

## September 2012 Wesley Foundation Update

Lisa Larson [collegiatewesley@cwames.ccsend.com]; on behalf of; Lisa Larson [lisa@cwames.org]

# *University of Iowa*

## Former Student Writes about His First Week at Seminary

*Edward "Eddie" Crise was an active participant at the Wesley Foundation at the University of Iowa. He served on our peer ministry team, and he was apart of the national Coordinating Committee for the United Methodist Student Movement. Eddie began at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary last week. Below he reflects on beginning seminary and the impact of the Wesley Foundation:*

"It has been an exciting near three weeks at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. Orientation was a time filled with meeting new first year students and getting acclimated to what theological education is. The best part was the fellowship. I met a great diversity of friends, from students my age active in campus ministry during their undergraduate studies, to second career students who were, well, totally cool as well! It's a privilege to go to a school with a diverse group of faculty and students. I know that my faith is going to deepen through my conversations with my colleagues over the next three years. "

"Garrett is where I want to be for its sincere commitment to helping students discern their call from God. Call has been the theme of worship this week in all three of our services: traditional, gospel, and contemporary. We are exploring our call to ministry and what that means for us in Vocational Formation and Church Leadership class. I chose Garrett for many reasons, but this notion of fostering call is one of the biggest ones. "

"The Wesley Foundation at Iowa helped prepare me to be ready for seminary. Our depth of theological conversations at Wesley was a big reason I continued to come back week after week. This intellectual atmosphere has formed a foundation where I can sit confidently next to religion majors and follow the lecture and discussion. The Wesley Foundation at Iowa was an excellent spiritual community for me during my time at the university and I'm excited to be at another great community at Garrett."



- Eddie Crise

## *Drake University*

The Drake Wesley House is continuing its commitment to fostering new conversations in new places with people (old and new) who are willing to venture to new depths. To that end, we are proud to host Drake's Writers and Critics Series this academic year. Sponsored by the English Department, these programs offer the Drake community an opportunity to explore the rich intersection of word and image. This year's theme, "Where the Verbal Meets the Visual," will bring artists and writers and critics together with readers and seers in a unique environment.

The first event, September 25, will feature writer **Matthew Swanson** and illustrator **Robbie Behr**, co-founders of **Idiot's Books**, a (very) small press that publishes odd, commercially non-viable illustrated books. Like all of the exhibitions hosted by the Wesley House Gallery, the content of the work shown is not necessarily a reflection of the beliefs of the Wesley Foundation, the United Methodist Church, or its acolytes. The Idiot's Books press-release reads, "These books range across subjects from the Christian God to seventh grade, French imperialism to donkey slaughter, and funnel cakes to traffic theory. Usually satirical and often irreverent, the books aim to exploit the possibilities inherent in the quarrel between pictures and words." Their work has been described as "witty, winsome, and original," by book critic Michael Dirda of the Washington Post and as "weird, stupid, and a waste of time," by tenth grade honors student Emily Parsons of Hamilton, Ohio.

Swanson and Behr will offer a 45-minute presentation on building a life as an artist, followed by Q & A and a poster giveaway, September 25, 7pm, Wesley House Gallery.

Other events scheduled in this series are:

**Student Showcase-Critics: Thursday, October 25, 7:00pm, Wesley House.** Student panels on criticism include "Cultural Capital and Comics/Manga/Graphic Novels," "Representations of Gender & Sexuality in Comics," and "Author/Artist Collaborations."

**Drake Writer's Harvest Festival-A Benefit for the Food Bank of Iowa: Thursday, Nov 8, 7:00pm, Wesley House.** The readings at this gathering will be paired with live responses by several visual artists, which will be auctioned after the event. The Writers' Harvest program is the United States' largest literary benefit to fight hunger. Every year, Writers' Harvest readings are hosted at colleges and bookstores nationwide, with proceeds donated to local anti-hunger efforts.

## *University of Northern Iowa*

Because of changes in the access to (very limited) and accuracy (poor) of UMC student lists, we have spent more time attending information fairs. The Volunteer Fair, sponsored by UNI and the Cedar Valley Volunteer Center, the BASIC Ministry Fair, the UNI Rainbow Reception (welcoming LGBT students, faculty and staff) and the UNI Student Org. Fair. We need help identifying the UMC students. We are doing well with word of mouth contacts in addition to the aforementioned fairs. Worship attendance continues strong. Building use by outside groups is increasing. If you are in town stop by. If you know someone at UNI, let us know.



an Sprunger, Keokuk and Carly Niemann, ksburg, carry the UNI Wesley display back to Wesley after the Student Activity Fair.

## Iowa State University

Many things have happened since the semester started at the Wesley Foundation at Iowa State University. We have had various free food events to enjoy fellowship time together. We have had some spontaneous meals, free ice cream events, and we even made desserts together. We also have lunch for students every Sunday around noon and our FREE Midnight Breakfasts once a month. Our first midnight breakfast of the semester was a fun way to welcome students back to and to Iowa State and the Wesley Foundation.



Once again, we served watermelon to the Iowa State University Cyclone Football "Varsity" Marching Band. Watermelons were donated by Dahl's,

Fareway, and Hy-Vee. Students, staff, and friends picked up the watermelon from the stores, cut the watermelon, and served it to the band after practice. The over three hundred members of the Iowa State University Cyclone Football "Varsity" Marching Band were excited to receive free watermelon on one of the warmest practice days of the semester.



We are currently offering three studies "*Balance, Living with Life's Demands,*" "*John Wesley for the 21st Century,*" and "*The Freshman Survival Guide.*" We have a nice mix of students that have participated in studies previously and students that are new to us in these studies.



We had our first service project of the semester where we collected food for one of the local food pantries. The students had a great time and some started talking about what service projects they would like to



do during spring break. We will be getting those students and other students together soon for our first Spring Break planning meeting. We also had a table at the volunteer fair this past Monday. It was great to meet students and tell them about all the volunteer opportunities we have planned this semester. Some students signed up to learn a little more about some of our opportunities. It also gave us an opportunity to learn about other volunteer organizations and get ideas for future volunteer projects.

