

from the  
**Leadership**  
Files

Building a Two-Board  
Ministry

A Relational Mentoring  
Model

The Student-Friendly  
Church

Reaching Interna-  
tional Students

Listening to a  
Generation

Building Character

Vision Casting

## Listening to a generation



**S**ecular colleges and universities represent one of the great American mission fields. In fact, data indicate a significant number of AG high school graduates will “step away” from faith while attending a secular college or university.

**The culture gap** between evangelical and Pentecostal churches and young adults has become difficult to cross. In the book *UnChristian* by David Kinnaman, young adults not in the church see Christians as judgmental, hypocritical, antihomosexual, boring, out of touch with reality, too focused on getting converts and too political, among other things. Reaching students requires a missional and cross-cultural mind-set with a desire to get to know their culture and a willingness to look honestly at our own.

**Get on campus**, have lunch in the cafeteria, hang out in the coffee shop, check out the posters that are plastered all over the walls and understand what students are interested in. Don’t judge, just learn! This is the most knowledgeable generation in history, and trite

generalizations from the pulpit about complex issues are perceived as arrogant and ill-informed.

**Find a friend** who can teach you about student life from the inside. The other day I sat with my 21-year-old friend Mike in a coffee shop near campus and learned more in two hours of listening than in two years of reading.

**This is a global generation.** They have been connected to every inch of the planet by the internet since they could talk. This generation is hardwired to change the world. They have grown up with images of poverty, starvation and injustice, and they want to do something about it. Christianity that isn’t concerned with issues of justice and relief is perceived as hypocritical and irrelevant.

**Students are hungry** for the supernatural. I am seeing many of our best young leaders go to other church movements, not only because they like the community and culture, but because they are experiencing the Holy Spirit there. They dislike hype and lecturing about spiritual things but desire relaxed, spiritually potent environments where they can encounter God.

This generation has a rendezvous with God. They are hungry for the real thing, mistrust the establishment, dislike religion, love the poor and want to change the world. Maybe we should see where they’re heading—it sounds interesting.

*Chuck Haavik (D.Min. 2006) is a Chi Alpha pastor living in Duluth, Minn.*

## Reaching international students

God is creatively strategic in accomplishing his mission to draw all nations to himself. Not only does he send laborers to reach the lost, but he brings the lost to the laborers! International students are an amazing mission field. They are the best and brightest of their nations and are in the United States during a window in their lives when they are more open to the gospel than they might ever be again. Here are ways you and your congregation can reach out to these students with the love of Christ:

- If your area has a university with a Chi Alpha group, contact the director. Local churches should work through the campus gatekeepers and join with them in their efforts to minister to students. The Chi Alpha director can give you ideas about how you can help.
- If you do not have a local Chi Alpha chapter, contact the International Student Office and offer to serve them. They often need help picking up students from the airport, taking them to the store, helping them find apartments, etc. These service opportunities open the door to build relationships with internationals.
- Look for various activities online that international student organizations may be hosting. For instance, the Chinese students may be hosting a Chinese New Year banquet, which is open to the community. Attend those activities and use them as opportunities to develop relationships.



- If the university has friendship or host-family programs, present the opportunity to your congregation. International students are often lonely for their families and would love to spend time with an American family. If no such program exists, consider starting one. Contact the National Chi Alpha office for more resources.

The most important thing to remember is that it's all about relationships! International Student Friendship Ministries Director Jerry Gibson says, "Sitting in congregations across this nation are people with the gifts of hospitality and service who could be the next friend for an international student." Would you consider partnering with God and befriending the nations he is bringing to our doorstep?

For more information, go to [www.onemorefriend.org](http://www.onemorefriend.org).

*Kristina Lwali (M.A. 2003) and her husband, Sevo, are Chi Alpha missionaries to international students at Missouri State University, Springfield, Mo.*

## The student-friendly church



I have discovered one thing to be true about Christian university students—they vote with their feet. They care little about organizational loyalty. Instead, they attend a church that meets their felt needs. I have been fortunate to be involved with three excellent, student-friendly churches. Collegians eagerly attended and highly valued the pastors, church members and services.

Why did collegians come to these churches? They used an “open-hand” rather than a “closed-grip” approach to students. The church leadership recognized the university as a strategic mission field in their city, and they further realized that the best person to reach a student for Christ was another student. So they resourced students to go as Christ’s ambassadors to their university mission field.

Does this sound like a one-way street? The students attend church on Sunday

morning, and the people in the church love, teach, feed, transport and serve them. On the surface it appears so. But after a deeper investigation of these student-friendly churches, I found that they share a common culture and approach to ministry. The following highlights this common culture.

Churches who reach students are relational and authentic.

- Churches who reach students continually refresh their tactics for the spiritual development of people.
- Churches who reach students understand larger cultural shifts.
- Churches who reach students are diverse.
- Churches who reach students demonstrate effective evangelism strategies.
- Churches who reach students practice effective change management.
- Churches who reach students think missionally.

Remember, a student-friendly church is missional, relational, authentic and substantive. If you become a student-friendly church, you will reach both students and the unchurched. You and your church will be blessed.

*Harvey Herman (M.A. 1980) is the Northeast area regional director for Chi Alpha.*

*Exclusive online content: Robert V. Huckleberry (M.A. 2000), professor of aerospace studies at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, writes about how your ministry can have a global impact by going next door to your local college campus. ([www.agts.edu/more/huckleberry](http://www.agts.edu/more/huckleberry))*