



Wesley Welcome Weeks Makes a Strong Start

With our newest outreach hosting over 350 young women going through sorority recruitment week, and a crowd of close to 100 at our first Tuesday night dinner and worship on August 21st, the excitement about a new semester at U of A Wesley is palpable. Today, thanks to the hard work of our students and faithful volunteerism, financial support and prayers of our multiple church and individual partners, our ministry has grown nearly fivefold over the past five years. If the energy witnessed so far this month is indicative of what is to come for the next five, everyone buckle your seatbelts, we are blasting off! Here are a few highlights.

This year for the first time, U of A Wesley served as a rest house for young women going through sorority recruitment week. During this week of numerous social events, important introductions and stressful decisions, potential recruits are not allowed to return to their dorms between parties. Wesley House opened its doors to hundreds of young women during the week so they could rest, have something to eat and drink, and experience the TLC of our cadre of volunteers and staff. It was a rainy week, adding to the stress for these young women, yet our volunteers brought towels, blow dryers, and other supplies to help them get through the challenges with as much confidence and social support as possible. Over the course of the week, 100 young women signed up to receive more information about Wesley activities and several showed up for our Coffeehouse evening on August 25th, sharing desserts and fellowship with a community of Christian students.

Also off to a great start is our Freshman Ministry. The freshman year is a critically formative year when students are establishing their social network, beginning to examine their beliefs and developing

habits that will carry them throughout their college career. U of A Wesley has targeted this as an area of strategic importance and outreach. Our Ultimate Brunch for freshmen gathered 40 students from numerous hometowns, even on a rainy morning, and laid a strong foundation for launching an active Freshman Ministry on Thursday evenings. This past Thursday, 25 freshmen joined us for our first Freshmen Community. A team of six upperclassmen, headed by College Ministry Intern Austin Miller, will lead our Freshmen Community Ministry each week. The gathering will include dinner, devotional and small groups for freshmen to connect with peers and be supported and mentored through their first semester experience.

We have also offered a lot of totally fun stuff to get a great start, including a Potato Drop and a weekly Ultimate Frisbee game and Zumba classes! Frisbee and Zumba are not only a lot of fun for our regular attendees, but they are fabulous outreach activities where active students can invite their friends to experience Wesley for the first time in a non-threatening environment. Over 50 students attended our potato drop event at the Northwest Arkansas Food Shelter, bagging over 6,000 pounds (!) of sweet potatoes for local food pantries. Overall, we've had 167 total new faces at Wesley since the start of the semester at one or more of our Welcome Weeks events.

As you can see in these photos, students not only find a spiritual "home away from home" at Wesley, but they have a lot of fun too! Do YOU know a student we should reach out to? Drop us an email at wesleycomm@centraltolife.com and we will add them to our outreach list.