

Pro-Israel Group Makes Inroads on Campuses

A growing number of Christian college students are showing their support for Israel by forming student-led campus chapters of Christians United for Israel (CUFI).

Andrew Summey, national director of CUFI on Campus, estimates the organization has a presence on roughly 150 campuses and that 35 colleges have a designated CUFI liaison or pro-Israel group. In April, the first campus Night to Honor Israel event was held at the University of Oklahoma.

"What we try to do is raise the awareness of students on moral reasons to support Israel," Summey said. "We want to create a positive view of Israel. It's quite a challenge for most of these students. It's tough to be a Christian on many secular campuses, then you add the Israel support to it and it makes it even more challenging."

Summey said that even at some Christian colleges, Israel is "being attacked" by those who hold to replacement theology, which teaches that the church has replaced Israel as God's chosen people. Meanwhile, he said, popular culture tends to view Israel as the aggressor in the Middle East conflict and Palestinians as victims. "That narrative in and of itself carries the day on many campuses," Summey said. "You see that very strongly on secular campuses, and you see that on the Christian campuses."

CUFI, founded by Texas pastor John Hagee to rally Christian support for Israel, helps student leaders develop educational presentations about threats to Israel's survival. This summer, CUFI on Campus will send several students to CUFI's annual summit in Washington, D.C. The group also plans to sponsor 40 students to attend a March of Remembrance, which will tour

sites in Poland and Israel to commemorate those who suffered during the Holocaust.

Scott Mason, president of CUFI on Campus at the University of Oklahoma, said CUFI on Campus has given Christian college students an outlet to show their passion for Israel. He said many Christian students believe it is their duty to educate their peers about the importance of supporting the Jewish nation.

“This generation, my generation, is the future if we’re going to have continued biblical support for Israel,” said Mason, who helped organize the Night to Honor Israel event on his campus. “From everything I’ve seen, there are students who are hungry to get involved. There are those of us out there who are not willing to be silent anymore. Christians United for Israel on Campus has become that vehicle that has opened that door to where we don’t have that excuse to be silent ... or to sit back.”