is learning how to deepen their relationships with Christ. Now, a year later, all the children continue in S.A.Y. Yes! Linda still meets with Alisha to encourage her in her faith. What’s more, Alisha has been sharing her faith with her co-workers! And it all began with S.A.Y. Yes!

Thank you for saying “yes” with your prayers and support, which help families like Alisha’s grow in Christ!

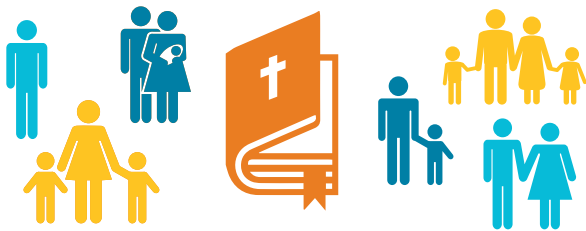
“We’re struggling with our spiritual walk”

Your Investment Multiplied

Through your generous giving, the inner city ministry of Cru is able to offer planning, structure, support, programs, and Compassionate Products™, such as Boxes of Love®, to our inner-city church partners. In 2016, we...



Worked with more than **2,000** churches in **26** cities.



Had more than **50,000** Gospel conversations.



Reached more than **200,000** people through Programming and Compassionate Products.

A Personal Word

Purpose and passion motivate us to remain faithful and focused. The Apostle Paul believed he was called to preach the gospel to the Gentiles—those outside the Jewish people. Paul’s passion to see all people come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ and mature in this relationship consumed his life! (Colossians 1:28-29)



Milton Massie
Co-National Director

Behind all the products, programs, and training Cru Inner City offers to our partners is that same passion and purpose. For three decades, we have strived to bring the life-changing hope of the gospel to marginalized youth and adults. We do this through partnerships with inner-city pastors and lay leaders involved in direct ministry. Through our efforts of connecting, developing, and empowering these inner city “heroes of the faith,” we are confident many souls will hear and respond to the gospel.

Some of our cities have recently sharpened their focus on training partners to make disciples. Our vision is that all our cities and affiliates will follow in their steps. The Chicago team alone estimates having trained at least 100 leaders across 30 partner ministries! I am both sobered and affirmed to share that some of these leaders are being equipped to disciple others for the first time! These leaders are teachable and committed to “repeating” the process they’re learning! That is God’s mission!

Cru Inner City exists to see His mission expand and deepen through our partnerships. Serving our friends and co-laborers in this process is our mission-critical purpose and passion. May the LORD continue to lead us as He led Paul to “toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within us.”

Grateful for your partnership,
Milton Lee Massie
Milton Massie
Co-National Director

Too Good Not to Share



It was the end of March when a tough, marginalized neighborhood in Bakersfield, CA was met with a celebration. High Definition Church visited an apartment complex there to deliver Easter Bags... and hope. They were one of several ministries in the city that received evangelistic training from the inner city ministry of Cru, and helped deliver 1,500 Easter bags to children in need.

When they arrived at the apartment complex, members set up tables for the children to visit. Each child got an Easter bag with goodies and the gospel tract “4 Keys 4 Kids.” They were encouraged to read the booklet and to share it with someone else.

At the first table, Pastor Stanley gave a clear presentation of the gospel using the Gospel Bead Bracelet. At the second table, a leader named Eva provided a concrete visual illustration of the gospel that demonstrated how Jesus Christ can cleanse each of us from our sins. Three other tables had games, face painting, and food.

Michael, a fifteen-year-old boy, had come to the party with his two younger siblings. After attending the first two tables and hearing such clear gospel presentations, Michael and his sisters prayed to express faith in Christ. Then the three continued to visit and enjoy the remaining tables.

As they played games, Michael remembered the encouragement he had received to share his new faith with someone else. He didn't wait—he immediately left the party to invite his friend Javier to come! Javier accepted the invitation, and

He didn't wait—he immediately left the party to invite his friend

Michael stayed with him and listened again to the table presentations. Then, Javier, too, put his faith in Jesus! A few minutes later, Michael and Javier left together and returned with yet another friend named Juan. Then, Michael, Javier, and Juan visited the tables together and Juan also came to faith! That day, three teenagers, 17 other children, and 2 adults, placed their faith and hope in Jesus. It all happened because of this one Easter party!

Because of your friendship and financial investments, you make it possible for people like Michael, Javier, and Juan to hear the gospel and meet Jesus. Even in a rough neighborhood, the gospel is bringing forgiveness and new life in Christ!



“We didn’t think God cared...”

It was an unexpected encounter with Christ.

Kiersten had spent all day sharing Jesus in inner-city Milwaukee. But instead of joy, she felt deep discouragement. As she hit the parks and playgrounds—ministering through puppet shows and colorful “salvation bracelets”—Kiersten felt overwhelmed by the poverty and need she encountered. *It had been an especially difficult day.* No one wanted to listen. No one wanted to hear the wonderful news of the gospel.

Feeling defeated, Kiersten began to pack up when she noticed two women in the park, watching their children. Kiersten prayed for strength and approached them...

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for strength and
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And there, Kiersten experienced the power of God in a mighty way as she led two sisters and their children to faith in Jesus Christ!

**“Until you showed up,” the sisters shared,
“We didn’t think God even cared.”**

Every summer, you show up in America’s inner-city neighborhoods through volunteer college students ministering alongside our partner churches and missions. It’s Summer in the City—a powerful, proven strategy for transforming lives.

Please pray for Summer in the City—and please give a generous gift to reach children this summer and show them God cares. Thank you! God bless you!



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Cru is a charter member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.

Occasionally the names of people featured in this report are changed to protect their privacy.

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