

# DOKIMOI ERGATAI

## The Collaboratory Captures Joni Eareckson Tada's Heart

By Sarah Fleischman '13

Joni Eareckson Tada, an author of more than 45 books and advocate for people with disabilities, visited Messiah College March 3–4. In addition to a public lecture, “Serving In the Midst of Suffering: Partnering to Make a Difference,” Tada spoke in common chapel, met with students in the Collaboratory and had a discussion with Messiah College students who have disabilities.

A diving accident at the age of 17 left Tada a quadriplegic and bound to a wheelchair. Since the accident, she has founded Joni and Friends International Disability Center and served on the National Council on Disability and the Disability Advisory Committee to the U.S. State Department. She currently hosts a daily radio show called “Joni and Friends” and serves as the honorary chair of the 2011 National Day of Prayer.

Tada is especially passionate about reaching out to the 650 million people living with disabilities worldwide, 80 percent of whom live in the developing world. This passion for the disabled also has led her to champion the new Messiah course “Disability and Society,” which is available for the 2011 fall semester as a pluralism general education course.

### INSIDE

- Word from the student director (p. 2)
- The Collaboratory Impacts Zambia (p. 3)
- Student leadership (p. 4)
- Partner spotlight (p. 5)
- Approved workers spotlights (p. 6)
- Alumni spotlight: Mark Reiff (p. 7)
- Adviser voices (p. 8)

### Tada and Our Students

At morning chapel on March 3, Tada spoke to students in a packed Eisenhower gym, saying, “A passion for God results in a passion for people.”

Tada said that when she was in college, she didn't connect with other students with disabilities because of her perception of their attitudes, but it was really her own attitude that kept her from reaching out to them. Ironically, God called her to reach out to people with disabilities and has greatly blessed her willingness to do so.

She told students that God didn't place them at Messiah College simply to get a good job. Instead, God is preparing each student for a lifetime of serving people, just as God called her to a lifetime of serving people with disabilities.

Students in the Collaboratory had the opportunity to showcase their disability-related projects to Tada and her staff.

Presentations on the tricycle project, the Mali Water and Disabilities Study of the disability resources group and the summer enrichment program of the education group demonstrated the Collaboratory's commitment to disability resources and to continue collaboration with organizations such as Joni and Friends.

In response to the presentations, Tada said, “You've really captured our hearts today ... what you've done as a group leaves me speechless.”

### An Evening with Joni Eareckson Tada

Tada spoke openly to the sold-out audience at the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church about her many struggles with



*Tada introduces the audience to her friend Robin, who has Down Syndrome, at her lecture at the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church.*

disability in order to inspire other hurting people.

After her accident, Tada said that she no longer wanted to live. She asked God why this was happening. People would come to her hospital bedside with Bible verses and encouragement to accept the hurt in her life, but that didn't make her feel any better about her situation.

The simple gesture of a girlfriend curling up on Tada's hospital bed after visiting hours and singing the sweet words of the hymn “Hallelujah, What a Savior” at her deepest time of need made the difference. Tada says at that moment she realized

*Tada, continued on page 2*

## The Collaboratory for Strategic Partnerships and Applied Research

### MISSION

The Collaboratory is a center at Messiah College for applied research and project-based learning, in partnership with client non-profit organizations, businesses, governments and communities in our region and around the world. Areas of engagement include science, engineering, health, information technology, business and education. Our twofold mission is:

- To foster justice, empower the poor, promote peace and care for the earth through applications of our academic and professional disciplines.
- To increase the academic and professional abilities of participants, their vocational vision for lifelong servant-leadership and their courage to act on convictions.

### VISION

Increasing hope and transforming lives through education, collaboration, innovation and service.

### IDENTITY

The Collaboratory is an organization of students, educators and professionals affiliated with Messiah College. We are Christians who aspire to obey the instructions of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to love neighbors as ourselves and to share his Gospel. As God enables us to serve others today, we seek to grow as disciples of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to serve as God's stewards over the resources of our academic disciplines and to bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God.

