

The Lowedown

An update on the life and ministry of Dave & Jennifer Lowe



Almost everything was different about our summer conference at Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

For starters, we skipped the usual two day drive with the family that would take us through the deserts of California and Nevada, the amazing rock formations of Utah and the majestic Rocky Mountains. We opted to fly instead.

It's been four years since Jen and I attended this conference so of course we noticed how much the town and the campus have changed with recent construction. Some of our favorite places to eat have closed and new eateries have opened up.



Moby Arena at Colorado State University has been the main meeting place for Cru staff conferences since the mid 1970's.

Somehow, it gave the sense of drawing people in.

The worship was inspiring and of course, the speakers were diverse and challenging. It's hard to encapsulate all that happened in a short newsletter so we'll share a few of our favorite moments.

1. During one of the opening sessions of our partnership weekend, Donnie and Renee Begay, the directors of our Native ministry (Nations) led us through a time of honoring local Native elders. There was an exchange of gifts between leaders and one of the elders who addressed our conference mentioned that this was the first time anyone had approached them and included them in this way before. It was incredibly moving and redemptive.



Steve Douglass gives a traditional gift blanket to a local Native elder.

When we entered Moby arena for the first session, I could tell this conference was going to be different than others I had attended in the past.

The stage was set right in the middle of the arena, instead of at one end, as has been typical in the past.

2. For the first time, Cru partnered with the Aruna Project to host a 5K run on campus to raise funds and awareness for women in India who are enslaved in the sex trafficking industry. Jacob and Joshua ran the race and did quite well, but that's not the highlight.

What was different about this race is that every runner ran with the name of a woman taped to their body who is still enslaved.

The hope is that they will soon be able to experience true freedom. Additionally, each participant received an Aruna drawstring bag that was made by women who were once enslaved but are now free and employed with jobs making usable clothing and gear. For more information on the Aruna Project, go to arunaproject.com. To see more photos from the race, see my Flickr album at: <http://bit.ly/2vVBIVf>.

3. Andy Crouch, author, speaker and former executive editor of *Christianity Today*, spoke on partnering. I've always found Andy to be very thoughtful and insightful as it relates to how Christianity intersects with current culture. Andy challenged our thinking on partnership. In particular, he said that, "Partnership is not a trade. You can't walk away after getting what you want."

He stressed the importance of relationships and engaging with one another in our struggles and our suffering.

Andy's talk reminded me of you, our PARTNERS. We missed the Cru conference 2 years ago because of Jen's health. During that trying time in our lives, you truly demonstrated the kind of partnership that Andy talked about. You encouraged us, prayed for us and suffered with us through our struggles. Your generosity and compassion sustained us and we are truly grateful! Thank you for your prayers and partnership!



Joshua (left) and Jacob, finished 2nd and 3rd in the Aruna 5K.



Andy Crouch speaks on the topic of true partnership.

Love,
Dave & Jen