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## U.S. SUMMER PROJECTS

### WORLDWIDE CHALLENGE EXCERPT

Worldwide Challenge is the award-winning, bi-monthly publication of Campus Crusade for Christ.

The mission of Worldwide Challenge is to show how God is directing the hearts and hands of Campus Crusade for Christ staff and volunteers around the world and to challenge readers to join with us in making Christ known

WORLDWIDE CHALLENGE



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# Worldwide Challenge

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

CONNECTING YOU WITH CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST

## SUMMER PROJECTS

*From artists in New York to a rugby player in Thailand, students travel to talk about Jesus.*

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# SAN DIEGO



# SUMMER

Jeanmarie Berg leaves North Dakota for a life-changing beachside summer project.

BY JENNIFER GRANT PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG SCHNEIDER

Jeanmarie Berg spent her previous summer doing what she had determined she would never do: drinking alcohol.

Her home state of North Dakota is No. 1 in the United States for underage binge drinking. Jeanmarie, the fourth of five children, knew that and wanted more for her life, so she never touched the stuff in high school. But her first summer home from college, she caved under peer pressure. She began joining her friends in the wheat fields for the drinking parties.

Since her parents had imparted a love for Jesus to her at an early age, she knew that she wasn't living the abundant life in Christ, and she also felt tremendous guilt. Yet she felt almost like she couldn't stop.

When school started up again in the fall at the University of North Dakota, Jeanmarie confessed her sin to her spiritual mentor with Campus Crusade for Christ, and to her parents. They were forgiving, but she still worried that she would continue to waste her college summers.

Then, through her involvement in Campus Crusade at UND, she learned about a different way she could spend her next summer: a summer project. On these mission trips to various cities in the United States and abroad, students participate in Bible studies, relational time, and activities, and often get jobs in the community. (See "What Is a Summer Project?" on page 36.)

"Summer projects give us concentrated time to build vision and skills for spiritual multiplication that is difficult to match during the school year," says Dan Allan, who directs the San Diego summer project.

Jeanmarie had once learned to surf in California, but she had no idea what her summer in San Diego would hold. Ultimately, it would change the direction of her life.

After being accepted to the project,

Jeanmarie's first test came. Students who participate in summer projects usually send out letters to friends, family members and people from their churches to raise the financial support necessary. Jeanmarie's support came in quickly—within a matter of weeks—in her hometown of Northwood. She believes that happened because a tornado had recently swept through the agricultural town of 1,000 residents. "Everyone learned the concept of helping one another out," says Jeanmarie.

So the pre-medicine student majoring in dietetics joined 129 other students from all over the country for the summer. In stark contrast to the surroundings of her native North Dakota, palm trees rather than silos cascaded into the California sky.

Almost immediately, she began learning about one of the most valuable parts of a summer project—building Christ-centered relationships. Jeanmarie and three other college women in her condo and Bible study talked about personal heartbreaks and triumphs, telling details of their lives so that they could get to know one another on a deep level quickly in an environment of safety. This activity, called "Soul to Soul," is common on summer projects as a way for participants to become better acquainted with the other same-sex members in their Bible study groups.

That's when Jeanmarie confided in the others the hurt and betrayal she experienced a few years prior when she discovered her high-school boyfriend had been seeing someone else behind her back. She also told them about how she struggles with believing she's pretty. "My heart went out to her," says Bethany (BZ) Jones, who was in her group, and the two became fast friends. BZ told about significant events in her life as well. "There's nothing superficial about Soul to Soul," says BZ.

Without knowing about Jeanmarie's or other women's bad experiences with men, on one particular Tuesday, the young men in her Bible study invited the rest of the small group on a "creative date" after work.



Jeanmarie enjoys free time with fellow project members, sometimes surfing with one of her new friends (previous pages). On her job during the project, she sells refreshments at Sea World's dolphin tank (above). Project participants offered "living water" on San Diego campuses (right) and visited an orphanage just over the border in nearby Mexico (far right). Jeanmarie loved the orphans, and they loved her back.



After selling concessions and popping popcorn at Sea World, where about half the project students work, Jeanmarie returned to the project's housing for an evening of fun.

The men had set up two white plastic tables next to each other on the bay, just a few feet away from the students' condos. They wrote cards for each of the women and set a flower at each of their spots. Then they served homemade creamy pasta and chicken.

"What I enjoyed most about the creative date was to see that there really are godly, thoughtful men in this world!" says Jeanmarie. "It is easy to settle for mediocre men, but it is so awesome to see men treating women with respect and care. Also a cool thing about it was that we knew they didn't 'want' anything. They just wanted to serve us!"

Creative dates are another classic experience on a summer project, and everyone will either serve or be served by the end of the project.

"Projects are like a greenhouse for Christian growth for the staff members and students who participate," says Dan, who has been directing the project for nine years. "The space in the schedule for personal time with the Lord and Bible teaching draws students to the Lord in a manner that most haven't ever experienced this consistently in their lives."

This was certainly true for Jeanmarie over the summer; she began to develop a heartfelt desire to read the Bible and learn about God's character through it. "In the past I have seen it as more of a chore and now it's a desire I have," she says.

