



# Northwestern College

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OFFICE OF CAMPUS MINISTRIES

## **Thoughts shared at the dedication of the Kaizen Club building in Lupeni, Romania**

**6/1/05**

**Dave Nonnemacher**

Thank you for the privilege of addressing you today. I bring you greetings from Northwestern College of Orange City, Iowa, USA on behalf of the president of our institution, Dr. Bruce Murphy. My position at Northwestern College is the Director of Service Learning, and I currently am in Lupeni with 4 students and 1 faculty member from our college on a cross-cultural studies program, partnering with the New Horizons Foundation for this experience. I am grateful to the host families of Lupeni who have graciously opened up their homes to us.

I am pleased to speak on behalf of New Horizons Foundation, I firmly believe in their mission of developing positive values as a strategy for sustainable development. The stated mission of Northwestern College is “a whole education for a whole life”. The values that New Horizons proposes to develop in the youth of the Jiu Valley are similar to the values we hope to develop through the education we offer our students at Northwestern College: trust, responsibility, compassion, teamwork, honesty, moral courage, environmental appreciation, civic activism and community service. That is why the partnership between New Horizons and Northwestern is so natural. These values truly are the foundation of a strong, healthy, and engaged society. In the last 6 years, I have visited Romania 11 times, and I have observed many programs that propose to address the needs of Romania, particularly the children of Romania. In my humble opinion, the Kaizen program fills a unique niche; there is no similar youth program that I have seen that is having the impact the Kaizen program is having. As a representative of an institution of higher learning in the United States, I am privileged to be a partner with New Horizons here in Lupeni.

In the States we are well aware of the necessity of providing our young people with usable space for them to gather; to learn and to grow, thus making them stronger citizens. When this building project is completed, Lupeni will have the distinction of having one of the finest, if not the finest, and only community supported youth center in the Jiu Valley. The completion of this project would send a strong message to surrounding communities, New Horizons supporters in the States, and Romania as whole; the message being that the community of Lupeni is committed to the development of the next generation of Romanian citizens.

As you sit in this building, I trust that you see more than a building. I trust that you see an investment in Romania’s youth, and specifically the youth of the Jiu Valley. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you.