### CONTACTS

#### STUDENT EXECUTIVE AND GROUP LEADERS

*Student Director:* Jonathon Martin  
*Assistant Director:* Erik Hornberger  
*Communications:* Jacob Francis  
*Disability Resources:* Charlie Kimpel  
*Education:* Pamela Kirkpatrick  
*Energy:* Nathaniel Nichols  
*Microeconomic Development:* Stephanie Schick  
*Staff:* Sandy Dzielak  
*Transportation:* Sara Finn  
*Water:* Karisa Martin

#### ADVISERS

*Director of the Collaboratory:* David Vader  
*Manager of the Collaboratory:* Tony Caito  
*Communications:* David Owen, Nancy Patrick, Harold Underwood  
*Disability Resources:* Andrew Betteridge, John Meyer, W. Ray Norman, Barbara Ressler, Evie Telfer, Timothy Van Dyke, Lamarr Widmer  
*Education:* Angela Hare  
*Energy:* Andrew Bryden, Brendon Earl, Carl Erikson, Randall Fish, Michael Zummo  
*Microeconomic Development:* J. Lynn Conrady, Matthew Nissley, Jesse Schwamb  
*Staff:* Tony Caito, Alyssa Heberlig, James Krimmel, Scott Weaver, Victoria Johnson  
*Transportation:* Donald Pratt  
*Water:* Tony Beers, Bruce Brubaker, Robert Clancy, D. Ray Knepper, Joseph Longenecker, Ariela Vader, David Vader, Timothy Whitmoyer

## A Word From the Student Director: Strength Made Perfect in Weakness



Twenty seconds ago, I was fine. Now my life is different. How many of us have been in this situation? An injury may put us out of commission. We may lose a close friend. That one thing we are counting on can be gone in an instant.

Suddenly, we are at a loss and do not know where to turn next. We are forced to stop and wait on God whether we want to or not. What could we possibly have to offer others in the midst of all this pain?

Consider Moses, a man separated from his family, fleeing for his life, just trying to get by in the wilderness. His speech is slow, his confidence is lacking and yet God picks him to go back to the very place he does not want to be. In the 80 years between this picture of Moses in Exodus 4 and the one we have in Deuteronomy 34 when he is described as a great prophet who the Lord knew face

to face, something happens. God happens.

When we reach a place of no control (although we've never really had control), we finally understand what it means to trust. When we cannot complete the task at hand, we are forced to believe that God is capable. Through our disabilities as humans, God is able to demonstrate his power. We cannot claim the glory, but instead we must acknowledge that it is God at work. In this way, His strength is made evident in our weakness.

In the same way that Moses learned to wait on God, we can learn to open ourselves up to him in every situation. God does not promise us a life free from pain, but he does promise to walk with us through every experience. We may never be able to return to the life that we knew before, but we can always be fully present in the life that God offers us in this moment. It is in these times, whether good or bad, that we will see God's hand moving. God is able to take our weaknesses and use them as an instrument of transformation, and as we begin to trust him, our eyes are opened to so much more than we imagined possible.

*Jonathon A. Martin*  
Jonathon Martin '12

*Tada, continued from page 1*

Jesus' presence in her suffering.

"You can't stop the bleeding heart with reason and answers," said Tada. "When a person is suffering, all they want to know is that Daddy is here."

During our deepest grief and loss—not during the joyous mountaintop experiences—is when we find Jesus. "Splash-overs of heaven are when you find Jesus in the splash-overs of hell," said Tada.

She referenced several times during her visit how challenging waking up each morning is for her. To wake up and realize

that someone would be coming into her room soon to give her a bath, brush her hair, dress her and get her out the door is overwhelming. She says she has to rely fully on God's strength each day. "Don't think I'm a veteran at this quadriplegic stuff," said Tada.

Tada said that maybe the really handicapped people are the ones who rush out the door in the morning on automatic cruise control, giving God only a tip of the hat, not realizing that we all need him desperately."

# The Collaboratory Impacts the Country of Zambia

By Tricia Demmers '11

The Collaboratory gives Messiah College students the opportunity to apply what they're learning in the classroom through their talents and abilities to help those in need. One country the Collaboratory has put substantial efforts into is Zambia. In addition to the following programs, professor Barbara Ressler is working on oxygen concentrators in Macha, Zambia. This summer, a site team will go to work on this biomedical project.

## Microfinance Projects

"It's really about the students and their abilities and their passion to put those talents into helping others. In this instance, Zambia is where the MED students are doing that," said J-Lynn Conrady, adviser to the microeconomic development (MED) group.

In the fall of 2006, the MED group decided to use their business skills overseas, specifically in Choma, Zambia. Following this decision and after much research, prayer, partnership and development, an exploratory trip was made in 2008.

After this trip, the MED group's first project began: They sought to work with the Messiah College Art Department and the Brethren in Christ Church Zambia (ZBICC) to launch a handmade paper business. Their role was to find markets for the product and develop a viable business model in order to produce and sell the paper.

At the same time, the MED group established a microfinance entity. While in Zambia, the exploratory group met Ron Herr, a missionary working in Zambia who encouraged the MED group to begin a microeconomic project.

