

# Pre-Orientation Acclimation

## CHESTERTON HOUSE WELCOMES FRESHMEN WITH RETREAT

By Eileen Scott, Senior Writer

Before student orientation at Cornell this semester, Chesterton House helped orient freshmen to what's ahead with a retreat that emphasized the integration of faith and campus life.

The pre-orientation retreat attracted 13 freshmen. They came from throughout the United States, including one American who grew up in Kuwait. The students and their parents initially met at Ches-

terton House, but then parted, with students heading to a nearby church for the night and parents remaining only sporadic cell phone service. Yet, according to sophomore Joshua Jeon, who volunteered to help with the event, there was "a sense of coziness that was distinct and could only exist because of shared belief in Jesus Christ." The retreat was particularly ben-

puzzle which could only be solved by bridging the gap between faith and reason. They also shared dinner together, followed by a panel of upperclassmen who discussed their experiences at Cornell. One spoke about engaging with a professor who was highly antagonistic to Christianity and suggested how to engage respectfully and thoughtfully in conversation in such situations.

The freshmen also enjoyed a trip to a local ice cream store, where the upperclassmen were "peppered with questions." The next morning, the students prayed together and a local pastor gave a devotional message about spiritual discipline.

For the 24 hours of the retreat, there was no internet connection and only sporadic cell phone service. Yet, according to sophomore Joshua Jeon, who volunteered to help with the event, there was "a sense of coziness that was distinct and could only exist because of shared belief in Jesus Christ." The retreat was particularly ben-

eficial in two key areas: establishing community and showing the freshmen how to live as Christians on campus. Additionally, many of the students who were on the overnight have continued to be involved in other aspects of the Chesterton House ministry.

"I think the biggest benefit of the pre-retreat is to connect new students to the Christian community," said Jeon, who attended the retreat last year. "When I was a new student, I

found it very helpful to find Christian friends, upperclassmen, and mentors prior to starting the school year." The retreat also served as a primer on how to seek the kingdom first at the secular university.

"I think the retreat helps them to [understand] that they are owned by Christ and only Christ," said Jeon. "This is an important message for new students who can be tempted to believe that they are Cornell stu-

dents first." At the retreat, Johnson gave a presentation to the students regarding 15 tips for living as a believer at Cornell, including "Think upon Jesus/Think Christianly," "Swim Upstream," and "Seek Wisdom not Sex."

"This presentation gave the new students something to consider, something to think deeply about as they start their college experience," said Jeon. | [CU](#)



Chesterton House

Chesterton House, a center for Christian studies at Cornell, hosted the retreat for the second consecutive year, as ministry staff members and upperclassmen arrived early to help freshmen acclimate to life in Ithaca, New York.

"Students were given a picture of a thriving faith on campus and some practical steps to having such a faith," said Barbara Weston, director of undergraduate ministries at Chesterton House. "I think God showed up [at the retreat] by meeting students in their fears and anxieties."

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at Chesterton House for a discussion with its director, Karl Johnson.

Students participated in get-to-know-you-games, including a

# A Fellowship Fair

## BARBECUE EVENT AT CORNELL DRAWS OVER 500 STUDENTS

By Eileen Scott, Senior Writer

In August, Campus On A Hill at Cornell, an umbrella ministry, introduced freshmen to the Christian community by hosting a Fellowship Fair Barbecue that was attended by more than 500 students.

Cornell's campus ministries and local churches in the Ithaca region set up information stations for the annual event as Campus On A Hill (COAH) brought together the Christian community.

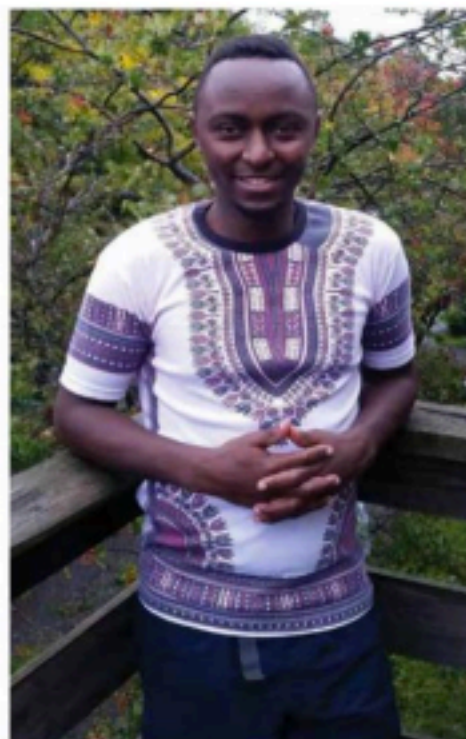
The cookout was held at North Campus on Balch Lawn, an ideal location for reaching a significant number of new students.

"Without a doubt, this event has always been a great opportunity for new students to meet organizations that they call family for the rest of their college lives," said David Ndereba, a member of the leadership team at COAH.

Additionally, the barbecue was a platform for believers to interact with non-believers, speak about

Christ, and answer any questions they might have.

"We've had many students learn about Christ during this event," said Ndereba.



David Ndereba, Cornell '17

And that's exactly what COAH seeks to accomplish: "to know Jesus and make Him known." The vision "is the ongoing process of mobilizing the whole Body of

Christ at Cornell and in Ithaca to strategically focus all of its resources on reaching the whole campus with the whole Gospel, resulting in the redemption of society and the transformation of the community."

Ndereba is encouraged by the unity he has witnessed at Cornell during the last couple of years, and especially leading up to the barbecue.

"Many of the leaders in these ministries were already excited and preparing for this event over the summer," Ndereba said.

The Fellowship Fair was partially underwritten by a Christian Union grant.

Like his fellow COAH team members, Ndereba desires to see