



REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP

REACHING STUDENTS FOR CHRIST • EQUIPPING STUDENTS TO SERVE

Dear Youth Workers;

Allow me to make my point right from the start: Please refer students graduating out of your ministries to campus ministers or college ministries located at the college or university where they will be attending. If you do not do this, then your work with them is not yet complete.

I recently read yet another report that noted the widespread tendency of college freshmen to leave the church, and in some cases, the Christian faith altogether once they hit the campus and succumbed to the pressures of campus life. I am not sure what I think of all that and frankly, I believe that those who are truly in Christ are never allowed to venture too far from His loving care; that is why we see so many students find a campus ministry and become involved often after a time of crisis and searching. Still, they do need to know that God loves them dearly and that the church is waiting for them once they reach the university and find themselves in need of fellowship and opportunities to grow in the gospel.

I was a youth minister for 8 _ years before becoming an RUF campus minister where I served for 11 years at the University of Florida. I remember those youth ministry days when I had to send students away to college. You know what I am talking about. You pour your lives into middle-school students (God love them) while they seek to become human beings, with all their massive insecurities and ever-changing temperaments and yet so transparent that they will tell you anything—open books all the time. Then you prayerfully and patiently labor with them while they tread the years of high school, with all its peer pressure, academic pressure, social drama, and sadly, sometimes heartache, doubt and crisis. And you have been there with them all the way. You have taught them, cried with them, loved them, prayed for them, and generally poured your life out for them often while your own family and relationships suffered as a result. But God graciously gives you the joy of seeing them grow and change and mature. About the time you begin to see something weighty happen, boom, they're packing up and heading off to college. I know how you feel. You have to actually do it to get it--that empty gnawing in your heart as you wave goodbye hoping that you have instilled enough into them to make them ready for life without tethers or restraint. You commit them to the deep.

That is why I love RUF and campus ministry. The church will not let our covenant youth leave the care of one shepherd without providing another on the other end. When I was a campus minister, some of my favorite phone calls were from youth ministers intent on making the transfer. I could hear it in their voice and I knew their heart and I loved them for being faithful with what was entrusted to them to the bitter end. Thank you for not dropping the ball. Thank you for referring your students on to us. And thank you for the seeds you planted in them. Pray for us as we come alongside and water behind you. Together we trust we will see a wonderful fruit spring up over time in accordance with God's mercy and love.

Your students are packing. So call someone now, make the transfer, and then go home and cry. I know. Thanks again for what you are doing with our students. We'll endeavor to prove worthy of your trust. And don't forget you can always call our staff to remind us to do so. God bless.

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