Through this interaction, the idea emerged to create savings-led microeconomic associations in the Simaubi and Simwaanda economic development zones. These associations provide the people in those development zones with the opportunity to save regularly, accumulate capital and provide loans for

group members, which is suitable for the largely rural Zambian context.

In 2009, the MED group travelled to Zambia, where the students established and trained two Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) and checked on the progress of the handmade paper business.

VSLA groups are effective because each community member deposits money into a community pot. When community members need money, they borrow from this larger pot and pay back the loan within a certain amount of time so others can borrow. This model of microfinance instills a high level of community accountability.

In the fall of 2010, the MED group traveled back to Zambia to check on the progress on the VSLAs and found that each of the groups actually produced a new group and for every \$1 put into the community savings, individuals received \$1.30 back.

## Information Systems and Technologies

The projects of professor Brian Nejmeh, professor of business information systems and entrepreneurship at Messiah College, have sparked the interest of the Collaboratory. Nejmeh has completed two electronic tracking system projects in Zambia with help from students in several of his computer and business classes.

The Collaboratory is joining in a possible partnership with Nejmeh on his current project near Macha, Zambia.

The first completed project was to create a low-cost mobile phone system that would allow volunteer community workers with World Vision in Zambia to track orphans and vulnerable people. The phone system is intended to replace the current paper system, allowing the data to be entered into the database immediately.

Since this system is real-time, the worker can put an alert on an entry when someone is in desperate need of help. Then, World Vision can send a field worker to act on the situation. The community worker assesses whether the people are fed, clothed, have shelter and are safe.

This project was conceived in two of Nejmeh's classes in the spring of 2009. Over the summer, Nejmeh and student Tyler Dean '09 went to Zambia to conduct a field trial.

The second project was created in partnership with Phil Thuma and the Macha Mission Hospital in Macha, Zambia. Students in Nejmeh's classes created an Android-based phone application that recorded births and deaths in rural Zambia where there are no birth or death records aside from hospitals.

Like the World Vision mobile phone project, this system is intended to replace the current paper system. With the new Android system, the cause of death can also be recorded. The application also uses the phone's GPS system to track where births and deaths occur, which is useful in analyzing root causes and trends.

Nejmeh is deeply committed to service learning. "All the work I do happens in the classroom," he said. The Android phone application was developed by six students. Four of them are members of the Collaboratory.

The success and ingenuity of the two mobile phone projects have encouraged the Collaboratory to examine how to resource and expand Nejmeh's current project near Macha. This project is a clinical patient tracking system for patients with hydrocephalus, a brain disease.



# Student Leadership: The Collaboratory Provides Opportunities for Growth on Many Levels

By Sarah Fleischman '13

**The Collaboratory strives to provide a dynamic growing and learning environment for its student volunteers by offering opportunities for students to foster their academic rigor, build relationships and become leaders. Throughout the academic year, students are invited and encouraged to participate in special events such as retreats, leadership classes and prayer breakfasts.**

## Retreats

Every fall, a retreat is organized in order to give students an opportunity to let their hair down with other student leaders. The retreat is a time for the students in the Collaboratory to relax, have fun and get to know each other better outside of working on their projects.

“Knowing the people you work with makes the working environment much more enjoyable,” said student director Jon Martin. He says that retreats can also improve group effectiveness as they give students a better relational base for the project work to rest on.

## Prayer breakfasts

Twice a semester, students representing each of the Collaboratory groups meet at the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church on a Saturday morning to pray for specific concerns within the Collaboratory. Students make breakfast, worship and play games.

Martin says that spiritual development is important to the Collaboratory because the work students do is in the name of Jesus. The breakfasts events “help it remain fresh in the members’ minds,” said Martin.

## Leadership class

Students who are interested in becoming student leaders in the Collaboratory are specifically encouraged to attend the spring leadership class. Typically over dinner once a week, the lecture-based class details what

leadership looks like in the Collaboratory. The class helps students understand the Collaboratory’s model, how work is accomplished and the motivation for its mission. Martin says the hope is that when students complete the class, they are able to answer the “what, why and how?” questions about the Collaboratory.

## Student group and project leaders

Student leaders are carefully selected through a peer nomination and interview process, which includes current group, project and Collaboratory executive leaders.

Group advisers, often Messiah faculty or local professionals, provide long-term mentoring and technical expertise for the projects and groups, but student leaders bear the bulk of the leadership responsibility.



