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FOCUS

ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Project helps solve problems across the world

Providence students supporting small Ugandan business

Allison Barron
Special to ChristianWeek

OTTERBURNE, MB—Business students at a small Manitoba university college are aiming to make a big impact across the world for people in need.

Fuel for the Future is a small business located in Uganda at the Kyaka II refugee settlement west of Kampala. The settlement is home to 30,000 refugees from Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan.

The settlement suffers from a shortage of firewood for cooking and basic needs. Foraging for firewood is dangerous, charcoal from trees has to be shipped from 300 miles away, and kerosene is impossibly expensive.

Pastor Godfrey Byaruhanga, a Ugandan who lives near the settlement, has developed a solution to this shortage: a biochar

briquetting product made from locally grown biomass (banana leaves, bean straw, corn stover, and sorghum), which provides a sustainable, renewable, local fuel.

Now Providence students who are members of the college's Biochar Team are getting involved, by raising capital to develop Byaruhanga's business.


"I am finding myself caring for this project so much and it has already become more than just a class to me," says Providence student John Buller.

Part of professor Bruce Duggan's non-profit management class, the students have posted the project as a crowdfunding campaign on causevox.com with the goal of raising \$30,000 for the Ugandan business. The finances raised will be used to purchase a truck to transport the product, to fund a building to store the machines and for year-round production.



Lauren Toews, one of the students who created the project, says she was blown away by Fuel

for the Future's mission after hearing about it.

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**FAITH
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Lament for a small-town Bible school

Current school year marks the end for Bethany College

Ryan Dueck

The official news showed up where all things show up these days: on my Facebook feed. Right there next to cheesy inspirational slogans and idiotic videos and family photos and passive-aggressive politicking.

It is with profound sadness and regret that the Bethany College Board of Directors announces that the conclusion of the 2014-2015 year will mark the end of the ministry of Bethany College in its current iteration.

It wasn't a surprise to me—I had seen this sad news coming for quite a while, had been talking with my twin brother (the academic dean) about it for months—but I was surprised at the way my heart sank when I read the announcement. Surprised by how surprised I was to see the words on the screen. December 10, 2014. The day the news came that another

small Canadian Bible school—an institution that has been around since 1927—would be closing its doors.

I did not attend Bethany College in Hepburn, Saskatchewan, but my brother and sister both did, countless friends and family and acquaintances did. My parents met there. So many people in my personal orbit have spent time at this little school in the middle of the frozen tundra of central Saskatchewan. It's a place I have visited often, a place where we have braved treacherous winter roads to visit family, to play in friendly hockey tournaments on bone-chilling January weekends, to drop our kids off at volleyball camp in the summer. It's a special place for me, even though I have never spent time there in any kind of "official" capacity.

And I am very sad that this seems to be the end of the road.

I am sad on a number of levels. I

am sad for what this means for my brother and his family. I am sad for an uncertain professional future, sad for my nieces who have only known this small Saskatchewan town as home. They will move on, I know. People do it all the time. But still. I feel a heaviness for people I love who are affected by this news.

I am sad for the many people whose faith was nurtured or even birthed at Bethany College. Sad for the many people for whom this place is a vital part of the story of their lives. Sad for the students who will not now get the opportunity to experience this wonderful place.

I am sad for the faculty and staff who have poured years of their life into this place, who have loved students, who have laboured under a cloud of uncertainty for a number of years now, and who must now continue to do their good work while helping a community to grieve this loss.

I am sad for the broader trends that this decision reflects for Christian higher education. Sad that theological education is no longer the priority for young adults and their parents that it once was. Sad that a focused year or two (or four) spent on discipleship and faith formation is seen as something sort of frivolous and unnecessary—a "waste of time" when they could be getting to work on beginning a career.

