

Random acts of kindness meet the love of God

The origins of Let Love Grow

Charles Yin '06

When I started Let Love Grow (LLG) during the fall of 2003, I was on fire for God. It was because of the love and kindness I had experienced in the Carleton Christian Community* (CCC) during my freshman year that my faith was being fanned into flames. Until Carleton, I had never experienced the love and fellowship of growing in Christ together with like-minded believers my age. As I began to grow in my love for God, I discovered for the first time a desire to share with others—both Christians and non-Christians—the love I'd experienced. And that is how the idea for LLG, a Christian random-acts-of-kindness group, started.

The focus of LLG's outreach "operations" was always more about putting a stone in non-believers' shoes and getting them to stop and think about God's love than about steam-rolling them in their tracks and getting

*From about 2003 to 2009, the loose collection of Bible studies and other groups that ran cooperatively called itself the Carleton Christian Community. Starting with the 2009-2010 academic year, the network of groups became Fellowship in Christ: Committed to the Gospel, to delineate it from the Roman Catholic and mainline Protestant groups on campus.

them to profess Jesus as Lord and Savior on the spot. We would have been happy simply to plant seeds and move people closer to God. For example, for one operation we made hundreds of stress balls that had encouraging Bible verses attached, and we taped them to students' doors.

Would this make believers out of most Carls? No. Most people might've just picked up their stress balls and thrown them in the trash, but for some—maybe just a few who were on the fence between belief and unbelief—this act would cause them to think about God when they otherwise would not have. We strove to follow Paul's example: doing everything in our power in order to win some for Christ.

While the focus of LLG was outreach, surprisingly the group became just as much of a vehicle for bonding and unity within the CCC. When 20-30 Carls got together to help out

with the massive Operation Love Bomb effort (which involved balloons and Scripture verses), we worked in teams of three or four and I remember how much fun it was chatting into the wee hours of the night with amazing people, some of whom I had barely met beforehand. As it turned out, LLG's operations were a great way for Christians to bond and fellowship through kindness in action.

Overall, LLG was one of many ways that I saw God moving in exciting and tangible ways on campus during my time at Carleton. My co-leaders Jason Acosta and Ming-mei Hung (both '06) were invaluable in generating ideas and bringing them to fruition. I was blessed to be a part of LLG, and blessed to have fellowship through it with remarkable and godly Carls. ♦

Charles Yin '06 lives in San Diego, CA. Formerly a health coach, he is currently completing a Masters program in Clinical Psychology at Azusa Pacific University and an internship at the San Diego Hospice.



"Serving with LLG teaches you to express God's unconditional love—and no one on campus is exempt no matter how crazy the project."
Max Diddams '12



From top, clockwise: For the unnamed origami operation (winter 2010), LLG folded 2,000 paper cranes imprinted with Isaiah 40:31a; the group baked cookies in fall 2004 for every student on campus in Operation Sweet Love; Jason Acosta helped hand out balloons with Scripture verses in Operation Love Bomb in spring 2006; Operation Heart Warmer in winter 2011 featured free hot chocolate handed out on campus; three girls folded cranes at FISH House; Charles Yin '06 founded and headed LLG.

"LLG taught me that we can love in extravagant and big ways. Our acts of love don't need a reason other than the sole purpose of sharing with people that they are loved."
Stephanie Mayer '09