*Alumni Reflections on Student Leadership*

MATT NISSLY '07  
MED GROUP  
LEADER

**“The most impactful thing is certainly the privilege of getting to know so many incredible people in the process.”**



FALL 2010 PRAYER BREAKFAST



FALL 2010 PRAYER BREAKFAST

## CenterPoint Engineering

By James Reagan '13



Over spring break, March 12–19, the energy group traveled to Honduras. The site team went to the CURE International hospital in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, to provide an on-site energy audit. This hospital, called “Hospital de Ortopedia Pediátrica y Especialidades CURE,” is looking for a way to reduce energy expenses.

The Collaboratory is partnering with a local engineering firm on this project. CenterPoint Engineering is a growing civil, structural, mechanical and electrical consulting engineering firm in Mechanicsburg, Pa. Several recent Messiah College and Collaboratory graduates are employed with CenterPoint, which has helped build the partnership.

One of these recent graduates is David Hostetter '09 who spent three of his years at Messiah College volunteering with the Collaboratory's energy group. He also served on the trip to Honduras as the technical and trip adviser.

CenterPoint president William DeLoache has expressed a desire for his firm to invest in the local community and help inform the public about the vital role that consulting engineers play in our daily lives. CenterPoint gives students at Messiah College and the Collaboratory a glimpse into possible career paths and professional engineering experiences through the projects that they partner on.

During the spring break trip to Honduras, Hostetter and two Messiah College students, Nate Nichols '11 and Jose Vasquez '14, conducted a survey to assess the hospital's energy use. “We gathered all the necessary data and were blessed to find out information about other potential projects that may be of interest to other Collaboratory groups,” said Nichols.

Hostetter said, “It is incredible to me that through this partnership I am able to live out one of my life's dreams—to help the underprivileged through the vocational gifts that God has given me. I am very grateful to work for a company that allows me to do this.”



FALL RETREAT



FALL RETREAT 2010



SPRING 2011 LEADERSHIP CLASS



FALL 2010 PRAYER BREAKFAST

### *Alumni Reflections on Student Leadership*

LUKE WITMER '08  
ENERGY GROUP  
LEADER



**“The leadership training and development that Collaboratory leaders undergo is critical to the success of both the projects as well as the individual student development and education. Learning to be a student leader in the image of Christ is an aspect that cannot be separated from leadership.”**

## APPROVED WORKER SPOTLIGHTS

### Katie Ogden

By Sarah Fleischman '13



*Katie teaches children in Burkina Faso at the summer enrichment program in 2010.*

Katie Ogden '11 has realized what tugs on her heart the most through the Collaboratory: telling the stories of the voiceless.

Ogden joined the education group during the spring of her freshman year. Every year since then, she has worked on projects that tell the stories of the children in Burkina Faso. Through photography and constructing picture

books of the lives of the children, she helps them tell their stories.

She has travelled to Burkina Faso twice: in January 2009 and then in the summer of 2010.

"I never thought I would go to Africa," said Ogden, "It was incredibly eye-opening. I realized that in every picture there was a story and a voice that needed

to be heard."

She wants to use this same passion to help children's voices to be heard in an urban school. As a result of how the Collaboratory has affected her perspective on service and vocation, she has decided to take a job with Chester World Impact following her graduation this spring.

Chester World Impact focuses on church planting by meeting people's physical and spiritual needs. Churches are planted by World Impact staff, and then community members are trained to take over church leadership.

In many cities, the public schools are struggling. To answer this need, World Impact creates alternative schools for urban children and pays for most of the tuition. Through these schools, relationships with community members and the local church are fostered.

"Jesus always served the least of these," she says. "I definitely see that people think children in the inner city are outcasts and that cities are dangerous and places to avoid."

Ogden will teach fifth grade at Frederick Douglass Christian School.



*Logan working on the battery for a motorized tricycle*

### Logan Singerman

By Huy Nguyen '14

"It's something beyond itself, part of a greater purpose," said Logan Singerman '13.

Singerman says the main reason he joined the disability resources group of the Collaboratory was to put into practice what he was learning in his mechanical engineering classes.

In his freshman year, Singerman was part of the mobility tricycle project, working on the motor alignment fixture of the tricycle that was helpful for those living with physical disabilities in the village of Mahadaga, Burkina Faso. "With this tricycle, our team feels like we have given

these unfortunate people a second chance in their life, and I'm happy to be part of that," said Singerman.

His objective in joining the Collaboratory was to answer the call from the Lord. "I felt like it was God's calling for me to go to the Collaboratory, to act as his hands and feet, using my skills to help the people in need," said Singerman. He highly values the opportunity to put his engineering skills into practice, especially when it is used to take care of other people and not just "for the fun of it."

