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Urban Immersion Trips Fire Up Students for Ministry



Sarah Dias (*Enochs HS / St. Peter-Modesto CA*), **Lailah Thabatah** (*MLS / Emanuel First-Lansing MI*), **Hannah Zoller** (*Ashley Ridge HS / Beautiful Savior-Summerville SC*), and **Sierra Mielke** (*LPS / Ascension-Sarasota FL*) with two students they met.

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Grace Williams (*Cypress Creek HS / Abiding Word-Houston*) is a second-year trip-goer who went to Chicago. She says, “When we weren’t in the classrooms or workshops, we got to eat at some really great restaurants, visit Navy Pier, and drive around some of the neighborhoods that the children in the schools were living in. It put a lot into perspective. We got to see the difference the schools were making. These kids understood the value of their education, and they had such big hearts because of it.”

The students who went to Chicago stayed in a youth hostel, an incredible experience all on its own, and those who went to Milwaukee spent time at the Red Cross learning the history of urban schools.

“You never know what area you’re going to be sent to or needed in,” says **Karl Kuschel** (*WISCO / St. John-Mukwonago WI*). “I would recommend this trip for anyone at MLC, even if you’re not an urban minor. It was eye-opening and informational, and it really refocused us on why we’re here in the first place.”

In addition to Milwaukee and Chicago, urban ministry minors may also travel to Baton Rouge, Minneapolis, and New York City. To learn more about this ministry opportunity, visit mlc-wels.edu/go/urban.

The Urban Educational Ministry minor is a program dedicated to training teachers for WELS schools in urban centers, where school children have been historically underserved. Last week, over 30 MLC students ventured out either to Milwaukee or Chicago to visit some of these schools. They met the teachers, observed in classrooms, and debriefed afterwards about what they saw.

“I was personally impacted by seeing the passion of every teacher and their dedication and love within the classroom,” says **Anna Scarfo** (*LPS / Atonement-Milwaukee WI*). “It really re-lit my fire for wanting to become a teacher and refocusing my purpose: spreading the gospel and setting these kids on the path for success.”

The MLC students came together in Milwaukee for the Unite Conference run by the Center for Urban Teaching (CfUT), where they sat in on workshops about different classroom strategies. Other colleges were also in attendance, and a panel of leaders from the schools spoke about what they were doing to make a change.

“We were able to interact one-on-one with young teachers who knew exactly where we were coming from and the steps we needed to take,” says **John Marquardt** (*Shoreland LHS / Garden Homes-*

Milwaukee). “My favorite part was the emphasis they placed on the importance of teaching with love and positivity, and the effect that can have in these children’s lives.”



Elena Stingle (*Appleton West HS / Immanuel-Black Creek WI*), **Emily Loberger** (*ALA / Emmanuel-Tempe AZ*), and **Mary Falck** (*KML / Bethlehem-Menomonee Falls WI*) with one of their students.