

A Hand to Help the Gulf Coast



Hurricane Katrina ripped through the Gulf Coast the last weekend of August 2005, leaving in its wake death and destruction. The region of Biloxi and Gulfport, Mississippi, suffered a near direct hit as the Katrina storm surge devastated many areas around these two coastal cities. Since that time, residents throughout the area have attempted to re-enter their neighborhoods, re-build their homes, and re-establish their lives.

"Our students, along with the entire nation, watched in disbelief at the destruction caused by the storm," explained Jay Harley, DBU director of spiritual life, who organized the trip. "They wanted somehow to respond and to reach out to those who needed help."

In the initial weeks after the storm, DBU students helped evacuees from the area by serving in camps, sorting clothing, packing supplies, and being a friendly face for weary people. Also, Mr. Harley began to reorganize an already-scheduled DBU Fall Break mission trip into a Gulf Coast clean-up trip. "Every year, we encourage our students to participate in service projects during Fall and Spring Breaks," explained Mr. Harley. "This year, we had a unique opportunity to go into these devastated areas and help in tangible ways."

Twenty-five Dallas Baptist University students and staff members loaded up in vans and traveled to Mississippi to serve the week of October 3-7. The team worked in a variety of ways, such as removing debris, demolishing houses, and salvaging items from homes. In addition, some students participated in rebuilding work at a local church. "It was amazing to be able to help people who are still in such great need even over a month after the storm," explained senior Kati Kavanagh.

The DBU team continued their work during the week throughout several residential areas of the city and considered it a privilege to serve these families. "It was great to be able to serve individuals and families here," said DBU senior Brittany Bradley. "We cannot imagine what they are experiencing, and I hope God used our work to help them with their immediate need and also to remind them that He has not forgotten them."

DBU in England

Spend a week in England along with the DBU Family. DBU Professor of English Dr. Deborah McCollister will host a tour of Great Britain during DBU's fall break, September 29-October 9, 2006. Sites include Oxford, Cotswolds, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Bath, and London. Call 214-333-5416 for more information.

