



# Tomorrow's Leaders Today

The good news from HELM and higher education institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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## HELM adds half a dozen to Leadership Fellows

Six emerging leaders in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have been named as the sixth class of HELM Leadership Fellows.

HELM Leadership Fellows are selected based on their leadership potential, church participation, and academic promise. The six new Leadership Fellows, who will all be incoming freshmen during the 2006-2007 academic year, are:

- **Allison Enari** of First Christian Church in Bloomington, Indiana. Enari plans to major in chemistry and Spanish at Occidental College.
- **Katie Johnson** of Woodmont Christian Church in Nashville, Tennessee. She has not yet chosen what her major at Texas Christian University will be.
- **Georgia Kuss** of Allisonville Christian Church in Indianapolis. Kuss will attend Kenyon College, where she plans to major in biochemistry.
- **Merillat Pittman** of Forest Park Christian Church of Tulsa, Okla., will major in political science at Texas Christian University.
- **Kristen Walling** of Euclid Avenue Christian Church in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, plans to major in peace studies and international relations at American University.
- **Kathryn Welch** of Christian Temple in Baltimore plans to be a religious studies major at Transylvania University.

The new Fellows will join a class of 13 returning Leadership Fellows. Together, the fellows are a diverse group. They come from congregations and towns of

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## Six Disciples undergraduate institutions awarded College/University Grants

Projects as diverse as Disciples colleges and universities – ethnic diversity and ethics, leadership development and covenants, and sociological studies – will receive special funding from the College/University Grant fund, a program administered by HELM.

The College/University Grant funds special projects at undergraduate institutions related to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that will benefit the relationship between the institution and the church as a

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## Exploring God's call

More than two dozen high-school students explored their call to ministry at a conference held on the Texas Christian University campus organized by HELM Leadership Fellows Michelle Harvick and Felicia Wright. HELM's Brad Lyons (standing) spoke to students about ways to minister as a layperson.



Photo by Adam Frieberg

## The Campus Chaos champion is...

The mighty Orange of Syracuse University's New Orleans Service Trip carried 36% of the vote in the final Free-for-All round in the first-ever Campus Chaos, a playoff that collected suggestions for getting students involved in campus ministries.

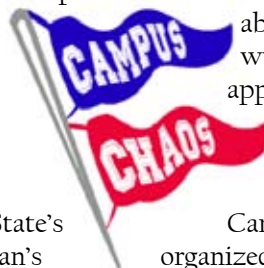
The other three finalists — Lynchburg's Cooperative Campus Ministry, Missouri State's pancake dinners, and Chapman's help for the homeless — gave Syracuse a tight race.

In all, 30 different suggestions were submitted by 10 campus ministry

programs, including Disciples schools Chapman, Lynchburg, and Transylvania University. Students wrote several of the short essays. All entries are avail-

able in a free booklet available at [www.stepnetwork.org](http://www.stepnetwork.org). Many are appropriate for other age groups, too, so check it out if you're looking for ways to start new activities in your congregation.

Campus Chaos was created and organized by the Student Ecumenical Partnership, the primary national student ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.



## Young Adult Commission plans mission trips, General Assembly

INDIANAPOLIS, April 26 – The Young Adult Commission's first meeting was a race against time. Its second meeting, in late April, was a chance to look ahead and think big.

Sponsored by Disciples Home Missions and supported by HELM, the commission's inaugural meeting in February 2005 focused on short-term needs, specifically the Portland General Assembly and networking.

At the second meeting, with a stronger sense of its mission in the church and a year of experience, the six members focused on more ambitious projects, planning mission trips and General Assembly activities, and discussing the growing national network of young adult Disciples.

**Mission trips:** With a mission trip to Lake Charles, La., a month away, the commission ironed out the details. A 9-member group made the trip in late May.

"Young adults in our church and in our society don't always feel like they have an opportunity to serve where it counts," said Nathan Hill, co-coordinator of the Louisiana trip and the Capital Area Region's young adult and youth minister. "The Gulf Coast mission trip is an opportunity to plug in and do something that helps those whose lives have been devastated by disaster."

Participants paid a \$50 registration fee and for transportation to the area. The rest of the costs were defrayed by generous gifts from Disciples Men, Disciples Women's Ministries, and Week of



Brad Lyons

**Nathan Hill (with guitar) and Beau Underwood (right) discuss improvements to web sites for Disciples young adults with the Young Adult Commission during its April meeting. Other members include John Davidson, Nancy Dunn, Esther Lee, and Alison Williams.**

Compassion. Once at the site, two hours east of Houston, volunteers did construction work during the day on a local home and on First Christian Church of Lake Charles. Evenings were filled with fellowship and worship.

