

## YOUTH PROGRAM OFFERS COLLEGE CREDITS AND AMAZING FUN

Nearly two years ago, a phone call got the Rev. Erin Davenport '05, MSW-LSW, working toward a goal that's about to come to fruition. The call came from Waynesburg University, and the goal came from Erin's desire to develop a partnership with the University in behalf of the **Miller Summer Youth Institute**, which she directs at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. With that partnership now official, Waynesburg and SYI will provide vocational and theological training for as many as 40 high-school juniors and seniors in a weeklong program in July.

"This model represents a change from the SYI summer program we've offered in past years," Erin notes. And it's a needed and exciting change for a number of reasons. "A few years ago," she continues, "we started doing some research on what was happening with summer programs for high-school juniors and seniors. And we discovered that many of them were looking toward college. So instead of continuing to participate in summer camps and the like, they were focused on earning some early college credits to give them the best chance of graduating from college in four years." The call from Waynesburg was all Erin needed to put that research together with opportunity—the opportunity to take the existing SYI program, with classes taught by PTS professors, to the campus of Waynesburg University, which would offer college credit to the summer scholars.



And that's exactly what will happen—for the first time—from July 9-15, 2017. "For only \$450 plus their travel costs, our youth scholars will earn two religion or elective college credits while they focus on the Gospels and Acts to study the spread of Christianity. Only \$450! For two accredited, fully transferrable college credits, room, board, and all program costs! Typically, just one college credit costs \$800, so the SYI program at Waynesburg is an incredibly affordable way to 'start college' while you're also exploring who God has called you to be and what God has called you to do," says Erin. As in years past, the study program will also include a biblical languages component—Hebrew and Greek. And for their final project, participants will give a graded presentation on how studying the history of the spread of Christianity is relevant for us today.

The registration deadline for **SYI 2017** is May 1, and the program is open to students graduating from high school in 2017 or 2018. "If the comments of our SYI alums are any indication, July 9-15 could be the best six days of your summer—or the summer of a high-schooler you know!"

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