Standing on Hope

This past year, we at CVM have been studying “Hope.” Where do we place our hope? Who is our only hope and what does it look like to live our lives reflecting the sweet gift of true hope that Jesus gave us? Picture a sterile graduate lecture hall on the University of Illinois campus being transformed into a room filled with 90 voices worshipping our Lord. It was, in fact, Real Life that made a Real Impact on our veterinary community and the college campus itself. As we sang “Living Hope” by Phil Wickham, these words echoed down the halls of the veterinary school:

Living Hope

Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of ages stepped down from glory
to wear my sin and bear my shame.
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven,
the King of kings calls me His own.
Beautiful Savior, I’m Yours forever
Jesus Christ, my living hope.
~Phil Wickham

Real Life Real Impact Illinois 2019 served to empower and bring hope to so many of our students and professionals this year, and all the glory goes to the Lord for that! Thank you all so much for praying for this weekend. It was such a blessing to see this retreat finally happen after so many months of planning.

My dear friend and Southeast Region Rep, Dr. Lauren Charles, came on the trip to help me (I needed lots of help!). We arrived in Champaign, Illinois, on Thursday night after 8 hours of travel and met with our student leaders to go over final details for the weekend. One last task before our heads could hit the pillow involved a shopping trip to Walmart to buy all the drinks, desserts, snacks, and breakfast for 90 people for the weekend. Can you feel the fatigue in that sentence? While at Walmart, I began to realize that only Jesus would be able to carry me through this event!

Late night Walmart fun
The most enjoyable part of the retreat was seeing the fellowship happen amongst all the students. People who had never met were sitting at tables playing Connect 4 or bonding over silly ice breaker conversation cards that my sweet mom made for the group. The idea that “we are all in this together” joins us in the veterinary world; especially while trying to survive rigorous school demands. As I read the comment cards at the conclusion of the weekend, it was awesome to see how many people were blessed as they began to understand that they could combine their faith in Christ with their profession. The students absolutely loved hearing from seasoned veterinarians as well as new grads about their struggles and successes in living a life for Christ out in “the real world.”

The Monday after returning home, I received an email from a student who was at RLRI. She told me that after leaving a great weekend in Illinois, she began to immediately struggle with severe anxiety and depression again. This broke my heart but helped me realize the importance of fostering and maintaining the relationships that are formed during these few short days we have at RLRI. We can’t fix every problem in just a couple of days, BUT the Lord uses us to sit in the trenches with and love the people who are hurting. As the months go by, I am learning that this is such an important part of my role as Region Rep. Please pray that the Lord will continue to equip me for this ministry He has placed me in!

Also, keep these students in your prayers. Pray that their lives would continue to be transformed in the coming months. Ask the Lord to raise up friends and mentors to come alongside them to water and tend to the seeds that were planted at RLRI. Thank you all for your continued support that is making this ministry possible!

Blessings,
Elizabeth

---

Elizabeth Mendoza
206-945-5799
emendoza@cvmusa.org

Contributions are solicited with the understanding that the donee organization has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds.