

## Institute Hires Director of Operations and Moves to New Offices

Executive Director Bob Osburn announced in late March that Jack Blackburn has been picked to be the Institute's new Director of Operations. Chad Erickson, who served wonderfully as part-time administrative assistant for seven months, has moved on to a nearly full-time position at a nearby campus church.

"The position had been vacant for nearly a year, so I am very, very happy that we have someone on board with the competency and the passion to see our organization well-organized for its mission to the university," said Bob.

Jack's background as an engineer includes not only several decades of work at 3M Company, but also several years of volunteer service as a member of the team that organizes Heart of the Matter Bookstore Lectures, the Institute's well-known extension program to the Twin Cities community.

The Institute's recent move to new offices right above Bona and Chipolte restaurants in Stadium Village (at the SE corner of Oak and Washington Aves.) was a product of Jack's immediate efforts to identify new office space for the Institute. The new offices will include the Institute's library, as well as a small study area for students. "It's a great location right in the middle of where students live and dine," ■

## We Need Your Help

"Our volunteer planning committee was the human secret to the success of the 20th Anniversary Celebration," said Executive Director Bob Osburn.

The Institute's generous base of donors and volunteers is a key part of God's wonderful provision for the Institute's efforts to bring Jesus Christ into academic life at the University of Minnesota.

Your help is needed in several areas:

- Two used Pentium-class computers or I-Macs (for students to use while studying in our library)
- Volunteer librarian to continue upgrade of the Institute library (about 2000 volumes)—4 hours/week
- Institute prayer coordinator to coordinate regular prayer for the Institute's mission and ministry—2 hours/week
- Volunteer office assistance—4 hours/week

E-mail Jack Blackburn, Director of Operations, at [maclaurin@maclaurin.org](mailto:maclaurin@maclaurin.org), or call 612-378-1935 to offer your computers or to volunteer.

Join the conversation  
in the Gophers Den at  
[www.maclaurin.org](http://www.maclaurin.org)

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# THE MacLaurin INSTITUTE

## 1,000 People Attend 20th Anniversary Celebration with Ravi Zacharias

Freezing rain, sleet, and thunderous lightning filled the night sky late on the evening of Friday, March 8. That weather drama was no match for the memorable celebration of the Institute's 20th anniversary highlighted by Ravi Zacharias' scintillating address "Christian Apologetics in the 21st Century."

Addressing the challenge of postmodernism, he declared: "Postmodernism is a move against truth, a move against meaning, and a move against certainty. We don't know where we are and we don't know who we are."

Following his lecture, students crowded around microphones to pose their questions about postmodernism and Christian faith. A huge crowd surrounded him for 45 minutes after the event finally wrapped up.

Over 30 volunteers, led by a volunteer committee, organized the event, which also featured State Senator Michele Bachmann as emcee. After the Celebration, she commended the institute for accomplishing so much on the relatively annual budget of \$240,000.

The Institute's newest displays graced both sides of the platform, where Executive Director Bob Osburn called out the names of over 30 staff, board members, advisors, volunteers, and instructors associated with the Institute. He also led a PowerPoint presentation outlining the Institute's program goals for the next year, which include the introduction of a new online Christian worldview



curriculum this Fall, as well as an increase in the number of campus lectures presented by Christian scholars.

Refreshments and book and tape sales, along with souvenirs of the Institute's special anniversary rounded out one very dramatic evening, inside and outside. ■



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## Heart of the Matter Bookstore Lectures Successfully Expand to a Second Borders Books



Executive Director, Bob Osburn, spoke on academic freedom, May 2nd.

The Institute's fourth year of offering thoughtful Christian lectures in Borders Bookshops included expansion to a second Borders in January 2002.

The new location, the Borders Books in Richfield, is a cooperative effort of the Soul Institute and The MacLaurin Institute, and meets on the third Thursday of every month from October through May. The local coordinator, Mr. Nick Weisensel, organized

the new series of lectures under the guidance of the Institute's long-time Heart of the Matter volunteer city coordinator, Dr. Howard Reitz of Roseville.

"I am enormously pleased with Nick's efforts and those on his committee at the Soul Institute to coordinate and set up such a great series of lectures," commented Dr. Reitz, "not to mention the wonderful ongoing and faithful work of Rich Malmsten and Ron Hjertstedt, co-coordinators for the St. Paul series, and their dedicated committee."