Now a Christian ministries major, Singerman also spoke in Collaboratory

*Singerman, continued on page 7*

# Mark Reiff '07

By Priscilla Morales '12

Mark Reiff '07 lives in Lansdale, Pa., has a B.A. in Christian ministries and is working toward a dual master's degree in divinity and economic development from Eastern University's Palmer Seminary which he will complete in December 2011.

Although Reiff is considering professional opportunities as a pastor or an economic development practitioner following graduation, he is primarily concerned with following God's will and direction.

Through recruitment efforts of his cousin, Reiff became a member of the Collaboratory's energy group in 2003, his first year at Messiah College.

Originally conducting solar and profitability analysis with the energy group, Reiff says he thoroughly "enjoyed what the energy group accomplished in creating new and creative opportunities to help the needy and follow God." The work was a means of building up relationships with community and team members alike and having the opportunity to practice his faith.

In his junior year, Reiff became the leader for the energy group. Though he started out as an engineering major at Messiah College, he changed to Christian ministries in December of his first semester.

While serving as the energy group leader the next year and a half, he led several cross-cultural trips, going to Burkina Faso in 2005 and Mozambique in 2006. "It was a launching point for me and helped me to revise my faith, become aware of social implications and to really care about God's people," said Reiff.

Although the Collaboratory was an empowering experience for Reiff, it also provided many challenges, including time



Reiff (pictured right) helps in Mozambique in 2006.

management and commitment.

Despite the sacrifices made, he endured by reminding himself of the importance of what the Collaboratory was doing for God's people.

Overall, Reiff has truly benefitted from his time in the Collaboratory and believes it is an exciting opportunity that Messiah offers its students. He wholeheartedly feels those Monday night meetings definitely were worth the effort, as they ultimately worked toward God's redemption in changing lives all around the world. "It's a wonderful place to learn, work and be useful," said Reiff.

*Singerman, continued from page 6*

chapel in the fall semester on Nehemiah 1-2. Beyond the Collaboratory, Singerman is the men's ministry coordinator for Koinonia (small group ministry) and the publicity director for a campus organization called Active Minds, which promotes mental health awareness.

In his second year with the Collaboratory, Singerman is preparing the electrical documentation of the tricycle so the people in Burkina Faso can make one themselves.

One of the attributes of working in the Collaboratory is the ability to "collaborate with your fellow approved workers." Singerman feels this attribute is the most

important. He says the relationships between the members of the disability resources group are like the relationships among members of a sports team. "When your teammates do not get along well, your team cannot play well," he said.

To Singerman, good team chemistry not only increases the team's work efficiency, it also creates a joyful time for each member involved. "We get down to work, but we have fun doing it as well," he said.

## SPONSORS

The Collaboratory could not achieve its mission without a broad team of sponsors. To support the Collaboratory financially, please make checks payable to Messiah College. Clearly indicate on the memo line or in an attached note that the gift is to support the Collaboratory. Mail support checks to:

Office of Development, Messiah College, Box 3013  
One College Avenue, Grantham, PA 17027-9989

For online giving, select "Give to the Collaboratory" on our website: [messiah.edu/collaboratory](http://messiah.edu/collaboratory).

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or have questions or comments, please contact: The Collaboratory, Messiah College, Box 3034, One College Avenue, Grantham, PA 17027-9989



[Collaboratory@messiah.edu](mailto:Collaboratory@messiah.edu)  
717-796-1800, ext. 7226

**SPRING 2011**  
**DOKIMOI ERGATAI** **the Collaboratory**  
for strategic partnerships  
and applied research

## ADVISER VOICES

**Carl Erikson**  
Energy Group

*"It has been more than 40 years since I was an undergraduate. Back then, as a*

*Christian studying engineering, I didn't know any Christian engineers or instructors with whom I could discuss my desire to share my talents and skills for the glory of God. Now, as a professor here at Messiah College, I can directly influence, challenge and mentor students to seek God's will in using their talents and skills to serve God in their specific discipline anyplace in the world. It is truly a blessing to me to see many young people desiring to go into Christian ministries, here and abroad."*

**Ray Norman**  
Disability  
Resources  
Group

*"As followers of Jesus, being an effective*

*'approved worker' requires that each one experience transformation in one's own understanding of what it means to serve. I am often humbled and touched in profound ways when I see this transformation in students. It also gives me hope for the future, knowing there will be others who have caught the vision to serve in Christ's name through their talents, lifestyle and vocation."*

**Harold Underwood**  
Communications  
Group

*"I am always encouraged to see*

*Messiah College students serving in a dedicated and enthusiastic way through the Collaboratory, because it indicates that they are cultivating an unselfish, outward focus on the real needs of people in the community, whether near or far."*