I am sad for how the news of Bethany's closing is, in many ways, symptomatic of far broader church trends. Declining numbers, aging populations, struggles to attract and retain young adults in the face of complex social factors... These are daily realities in many parts of the Church. The closing of Bethany's doors echoes the closing of other doors—other small Bible colleges, other churches, other institutions that were once taken

Continued on page 11

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for granted, other places which, for all their flaws and however inconsistent-ly, pointed people to Jesus of Nazareth.

I am sad for the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches—the denomination that I was raised and formed in, the denomination that I continue to think of as one of the places that I belong. I am sad that more effort is often put into hyper-pragmatic church-planting techniques than the preserving of spaces for theological education that has as its goal the forming of Christian character and the training of Christian leaders.

But most of all, I think, I am sad

that the world will now have one less good place where young women and men can encounter Jesus and learn to love each other in the context of community. Bethany College is not perfect. Of course it isn't. No school or church is or could be. It is not in a desirable location, doesn't have gleaming state-of-the-art facilities, is not academically renowned, is not terribly well-known beyond the relatively small world of Anabaptist churches.

But it has been a place that has stubbornly invited people to encounter Jesus, to explore what He means for them and for the world, to ask some good questions, to receive

some good answers (or better questions), to learn what it means to give oneself away for the sake of the world that God loves.

In John 11, Jesus came to a town called Bethany where His friend Lazarus had been dead for four days. It was at Bethany that Jesus defiantly summoned a dead man to walk out of his tomb. And so, the sentimental part of me obstinately hopes for the same for Bethany College—that what is dead or dying might rise up and walk again. But I am not naïve. I know that even though Lazarus walked out of his grave at the command of Christ on that beautiful day in Bethany, he eventually died again. I know that all

things die, that all things are here for a season, and then no more.

This is the way of the world. We are born, we march across the stage for a few years, we (hopefully) do some good, and then we die. And we trust that the One who is the source of all that is good, the One in whose name we did what we could, with the resources we had, for as long as we could, can be trusted to bless and care for that which was given, to water seeds that were planted along the way.

Ryan Dueck is a pastor serving at Lethbridge Mennonite Church. This article is reprinted from his blog, Rumbblings (www.ryandueck.com), with permission.

Global impact through sports ministry

Peter Mal

While in some public forums faith is often pushed to the sidelines, professional sports seem to welcome the conversation publicly. Whether the Tim Tebow phenomenon from just a few years ago, post-game professions of faith or John 3:16 signs at professional sporting events, the dialogue is certainly a mixed bag.

Athletes in Action Canada (AIA), a ministry of Power to Change, focuses on the domain of sport. In addition to local outreach activities and campus ministries, it also has chaplains with eight Canadian Football League teams, three Major League Soccer teams, three National Hockey League teams and a National Basketball Association franchise.

“It is a privilege to bring God’s unconditional love and His truth into the sports world,” says Rodd Sawatsky, chaplain for the Calgary Stampeders, Flames and Roughnecks. “There has been openness and involvement by a growing number of athletes, coaches, and staff on the teams where I have been able to serve.

“Every athlete is in a different place in their spiritual journey; it is my desire to encourage each of them to be all that God created them to be, in every facet of their lives.” AIA believes sport is the one language that knows no boundaries and sees no distinctions. It unites cultures, transcends values and defies convention. When words fail, a game can speak.

Brittany, a 26-year-old transfer student at Prairie found Christ

when she was looking to play volleyball in a local rec league.

“All of the leagues in my hometown were closed to new participants,” she says, “except for the church league.” Through sports she was introduced to a community unlike any she’d encountered previously. “I was accepted for who I was,” she recalls. “People were welcoming and willing to get to know me, but most importantly, they shared Jesus through words and actions.”

James Fraser, Athletics Director and Program Coordinator for the Diploma in Sports Ministry and Management at Prairie, says opportunities to share faith through sport are growing across the country. “Over the last 10-15 years there has been an emphasis on promoting health and well-being and churches and ministry organizations have responded through afterschool programs, summer camps and rec leagues.”