Speakers at the new location included attorney Roger Magnuson, Institute advisor Tom Prichard of the Minnesota Family Council, Dr. Don Bierle of Faith Studies Intl, popular Institute Fellow and speaker Vishal Mangalwadi, and Dr. Walter Sundberg of Luther Seminary. Attendance averaged over 70 people at each lecture.

The St. Paul lectures (the first Thursday of each month) were, likewise, successful and stimulating, closing the year on May 2 with a lecture by Bob Osburn on academic freedom in the university. Attendance at the St Paul Borders has averaged over 80 people during this past year.

2002-2003 Heart of the Matter lectures will be posted on the Institute's website by later this summer, with a mailing of the full year's schedule planned for September. ■

## Elshtain and Skillen Round Out Campus Lectures for 2001-2002 Academic Year

The 2001 Holmer Lecture, honoring retired Christian philosopher Dr. Paul Holmer, delayed until February 20, 2002, featured a brilliant lecture by Dr. Jean Bethke Elshtain of the University of Chicago, widely regarded as one of America's leading public intellectuals.

She spoke on the concept of "pilgrim citizenship," which is the notion that a Christian view of citizenship qualifies obedience to the state with one's larger call to obey God. It is not a citizenship entirely at home with the strong state envisioned by political philosopher Hannah Arendt, but one more at home with Augustine's more nuanced and theological vision of citizenship.

The final campus lecture of the Spring semester featured the President of the Washington, DC-based Center for Public Justice, Dr. James Skillen. In his lecture "The Desecularized World? Religion and the Politics of War and Welfare" Dr. Skillen suggested possibilities for vibrant Christian engagement with public affairs. His organization has had particular success in helping to shape some of the policy initiatives of the Bush White House.

Circle December 6, 2002 on your calendar. The world's most-respected Christian philosopher, Dr. Alvin Plantinga, will offer the 2002 Holmer Lecture at the University of Minnesota, sponsored by The Institute. ■



## Gopher's Den Launches



"Sagacity meets irony in honest dialogue about life's big issues . . . dialogue framed by a Christian theistic perspective engaging other perspectives . . . focused for the University of Minnesota's academic and student community." So begins the welcome to the newest feature of the Institute's website.

For those unfamiliar with the University of Minnesota (the "U" as we call it), the mascot is the "Golden Gopher," a rodent known for burrowing in the ground and building his "den". We use this metaphor for intellectual life at the U.

In addition to the new Gopher's Den, the Institute website also provides last-minute information on the latest activities of the Institute, as well as current news articles that address matters of interest to the university community. In this regard, the Institute has posted several current news items that offer Christian critiques of the new U of Minnesota Press book entitled *Harmful to Minors*, which offers backdoor endorsement to pedophilia.

As we work toward our long-term goal of introducing a genuinely Christian voice into the center of academic thought at this university, we want members of this academic community to know that followers of Christ are eager to discuss the big issues of life, not impose dogma on an unwilling world. We believe that the reentry of Christian thought into academia will re-invigorate campus intellectual life. Our Gopher's Den is an on-line forum that demonstrates the willingness to make that happen.

So, join us in this virtual free speech zone at [www.maclaurin.org](http://www.maclaurin.org). Even if you are not a member of the University of Minnesota community, sign-up, log-in, read the articles, and post your comments. You are welcome to the Den! ■

## Christian Studies Courses Are "Awesome!"

So spoke Amanda, a U of Minnesota senior in elementary education, when asked about the Old Testament course in which she was enrolled at the Institute during Spring semester 2002.

Amanda's professor, Dr. Daryl Aaron, recently named Northwestern College's Professor of the Year, serves as academic coordinator for Northwestern College faculty who teach at the Institute.

It's not too early for students (and anyone else in the Twin Cities) to pre-register for the Institute's Fall semester 2002 courses, which include a three-credit course in Old Testament, also taught by Dr. Aaron. Other courses include Christian history (four credits) and Christian theology (four credits). Tuition is just \$185/credit hour (significantly below the U of Minnesota's new tuition rate), and credits transfer to U of Minnesota transcripts. Register on the Institute's website ([maclaurin.org](http://maclaurin.org)) or call 612-378-1935. ■



Students in our New Testament course loved the free refreshments!

**Please note the new mailing address for the Institute:**  
**PO Box 141007,**  
**Minneapolis, MN 55414.**