And knowing God more allows her to better tell others about Jesus. Once a week, she and other project students go to San Diego State University and talk to summer-school students about their faith.

Jeanmarie and BZ often pair up to meet students. Early in the project, they met a student named Patty, who openly described her life as "empty." She told them about her parents' divorce and concern about finances, and they were able to talk with her about spiritual issues. They invited her to their Bible study, and although she couldn't attend that afternoon, she said

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she wanted to participate in other project activities. Now she and Jeanmarie keep in touch online.

That same day, they talked with a Middle Eastern student, and he asked Jeanmarie and some of the other summer project students many questions about their beliefs. At the end of the conversation, he said he was intrigued and intended to find out more about Jesus. Jeanmarie invited him to a co-ed Bible study later that week.

In total, the students on the project were able to explain the gospel to 4,132 people throughout the summer, and 52 indicated they wanted to become Christians.

While Jeanmarie loves telling people about Jesus, her favorite part of the summer was when the students visited an orphanage

just across the border in Tijuana, Mexico. Some of the orphans living there are children of child prostitutes. "It was really hard to leave," says Jeanmarie, who knows enough Spanish that she could converse with the children who liked to cling to her.

With each new experience and step of faith, Jeanmarie's life was changing. "It wasn't in a huge and obvious way," she says, "but rather in the little ways, like the daily quiet times and striving to walk in the Spirit daily."

She doesn't worry about wasting any more of her summers being influenced by others for bad. Instead, Jeanmarie is influencing people for the Lord. It was a completely different way to spend her summer, and it is a summer she will never forget. ■





















“GOD IS JUST GIVING ME A HEART  
TO LOVE PEOPLE AND BECOME  
INVOLVED IN THEIR LIVES.”  
—Leah Munley



A student at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, Calif., Leah Munley (right) spent her summer in a much different locale: inner-city Detroit (left). She helped with youth programs at Hope Community Church, including an afternoon program (above) and a morning science camp (below). Other members of the project, helping at a different church, say goodbye to a group of children (bottom, left).







SUMMER  
PROJECTS

STUDENT TRAVELS TO THAILAND FOR CHRIST.

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# Journey





It seemed like a random place to go,” Justin remembers. He didn’t know much about the country formerly known as Siam, and other countries made more sense for him to visit, like Scotland, where he’ll be spending a semester abroad studying philosophy. Thailand, on the other hand, a land of elephants and Buddhas, had almost nothing in common with the razorbacks and country music of Arkansas.

But through his involvement with Campus Crusade for Christ, Justin heard about international summer mission trips, and learned that several other students from his school were going to Thailand. He knew a mission trip would be a productive and challenging way to spend his summer, and before long, he was on board with eight other students and one Campus Crusade staff member.

They spent five weeks in Thailand, the majority of it in Chiang Mai, Thailand’s “Rose of the North,” meeting students at two universities and teaming up with Thai Campus Crusade staff members like Wanchai “Pai” Kakho. For the last four years, Pai has helped build ministries on the college campuses, connecting Christian students and explaining the gospel to others. The Americans helped to jump-start the school year for the Thailand ministry by meeting hundreds of students throughout the summer and helping them get connected with the ministry.

“Thai students like to be friends with Americans,” says 26-year-old Pai, “and they create an exciting atmosphere for the Thai students to follow and serve Christ.”

Early on, Justin learned that there were several rugby teams on campus. As he talked with students, he secretly hoped he would be able to meet a rugby player, a link to make friends on the team and open more doors for Pai and the Thai staff members.

With only a short amount of time in Thailand, building relation-

**It took four flights for Justin and his teammates to get to Chiang Mai, Thailand (above). In a university cafeteria, Justin and Pai, a Thai Campus Crusade staff member, pray with Arm (center), a Thai student who rededicates his life to following Christ (below).**



ships quickly was key, but not always easy. Sometimes finding English speakers was difficult, sometimes the Thai students simply wanted to claim an American friend, and sometimes after what appeared to be a good conversation, the student would be too busy to meet again.

The first week on campus, Justin had met a 21-year-old named Arm. His full name is Yuttapong Kherakamkow, but like most Thais, he goes by a nickname for all occasions except the most formal.

Although not fluent, Arm spoke enough English to have a conversation with Justin, and introduced him to his friend Tony. They talked about spiritual things briefly that day: Arm said he was a Christian, but admitted he wasn't very serious about his faith. Tony was not a Christian.

Justin wanted to talk again, but he didn't get their phone numbers, and then didn't see them on campus for the next few weeks.

But Justin continued to introduce himself to new students. He was usually able to have conversations about anything from international soccer competitions to the latest movies.

"It's good because I'm developing relationships," says Justin. "But sometimes I get frustrated because I don't know if I'm doing enough."

Doing enough. It's something Justin has wondered many times before. At 9 years old, he was diagnosed with bone cancer, and he had to endure surgery and months of chemotherapy and radiation. The same year, his parents divorced. "I began to internalize a lot of things," he says, "I felt that it was my job to be strong, my job to be reliable."

