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GWU Team Joins Mission to ‘Reach, Rescue and Restore’

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Office of University
Communications

November 18, 2016

Students and Faculty Spend Fall Break Working with Atlanta Ministry

By Bryton Mitchell, ('17) GWU Intern for Communications

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Instead of taking time off to relax and rest, a team of 17 eager students and faculty from Gardner-Webb University spent their fall break in Atlanta, Ga., to pursue mission work. They partnered with various ministries of the Atlanta Dream Center, an organization whose mission is to “reach, rescue and restore men, women, and children so that the glory of God may be known.”

The team helped organize clothes for the Dream Center’s clothing truck.

Emily Hamilton ('18) of Everson, Wash., a psychology and Spanish major who participated in the trip, enjoyed her time in Atlanta and learned a lot from this experience. “God really got me out of my comfort zone and helped all of us to make a real impact on others’ lives,” she explained.

They worked closely with sexually-exploited women, but helped anyone who they could reach. The mission trip involved activities such as handing out roses, cards, and creating art to boost morale and offer encouragement to these women. “I learned so much about sex trafficking and sexual exploitation,” Hamilton explained. “I have now seen first-hand just how real this issue is in America, and I have been changed by all that I saw and learned.”

Group Leader Dr. Tracy Jessup, vice president of Christian Life and Services and Senior Minister to the University, chose this ministry because Mark Northcutt, who is on staff with the Atlanta Dream Center, spoke at the University last spring during Human Trafficking Awareness Week. “Many students were touched by the message he shared, and two students came to me requesting that I consider organizing a mission trip in partnership with that ministry or something similar,” Jessup said.

Jessup was impressed with the Center’s mission work and ongoing efforts to reach those who need help. “It takes time, hard work, and dedication to develop relationships that will make a lasting difference in the lives of those who often are looked down upon by society,”

he observed. “The Atlanta Dream Center has earned the trust and respect of those to whom they minister and we were honored to partner with them in this missions endeavor.”

Their outreach activities also involved working closely with low-income families in the surrounding area. “One morning we helped with Adopt-A-Block where we went to lower income areas and went door-to-door handing out food, praying for the families, and in the end spent a couple of hours outside playing with all the kids,” Hamilton described. The team helped organize clothes for the Dream Center’s clothing truck. Before leaving, students enjoyed some free time where they were able to relax and take in the culture and history of the area.

Gardner-Webb students used wooden pallets to create artwork that will be placed in the safe house.

Besides gaining valuable experience and growing spiritually, Hamilton also developed new and lasting relationships with the GWU students working with her. “I also got to bond with an incredible group of people of GWU,” she observed. “I now have more relationships with those on campus that are eager to help make a difference and change the world for the better.”

The following students participated in the trip:

Hannah Boehmer

Amanda Collins

Emily Hamilton

Christian Jessup

Tracy Jessup

Michaela Killon

Soobean Kim

Grace Lodholz

Kathryn Manning

Morgan McDaniel

Matthew Morrison

Sarah Grace Moxley

Mindy Robinson

Alyssa Serrani

Allie Smith

Haley Spurlin

Megan White