HELM Leadership Fellow Esther Lee, a student at Texas Christian University, and Nathan Hill led the mission trip. A report on the mission work is available online at [www.docya.org](http://www.docya.org).

**General Assembly:** The other focus

of the meeting was planning for the 2007 Fort Worth General Assembly. After reviewing an overview of proposed Assembly activities and a schedule, the commission planned ways to get young adults involved during the biennial gathering. The commission will take on planning a pre-event, with housing at nearby Texas Christian University, participation in every worship and workshop sessions, and a General Assembly "survival guide" tailored for young adults.

## HELM in brief

### HELM Board explores new church ministries

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is growing with a record number of new church starts, often in non-Anglo communities. At its annual gathering in late April, the HELM Board of Directors met with experts in new church starts to learn how HELM can work with these congregations to lift up the leaders they are already producing.

Church Extension's Rick Morse and Illinois-Wisconsin Associate Regional Minister Scott Woolridge briefed the board on the demographics and the attitudes of Disciples congregations. John Roh of Church Extension explained the denomination's role in starting Korean churches. Yolanda Smith of New Direction Christian Church in Memphis, Tenn., described that congregation's dynamic life and ambitions.

"The church we serve is changing, and this discussion helped us gain a better understanding of how HELM can work with these congregations," said HELM Board Chair Paul Rivera. "Bridging the gap will be key as we tap the resources of these congregations and nurture more leaders for the church."

The board will meet in November by conference call and in person in April 2007.

### Council on Theological Education works to improve networks

A dialogue on educational opportunities for Hispanics highlighted the March meeting of presidents and deans of Disciples-related



**Just as congregations run on their stomachs, so do college students. HELM Leadership Fellows at Texas Christian University gathered in March for a Sunday lunch at Fuzzy's, a popular campus hangout. Chowing down were, clockwise from left, David Weuste, Casey Abney, Sara Blackwood, Kelly Rand, Esther Lee, Michelle Harvick, and Felicia Wright.**

theological institutions in Chicago.

Daisy Machado, dean at Lexington Theological Seminary, reviewed the Borderlands program established at Brite Divinity School, discussed the current state of theological education for Hispanic communities, and urged other institutions to examine how they can reach out to ethnic minorities.

The council also met with General Minister and President Sharon Watkins to discuss the ongoing restructure of the funding system. The council also approved the production of a new publication promoting Disciples theological institutions.

## DDH-Vanderbilt receives Lilly Endowment grant

Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt is the recipient of a five-year, \$800,000 grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., for a program designed to enhance education for congregational ministry for Disciples in the Masters of Divinity program at Vanderbilt Divinity School.

The grant falls under the "Transition into Ministry" initiative, a set of efforts aimed at easing a major trouble spot for new pastors: the move from school into congregational leadership. About half of all new pastors leave the ministry in the first five years.

The "Midterm Congregational Immersion Project" is an experiment that will place two ministry students who have completed their second year of academic preparation into a full-time, paid, ministry position in a healthy congregational setting, with mentoring. It will explore how participants will bring to their remaining classroom experience a different outlook and a different set of questions, based on a grounded understanding of what they need to know to be effective, creative and faithful, as well as theologically informed, in ministry.

## GRANTS

whole. The colleges and universities put a portion of the money they are allocated from general denominational funding into a special fund to support these grants. New grants are made each year by the HELM Board of Directors following applications from the schools.

Jarvis Christian College aims to attract Hispanic Disciples students with a new recruiting program, a partnership with the Christian Church Southwest Region. The college plans to develop a recruitment program with the goal of recruiting 30 Hispanic students eligible for Disciples



scholarships in the fall of 2007. The grant will support a part-time Spanish speaking recruiter and will train Hispanic students already on campus to help in the recruiting process.

At a time when the meaning of covenant is under examination in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Eureka College plans to assemble representatives of the different expressions of the church to examine the meaning of being church-related in the "Friends and Family" program. General ministries, higher education, regions, and



congregations would be represented at the conference, which would be held near Eureka's central Illinois campus.

Students at Lynchburg College who are not already in leadership roles could participate in new leadership development activities. Identified as potential leaders by faculty and staff, students would participate in workshops, retreats, and one-on-one mentoring to explore their leadership skills.



A new inter-term class in Barton College's School of Nursing and the Department of Religion and Philoso-

phy would examine the complex relationships between religion and social pressures in Honduras. Students and faculty will spend three days on the Barton campus studying Honduras before traveling to the nation's capital for an eight-day immersion in both urban and rural settings. Students will also report on their trip to congregations and at student events.



William Woods University plans a 15-week class focusing on the society of Zimbabwe, climaxing with a week in southern African country. Issues

such as religion, media, economics, health, human rights, and the arts would be reviewed before students and faculty see the society firsthand. Faculty will present their findings for Disciples congregations, a local ecumenical group, and a statewide civic engagement group.