Prairie’s program prepares leaders for both ministry and recreation management roles by providing a biblical foundation and athletics training as well as leadership and management courses. Following a successful mission trip to El Salvador in 2013, a 10-member team is also planning to return to the Central American country in the spring. “Coming from North America, we have an immediate open door,” shares Fraser. “We are met with respect and a willingness to participate. Along with local ministry leaders, we are able to teach, coach sports and share the gospel.”

Prairie is accepting applications

to the two-year diploma program. The school is looking for students who are passionate about getting involved in their communities and using sport as an on-ramp for ministry. “I hope that each graduate will be a life-long ambassador for physical activity as well as for Jesus

Christ,” says Fraser. “Some may find a calling with organizations like Athletes in Action, but others will be faithful in their church or local soccer club.”

Learn more about Prairie’s Sports Ministry and Management Program at www.prairie.edu/sport.



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The Sports Management & Ministry program prepares graduates for athletics-related careers and ministries. Students benefit from the integration of faith and sport, leadership development and hands-on experience.

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EXERCISING

faith

ChristianWeek asks several faith-based universities and colleges about their sports teams and what it takes to integrate their faith with the games they love.



Prairie Bible Institute
THREE HILLS, AB
www.prairie.edu

Intramural sports offered: Futsal, basketball, volleyball offered every year. Some years: dodgeball, Ultimate Frisbee, floor hockey

Intercollegiate sports include: Outdoor soccer, futsal/indoor soccer, basketball, Volleyball and badminton

Team motto: Prairie Pilots – Purpose. Passion.

Noteworthy accomplishment: 2015 PAC Indoor Soccer Champions – Men, 2013 ACAL Basketball Champions – Women, 2013 PAC Indoor Soccer Champions – Women



Trinity Western University
LANGLEY, BC
www.twu.ca

Noteworthy accomplishment: Have won eight CIS national championships, 15 Canada West championships, and 24 national championship medals in 16 years. Have also won 21 major CIS individual awards, including seven CIS Player of the Year and four CIS Coach of the Year awards. Ranked number one in the BCHL men's hockey.

Team motto: Through the Complete Champion Approach, strive to develop athletes who are godly leaders in all areas of their lives. Send teams to help communities around the world through sports camps for kids, building projects, and other types of ministry.



Ambrose University College
CALGARY, AB
www.ambrose.edu

Intramurals offered: Badminton, dodgeball, futsal, basketball, and volleyball as well as two club sports: hockey and cross-country running

Six intercollegiate sports include: Men's and women's basketball, futsal, and volleyball

Team motto: Pursuing excellence, building disciples

Fast fact: Our teams have won 23 provincial championships in the last 10 years



Canadian Mennonite University
WINNIPEG, MB
www.cmu.ca

Intercollegiate sports include: Basketball, volleyball, soccer, futsal

League or conference: CMU is a founding member of the Manitoba Colleges Athletic Conference

Team motto: Love the Dove

Noteworthy accomplishment: The men's soccer team defended its title to the Thunderhawk Invitational Tournament in Thunder Bay, which they won for the second straight year.



Providence University College
OTTERBURNE, MB
www.providenceuc.ca

Intramural sports offered: Flag football, floor hockey, Ultimate Frisbee, beach volleyball, basketball and indoor soccer

Intercollegiate sports include: Soccer, basketball, volleyball

History of success: Five national championships, 12 top four finishes, 19 NCCAA Regional Championships, 16 MCAC Championships

Teams travel to: Florida, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Winnipeg



GUARDIANS
Tyndale University College
TORONTO, ON
www.tyndale.ca

Intramurals offered: Badminton, dodgeball, futsal, basketball, and volleyball as well as two club sports: hockey and cross-country running

Six intercollegiate sports include: Men's and women's basketball, futsal, and volleyball

Team motto: Pursuing excellence, building disciples

Fast fact: Our teams have won 23 provincial championships in the last 10 years

MILLAR EDGE




Millar College of the Bible
PAMBRUN, SK & TAPPEN, BC
www.millarcollege.ca

Intramural sports offered: Four on four hockey, arena football, badminton, floor hockey, Ultimate Frisbee and indoor soccer