Although he had a relatively normal adolescence, playing lots of sports and having many friends, the effects from his parents' divorce still lingered, and especially affected how he saw God.

"I was trying to serve God, to love God," he remembers, "but the whole time I thought God was Someone who had to be pleased by my ability to be strong and to serve Him. I had this conception of God, but that conception was wrong."

Then, through his youth-group ministry and other friends, Justin began to learn about a God who loved him for who he was, not because he was doing enough: "I finally understood that the reason God loved me was because He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for me, and by believing in Him, I could experience freedom from my failure—freedom from my inability to be strong and my inability to be enough."

Justin's growth continued in Thailand, where he and the other Americans studied about the Holy Spirit each week. In learning more about the power God has given him, Justin revisited this old question of doing enough with some new understanding. He began to rely on the strength of the Holy Spirit to get him through each new situation and give him energy to keep meeting new students.

Justin plays soccer with some orphans (right) after the team brought gifts and supplies for the orphanage.



And a few days later, Justin met a new student named Rut (pronounced "root"). Rut was a rugby player, and one of the team captains.

They met at a cafeteria, and when Rut found out Justin also played rugby, he quickly invited Justin to practice with his team, a kind of intramural club. So Justin began attending 6 a.m. practices—running drills, playing scrimmages, even talking about playing in a game.

After practice, he and Rut would often go to the school cafeteria for a typical Thai breakfast—steamed rice and vegetables—that often looked exactly like Thai dinner. Even at the end of the trip, Justin was still getting used to the adventure associated with each meal.

"I'll bite into something and it's crunchy, and I'll think, *What did I just eat?*" he says.

For lunch one muggy Tuesday, Justin chooses the soup, and, proving once again that he stretches even his own definitions, he adds pork rinds, a snack he didn't even like in Arkansas. "I tried them with the soup, and now I love them," he says with a shrug.

“ I NEEDED TO GO TO *Thailand*, IT WAS ABOUT RELINQUISHING CONTROL OF WHO I AM AND UNDERSTANDING HOW MUCH GOD LOVES ME.” –JUSTIN ALLISON



That day he’s reconnecting with Rut, the rugby captain, and surprisingly, Arm and Tony, the students he had met the first week. A few days earlier, he had finally met them again and they bonded over a game of basketball.

While the cafeteria buzzes with students in uniforms, Arm, Tony, and Rut begin conversations with Justin and Pai; the topic often turning spiritual. For the next two hours, they talk about everything from professional wrestling to Buddhism, students sometimes stopping to greet Pai with the traditional *wai*—hands together with a slight bow.

Rut and Pai talk about Christianity until Rut leaves for class, and Justin also gets into a conversation about Christianity with Arm and Tony, and Pai soon joins them to help bridge the language gap. The staff member uses an evangelistic booklet called the Four Spiritual Laws to explain the biblical concepts more clearly, and challenges

both students—Arm to get serious about his faith and Tony to make a decision about Christ.

At the end of the conversation, all four men bow their heads to pray; Arm rededicates his life to Christ and Tony invites Christ into his life for the first time.

It’s an event Justin will never forget.

As much as he likes to stretch the definitions of his own life, Justin found his own view stretched after that day. He saw that God could use him in Thailand, a place he never even imagined he would go.

“I needed to go to Thailand,” Justin says in hindsight. “It was about relinquishing control of who I am and understanding how much God loves me.”

Now Thailand is no longer a random place to Justin. It’s a part of him. ■

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# ABOUT *Summer Projects*



Although it can take many forms, a summer project always contains these elements:

- **SUMMER**—Last year the projects began as early as May 8 and lasted as late as August 20, ranging from one to 11 weeks in length.
- **EVANGELISM**—Students on summer projects personally explained the gospel 39,443 times last year—2,148 people indicated decisions for Christ.
- **CHRISTIAN STUDENTS LIVING IN COMMUNITY WITH CAMPUS CRUSADE STAFF MEMBERS**—Last summer 3,669 students went on 234 projects, with groups ranging in size from eight students to 120.
- **A POPULATED LOCATION**—Whether students live at a beach, a national park or in the middle of a crowded city, the aim of the summer is to help students interact with people on a regular basis. Projects took place in 26 states and 51 countries last summer, with students also visiting orphanages, villages, prisons, military bases or hospitals.
- **TRAINING AND BIBLE STUDY**—Students are mentored in their faith continuously on a project, and participate in Bible studies and evangelistic trainings. They sometimes get jobs on U.S. projects, or focus on a specific area of society with one of Campus Crusade's unique ministries like the Medical Strategic Ministry or Destino (Hispanic ministry). Whatever the day-to-day looks like, everything is done with the intention of building relationships and giving students opportunities to communicate their faith.

For more information, visit [www.gosummerproject.com](http://www.gosummerproject.com).

“Our summer projects continue to be absolutely vital to the overall direction of our ministry. They are the place where high-school students, college students and faculty alike can see lives transformed as they are immersed in an environment where they can experience our mission, vision and values along with practical equipping so they can pass their experience on to others.”

—Mark Gauthier, National Director  
U.S. Campus Ministry