Following the establishment of an ethics curriculum supported by a College-University Grant, Columbia College plans the inaugural conference of the Midwest Ethics Society in

Spring 2007 to examine the relationship between the sacred and the secular in ethics. Ministers of Disciples congregations, scholars at Disciples institutions and other schools will be invited to participate.



Grants are made only for projects that represent new initiatives beyond present programming. Including this year's proposals, the program has funded 85 projects. Each institution in covenant with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has received at least one grant during the program's history.

## FELLOWS

all sizes and reflect a variety of academic and professional vocations. Several attend Disciples colleges and universities, but public institutions and private institutions affiliated with other denominations are represented as well. They also reflect Disciples' ethnic diversity; more than 25 percent of the 2006-2007 class is non-Anglo. All this diversity gives Fellows a new way to look at the church they have grown up in, the church they will serve.

Forty-nine students from 18 regions applied for the Leadership Fellows Program. A former Leadership Fellow, a former member of the HELM Board of Directors, and an administrator at a Disciples theological institution reviewed the applications along with HELM staff.



ENARI



JOHNSON



KUSS



PITTMAN



WALLING



WELCH

"Every year, as I review the applications, my belief that Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has a lot of up-and-coming leadership is reinforced," said HELM President Dennis Landon. "So many of these students have already had amazing experiences in leadership, within the church and in the schools and communities where they live. We know all of them will find additional creative ways of developing their leadership skills and their faith."

The Leadership Fellows Program provides several ways to help students explore and strengthen their leadership potential:

- **Covenants:** Students design their own covenant with HELM describing how they plan to work on developing their leadership abilities. Fellows work in cooperation with a campus chaplain, director of church relations, ecumenical campus minister or another appropriate official to develop leadership skills. Many participate in planning and leading campus ministry programs or similar activities, while others lead youth groups in local congregations or engage in outreach programs.
- **Leadership Conference:** Fellows also attend annual leadership conferences, where they learn from Disciples leaders, pastors, and each other while building bonds to support each other as their leadership skills grow. The next conference, scheduled for the Tall Oaks Camp and Conference Center near Kansas City this November, will examine how to make a difference in the world – within the church or outside the church.
- **Summer internships:** HELM works with Leadership Fellows to identify internships that will expose students to the wide variety of ways Disciples minister.
- **Grant:** Fellows receive a \$2,000 scholarship at the beginning of each school year for educational use.
- **Intangibles:** Students maintain regular contact with HELM staff and other denominational leaders via e-mail and denominational meetings. Through a special gift to HELM, most Leadership Fellows attended the Portland General Assembly at almost no cost. In addition to their commitments to HELM, several serve other manifestations of the church.

To apply for the fellowship, students must be high-school seniors or community college students planning to enter a regionally accredited American college or university as a full-time student, and participate in a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation. Applications for the 2007-2008 Leadership Fellows Program will be available in November.

## Returning HELM Leadership Fellows

- **Jean Ellen Cowgill**, a junior at Dartmouth College (Central Christian Church and Crestwood Christian Church, Lexington, Ky.)
- **Carissa Cullumber**, a senior social work major at Bethany College (Avon Christian Church, Indianapolis, In.)
- **Tiffany Curtis**, a junior peace studies major at Chapman University (Familia de Fe in Downey, California).
- **Rebekah Cypert**, a senior studio art major at Bethany College (First Christian Church, McKinney, Texas)
- **Esther Lee**, an undecided sophomore at Texas Christian University (University Christian Church, Fort Worth, Texas)
- **Emily Brooke McIntyre**, a senior mass communications major at Hampton University (New Hope Christian Church, Beaufort, S.C.)
- **Christopher Miller-McLemore**, a junior anthropology major at Vanderbilt University (Woodmont Christian Church, Nashville, TN), who will study in New Zealand this fall.
- **Laura O'Donnell**, a sophomore elementary education major at Vanderbilt University (Zionsville Christian Church, Zionsville, Ind.)
- **Mandy Ogunnowo**, a junior marketing major at Indiana Wesleyan University (First Christian Church, Lawrence, Kansas)
- **Cassie Poncelow**, a senior interior design major at Colorado State University (Heart of the Rockies Christian Church, Fort Collins, Colo.)
- **Kelly Rand**, a junior social work and English major at Texas Christian University (St. Andrew Christian Church, Olathe, Kansas)
- **David Weuste**, a sophomore music education major at Texas Christian University (First Christian Church, Guthrie, Okla.)
- **Felicia Wright**, a sophomore E-business major at Texas Christian University (University Christian Church, Houston)