Intercollegiate sports include: Outdoor soccer, volleyball, basketball, indoor soccer/futsal and hockey

Noteworthy accomplishment: Men's and ladies outdoor soccer PAC provincial champions 2014, women's volleyball league sportsmanship 2014 and men's volleyball league and provincial champions 2014

Teams travels to: Alberta, Montana, Saskatchewan and Manitoba



Redeemer University
ANCASTER, ON
www.myredeemer.ca

Intramural sports offered: Dodgeball, bubble soccer, Quidditch, volleyball, basketball, and indoor soccer.

Intercollegiate sports include: Badminton, cross country, soccer, basketball, volleyball, and indoor soccer

Team motto: Character and excellence in a healthy community

Noteworthy accomplishments: Men's volleyball - three provincial medals in the past five years. Indoor soccer 2014 provincial champions; 2014 badminton men's singles provincial champion (Owen Kurvits), who also placed fourth at the national championships.

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"We were given an opportunity to choose a project to work on for the length of the course," says Toews. "Fuel for the Future Uganda's inspiring self-empowerment and environmentally sustainable product is what really drew me in!"

Duggan says the goal of the non-profit management course is to give students hands-on experience.

"We want our graduates to be

prepared to assume leadership responsibilities in non-profits, charitable organizations and their churches, no matter what career they go into," says Duggan.

"I'm mainly hoping [the students] take away the idea that a small group of people, starting with no money, can be part of doing big things. There is a lot of work required—crowdfunding takes just as much effort as traditional fundraising—but it can make a difference."

Kelsey Friesen, another student on the project team, says she appreciates the real-life experience.

"Working towards a real life goal gives me experience that I just could not get from class assignments and papers," Friesen says. "Problem solving is hard to learn without actual experience; this project was able to show me some of the struggles and allow me to work with my group to find solutions."

The project is also encouraging

students to think about future opportunities in the non-profit sector.

"My faith impacts every decision that I make," says Biochar Team member Karl Johnson, "and because of that I would hope that my future profession is something that I can be proud of. I like to know that the work I am doing has a positive influence on others."

The Fuel for the Future campaign ends on April 17, 2015. Visit fuelforthefuture.causevox.com to donate to the cause or learn more.



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Where is God in suffering?

“Only God could help me face and heal from that trauma”

Steven Sukkau
ChristianWeek staff

TORONTO, ON—Axel Kazadi’s crisis of faith came to a head when seven friends were tragically killed in a bus accident.

Born into a Christian family in the Congo D.R, Kazadi says he brought with him a rich religious upbringing when he moved to Canada at the age of 12.

“I truly believed,” Kazadi explains. But throughout his high school years he felt his faith waver, and it became an “off-again, on-again” relationship.

Then in 2008, during his senior year in high school, tragedy struck. The school’s basketball team was returning home from a tournament when the bus hit black ice. Only a few minutes from home in Bathurst, New Brunswick, the bus began to skid into on-coming traffic and was struck by a semi-truck. Seven of Kazadi’s friends died in the crash.

“After hearing the news I was devastated,” says Kazadi. “I started questioning God, “Why would such a thing happen?”

The event brought Kazadi to the lowest point of his life, leaving him depressed and confused.

“I was in a dark place,” he says. “The fear of death gripped me.”

His thoughts turned oppressive; his friends were gone and he felt there was no one to turn to. Yet he

says even in that spiritual darkness he could feel God calling him.

“I don’t know how to describe it; I had reached a dark place, yet God was saying it’s time to come back to your first love,” he says.

It was when he heard a sermon on depression and death that things began to change. Feeling the Holy Spirit speaking to him in the service, Kazadi says he suddenly felt a peace of mind come over him.

