



Northeast Report

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“What a way to end the year!”

This is what one Kansas State student kept saying all week at the RUF summer conference in May. Over 2,000 students traveled to Panama City Beach for three different weeks of fun and teaching. They came from as far as New Mexico, Minnesota, and Vermont to attend seminars in the morning, enjoy the beach in the afternoon, and hear great preaching in the evening. This year was the first for RUF at Kansas State, and the three students who came to summer conference were amazed. Penn State has been going for many years, and 52 went this time. Penn State won the tug-of-war contest once again!

Of course the Florida beach is very nice, especially after a cold winter like this one. But our primary purpose is to reach students with the gospel and equip them to serve Jesus. John Stone, our Assistant Coordinator said, “I don’t know why summer conference works for us, but it does.” There is always something mysterious and wonderful about God’s grace. We know God’s word transforms people, but it’s still amazing when it happens. Here are snapshots of RUF Summer Conference 2014.

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University of Maryland

### **University of Maryland**

The students loved the conference and I had to get over the fact that we did not have more go due to another late finals week! Scotty Smith spoke each night on justification and God’s big story of Creation-Fall-Redemption and

Glory. He spoke much on his own brokenness and the Lord’s revealing his idols and hardness and the gospel of grace. It was a powerful testimony to our students.

One student who has been a big part of our ministry was weeping the last night. The tears were a culmination of God opening up his heart to His grace more and more. This brother had been through a lot of childhood verbal abuse by peers growing up and has had a hard time making friends. During the semester and the week God has been opening him up more and more to his grace and friendship and he’s been stepping out and initiating. It’s just really wonderful to see God at work...he’s so thankful for RUF and sensing love and community for the first time. *Chris Garriott, Campus Minister at University of Maryland*



Derek Bates, Campus Minister at Pitt, teaching a seminar

### **Penn State**

As of June 1, I’m the new campus minister for RUF at Penn State. This means that I went to Summer Conference in May as the campus minister of another school, but in God’s good providence I was also able to spend some time with Penn State students while I was there. Already, they know more about me than I do of them, as many of them have tracked me down on social media. Our personal interactions were warm as well. I was excited when they invited me to go out to dinner with them, but I was encouraged when my waitress gave me a note instead of a bill for my meal -- “Welcome to PSU from all of us.” These students are enthusiastic both to get to know me, and to labor with me in the ministry of RUF at Penn State. I am just as excited. *Joe Dentici, Campus Minister at Penn State University*



University of Connecticut



Harvard University



University of Vermont

Lehigh University held their summer conference in northeast Pennsylvania, maintaining a tradition from the beginning of RUF at Lehigh.



Lehigh University

## Your Connection with RUF

Can you imagine the cost of providing a summer conference for over 2,000 students? Many people provided scholarships to help, and students paid a registration fee. But no one paid the campus ministers who taught seminars, the interns who made the logistics work, and the many other people who helped out. Or I should say no one paid these people anything extra, because it is your donations which pay the salaries to enable campus ministers and interns to serve this way. Thank you for your continuing support, and for your prayers which are even more vital. They are the secret that makes summer conference work.

You can make donations to our ministry here: <https://www.ruf.org/donate/> or scan this QR code →



Remember to visit our RUF Northeast website! Each week a campus minister posts some new development among our RUF ministries. Go to <http://rufnortheast.org/> or scan this code →



If you would rather receive these newsletters by email, contact us at [Northeast@ruf.org](mailto:Northeast@ruf.org).

And if you would like to receive weekly prayer requests by email, also contact us at [Northeast@ruf.org](mailto:Northeast@ruf.org).

## Focus on John Meinen

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John Meinen began his first year of ministry at the University of Vermont with a disclaimer. “If you thought this was a dog lover’s club, you’ve come to the wrong place.” Students at UVM are frequently perplexed by the acronym RUF, pronouncing

the campus ministry “ruff” like a dog bark or “rough” as in the texture of tree bark.

In most ways, students at UVM are ordinary college students, seeking truth, their future careers, and a good slice of pizza. Yet many have had no interaction with professing Christians prior to meeting Meinen and his wife, Megan. A 2012 Gallup poll reported that Vermont was the least religious state in America – a statistic reflected by the student body at UVM, where a greater percentage of students are Jewish than Protestant.

The Meinen family moved to Burlington in 2012. They spent that fall fundraising, supporting the PCA church, and settling into their new home. In the spring of 2013, they entered full-time ministry at the University of Vermont.

This fall, Meinen recruited a handful of students at student orientation. He leads weekly Bible studies attended by seven to eight students, mostly believers. Later in the school year, they were joined by a young woman who asked probing questions about God.

One freshman at Meinen’s studies initially hated UVM. Fritz used to joke that God brought him to UVM to destroy his faith. Throughout the fall semester, Meinen reminded Fritz that God may lead his people into a wilderness, but he never abandons them. He fulfills the needs of those who love Him. Eventually, Fritz’s attitude had transformed from anger to trust. Meinen says Fritz is excited to return to UVM next year because “he knows he will be fed here and can feed other people too.”

Meinen and his wife strive to be where the students are. He exercises in the campus gym, which he has access to through Megan, who works at the university’s high ropes course. Meinen and Megan attend weekly dinner at an on-campus community-focused dorm. Meinen also registered for a hockey class as a continuing education student and played on an intramural team. While his team lost most of their games, Meinen scored a few friendships.

Meinen’s approach to ministry is relationship driven. He strives to understand the students’ own stories, eventually connecting their personal lives with the gospel. He shows them that the Christian story is founded on the real world – “a beautiful, broken world.”

“However, building trust and making gospel-connections takes time.” Meinen says. Meinen anticipates more conversations with students as his relationships develop in the coming years.

Next fall, Meinen hopes to collect enough student signatures to petition the Student Government Association to allow RUF to be an official student club. The SGA’s approval would allow Meinen access to important recruiting events and waive the fee he currently pays to reserve a room for Bible studies.

Meinen prays that UVM will become a known place where students will blossom in their faith. He looks forward to the day when UVM’s reputation is not that of a spiritual desert, but of a garden.

– by Rebecca Trudeau

## Summer Reflections

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“Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.” *Psalm 127:1*



Last winter I tentatively told a few people that it could be possible that we would have four new RUF ministries in the Northeast next year.

It’s been a busy spring. I worked with Daryl Wattley, Nathan Dicks, and Solomon Kim to raise funds for new ministries. Eric Lipscomb also

raised funds to begin RUF at Columbia University. These four men had to raise an average of \$40,000 in six weeks. Amazingly, they did it! And now what seemed six months ago wildly optimistic has become a reality.

It’s been a busy spring, but that doesn’t explain how we arrived here with four new RUF ministries. It is God’s work – God, who builds the house of faith, the Kingdom of Christ. Praise God for His awesome love and power! Now about next year – we’re actively looking at five new campuses...

