

Is This the Solution for 70 Percent College Faith Dropout?

All of the major U.S. college ministries and a growing number of youth ministries and denominations have teamed together to reduce the 70 percent of Christian students who walk away from their faith in college. The first days and weeks when freshmen land on their new college campus are critical to solving this tremendous problem.

Campus Ministry Link is a free online tool just released that relationally connects graduating high school students to college ministries and campus churches. Studies show that around 70 percent of college students leave the church.

One of the major reasons is the Christian community had no way of intentionally connecting students to Christian communities before they begin college, leaving hundreds of thousands of students' faith up in the air during the most important transition of their lives. The Navigators found that the bonds students make during the first 72 hours on campus often determines the outcome.

Twelve of the largest college ministries, including Cru, InterVarsity, Navigators, Chi Alpha, RUF, Young Life College and more, have joined together for this project as well as many high school ministries and denominations. Campus Ministry Link seeks to at least double the national yearly average of students who continue to pursue their faith in their freshman year of college.

Furthermore, Campus Ministry Link will allow Christian freshmen to be immediately involved in reaching out and discipling non-Christian students at the start of the school year when they are most open to the gospel. The parent

organization behind Campus Ministry Link is Campus Renewal, founded in 1997 with a mission to create and catalyze united movements that transform college campuses.

“The level of commitment and enthusiasm of national college ministries has been exciting and humbling,” says president and founder of Campus Renewal, Jeremy Story. “Sending out more college graduates throughout society as influencers for Christ is critical. Campus Ministry Link will be a significant part of this.”

Josh McDowell, of Josh McDowell Ministry, noted: “When Christian college freshmen are alone, their faith rarely survives in today’s college environment. The good news is that when they’re connected in advance to campus ministries, churches, and Christian friends, they not only survive, but thrive and impact their classmates. Campus Ministry Link will help parents, churches and ministries to turn the tide so this generation can now become the leaders of tomorrow.”

Local campus ministries and churches who serve universities can list their information on the site as well. Parents and youth pastors can use the site as well. Some pastors are engaging their city networks so that no student is left behind.

“The harvest is plentiful at universities, but the laborers have been too few,” says John Decker, partnership director for Campus Ministry Link. “This tool will make it normal for students to prepare as high school juniors and seniors and experience growing in community and reaching other freshmen. College movements will be fueled, freshmen will return for Christmas to energize church youth groups and many more will be disciplined to change our nation and the world.”