It was the beginning of a three-year journey to overcome the psychological scars from the crash, but he credits God for being there in the midst of his suffering, and helping him overcome.

“God is the only one who could have helped me, human efforts were only Band-Aids,” Kazadi explains. “Only God could help me face and heal from that trauma.”

Afterwards, Kazadi was left with a burning desire to know God better, and received his undergraduate education in pastoral ministry from Kingswood University. He is now studying at Tyndale Seminary to receive his Masters in Theology.

“If God is real, and God created life, I needed to learn who this God was, why he created us and why there is life,” Kazadi explains. “One cannot talk about life without talking about God, who is the giver of life.”

His long-term goal is to teach theology, and earn his PhD from the



Axel Kazadi believes suffering brings you closer to God.

Photo courtesy Axel Kazadi.

University of Toronto. Currently in his final year at Tyndale, he is working on his major research paper, dealing with the question of whether God is able to suffer relationally with His people.

He hopes to address the question, “why is there suffering in the world, and does it negate God’s existence?”

Because through his own suffering, Kazadi says he has come to believe that the one who endures suffering longs for life, and only God brings that life.

“You learn so much through suffering, life becomes richer,” he says. “You can only know joy truer through enduring hardship and overcoming.”

www.millarcollege.ca

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Business students get jump start on career

On-the-job training provides practical workplace experience

Renee Joette Friesen
Special to Christian Week

WINNIPEG, MB—A distinctive cooperative education program at the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) is giving business students an edge in their preparation for the marketplace.

The Redekop School of Business (RSB) Co-operative Education Program integrates academic learning with on-the-job training that offers students practical experience to succeed in the workforce.

RSB launched the co-op program in 2011, and is unique in Manitoba because it provides double the work experience available at other higher learning institutions.

It offers Christian-based specialized training in accounting, management, non-profit organizations, and human resources.

“We aim to help students get a clear sense of their pathway and the direction they want to go,” says Sherry Funk, RSB program coordinator. “Our students learn important work and communication skills in the classroom and on the job.”

Fifty-four students are currently enrolled at RSB, and of those, six participate in the co-op program.

The co-op program can be

completed in five years or less and includes eight academic terms and six co-op work terms. Each job placement is four months, and students can take on back-to-back placements for eight-month rotations.

“The business co-op program is intended to be win-win,” says Ray Vander Zaag, director of RSB. “Students gain extended periods of employment experience in their field of study, during which time a lot of informal learning occurs, and they have an opportunity to earn some income while in school.

“The businesses gain access to an energetic, young worker, and they are able to identify if that young person would be a good fit for their organization.”

“This is a great work-integrated learning process,” Funk says, adding students typically enter the co-op program in their second year of studies. “Entrance requirements are higher than for the (general) business program. We want students who are determined. They will come out of the program job-ready.”

At least 30 per cent of the students’ time spent in the program is dedicated to on-the-job training. Co-op students’ performance on the job is supervised and evaluated



RSB students have the option to supplement classroom lessons with workplace experience through RSB’s Co-operative Education Program.

Photo courtesy of CMU

by their co-operative employers.

“The co-op program allows students to apply the knowledge they gain in the classroom in real world situations,” says assistant professor Craig Martin. “This improves the learning students get from their university education, and they will gain experience to help them find jobs after they graduate.”

The program is particularly attractive to international students who may have difficulty entering the workforce. And Canadian students who may otherwise lack opportunities to work in an office setting can gain that kind of experience.

“It means that right from the beginning, students have the opportunity for entry level

positions,” Funk says. “By the time they graduate they will not be at entry level.”

Sometimes the job placements result in permanent employment, Vander Zaag adds.

The Manitoba-based businesses involved in the RSB co-op program include Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba, iDE Canada, Argus Industries, and McDonalds. RSB also makes every effort to match students from other provinces with companies from their hometown.

Organizations interested in offering RSB students work placement through the co-op program are encouraged to fill out a form available on the CMU website. For more information, visit cmu.ca.



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