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For Immediate Release

## **HOPE International spreads message of empowerment**

By Linda Waggener, marketing and media relations coordinator

CAMPBELLSVILLE -- Chris Oakley, Atlanta-based regional representative with the helping organization HOPE International, was a recent luncheon guest of John Chowning, Campbellsville University vice president for church and external relations and executive assistant to the president.

HOPE is a Christian faith-based, non-profit organization focused on alleviating physical and spiritual poverty through microfinance and microenterprise development. Microfinance is the supply of loans, savings, and other basic financial services to the poor. It usually starts with very small sums and most of its clients are women.

Founded in 1997 and now helping men and women in 14 countries, HOPE is offering internships and learning opportunities for CU students on the subject of the staggering reality of global poverty. This is part of their growing efforts as stated in their mission to, "...implement sound microfinance and basic business training that enable our clients to build businesses and break free from physical and spiritual poverty."

Oakley said that many creative, intelligent people are in extreme poverty simply because they lack access to capital and that microfinance services can make a difference between economic entrapment and the realization of dreams.

Chowning indicated that CU students may be interested in learning more about microfinance in the 14 countries served by HOPE International and may select the organization for missions support projects in the future. He noted that HOPE International appears to be very transparent in its financial accountability and is a positive

example of the emergence of the concept of microfinance in the Christian missions movement.

Dr. John Hurtgen, dean of the CU School of Theology, discussed the new missions emphasis that the School of Theology will be offering in the near future and how the microfinance concept and the work of HOPE International would be an additional topic of student research and learning.

For more about the organization, visit their website at: [hopeinternational.org](http://hopeinternational.org).

Campbellsville University is a widely acclaimed Kentucky-based Christian university with over 3,000 students offering 45 undergraduate programs, 16 master's degrees and five postgraduate areas. The website for complete information is [campbellsville.edu](http://campbellsville.edu).