

# THE STORY: FROM SUICIDE-BRICKS TO CHIEF CORNERSTONE



*Collena, with birth-mark girl at spring break outreach*

In preparing for our prayer letters we primarily do three things: pray with fervor, review our ministry stories and review other staff member’s ministry stories.

As a journalism junkie, Joey would prefer to write it all, but this month, staff members Mark and Jocelyn Scott shared how God healed Collena from Farleigh Dickinson University, whose miry pit was suicide and whose savior is now Jesus.

“Collena comes from a really, really difficult home situation. Her relationship with her family is unstable, with substance abuse issues making it more difficult. She felt like she was living with bricks piled on her chest weighing her down and making it hard to breathe.

Feeling unloved and valueless, she decided to enter the college party scene this year. The first semester of her freshman year left her feeling empty and broken. She learned that she had no genuine friends, and that instead of making her happy, it was all adding bricks to the pile.

She spent Christmas break with family, where things had gotten even worse. Sometimes, she would sneak in where her mom was sleeping and put her mom’s hand on her own face just to feel some kind of connection. Completely depleted and lost, she decided that if no one cared that she was here, then she might as well not be here.

## She began making plans to end her life once she returned to school.

God intervened on the train ride to Farleigh Dickinson Univ. Collena found herself next to some random guy who asked her how she was really doing. He engaged her in conversation, and as he was leaving he encouraged her to pray.

For the next few days she found herself constantly thinking about God. Instead of carrying out her suicide plans, she was daydreaming about Him---like He was a crush. Her heart would race, and she would get all excited. Not sure what to do, she went to the FDU student activities staff and asked if there was anyone on campus who knew about the Bible. They said they didn’t know.

“What do you mean you don’t know?” she replied. “Isn’t it your job to know?” Just then, a member of FDU’s Campus Crusade group walked by, and she invited Collena to their meeting.

Not really knowing what to expect, she went. As soon as she walked into the room, IT WAS LIKE THE BRICKS STARTED TO COME OFF. She knew immediately that this was where God wanted her.

She started faithfully attending the Crusade meetings, soaking up knowledge of the Bible and investing in new, real friendships.

Before long she heard about Crusade’s spring break outreach trip to Florida and decided to go. As she was learning how to share Christ with others, she placed her trust in Christ herself .

All week she shared her faith with partying spring breakers, and she saw two of them come to faith. One of those two was a girl with whom she made an instant, uncanny connection. They actually had matching birthmarks. Weird, right? God is doing weird, cool stuff with this girl. I don’t know what the deal is exactly, but I’m glad we’re along for the ride.

Since returning home Collena has continued to share her faith and has seen at least three more people trust Christ. This summer she’ll be attending the Hampton Beach Summer Project, where she’ll be discipled, trained, and challenged.

Mostly she’s just a joy to get to know. She just...loves...Jesus. He loves her unconditionally, He saved her life AND her soul, and He’s basically all she has. It oozes from her.

Jesus lovingly urged, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from DEATH TO LIFE.”

It is a deep joy and motivation to see lost, dying souls come alive in Jesus by the power of His Spirit! We, Joey and Jenn, are so grateful to be part God’s Kingdom plan, which is forever advancing in bringing more citizens in.

Plenty more has happened recently that would take several dozen prayer letters to detail, but here are the bullet points:

- A men’s conference at Montclair State sent twenty-somethings out with a renewed desire to lead and follow The Man, Jesus.
- Jaelynn from Kean Univ. went to Spring break trip as non-Christian and came home as Christ’s.
- Jesus without Religion author spoke at Kean Univ.; three students prayed to have Jesus.
- Brian “the Kilt-Man” from Gloucester County College is set to do missions in Hampton Beach, NH, after overcoming a load of obstacles.

Thank you all for your continued prayer and financial support. None of this is possible without God using you!



*Warmly,  
Joey and Jenn Sforza*

**PLEAS & PLAUDITS**  
-Praise the Lord for saving Collena.  
-Praise for a bouncy Gianluca!  
-Pray for summer growth in the newly saved.  
-Pray students get full support for missions.  
-Pray God sends more volunteers.

JERSEY LIFE: a young professionals meeting:  
Friday, 6/17 at 7PM in East Brunswick.  
Email us if interested :)

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