

Collegiate missionaries spend Spring Break on mission

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

More than 300 Baptist Student Union (BSU) members from Mississippi campuses fanned out during Spring Break 2023 to spread the Good News that Jesus saves.

“Typically, our goal in doing this is to reach people who are not attending church or participating in any religious activities. We want to share the Good News that Jesus saves with as many people as possible.”



BSU Baptist Student Union Spring Break Mission Trip – Beach Reach/Panama City, Fla.

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For some of the students, it was the first mission trip of their lives, Ivy said. "Some of them didn't grow up in church. Some of our BSUs provide very cost-effective trips within the continental United States that help meet a Gospel need, but also don't cost an arm and a leg to get there."

If it wasn't their first mission trip, it was likely the first in which the students participated with primarily peers and classmates their age. "We had people all over the place," Ivy said. Destinations this year for the students followed by their respective BSUs included:

- Lisbon, Portugal: Ole Miss and Hinds Community College.
- Puerto Rico: Mississippi College.
- New York City: Southwest Community College, Mississippi University for Women, Mississippi State University, and East Mississippi Community College.
- Beach Reach/Panama City, Fla.: University of Southern Mississippi and Copiah-Lincoln Community College.
- Maryland: William Carey University.
- Phoenix, Ariz.: Blue Mountain Christian University.
- Kentucky: Delta State University and Mississippi Delta Community College.
- Knoxville, Tenn.: Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College.

- Kansas: East Central Community College.
- Montana: Itawamba Community College.

During a previous, short-term mission trip last December, Ivy led a team of 50 students from his previous post as BSU director at the Mississippi University for Women in Columbus to serve at Soul City Church in inner city Jackson.

“Think about it. That was a group from ‘The W,’ which has about 600 residential students. That’s almost 10% of the campus wanting to come to Jackson on a mission trip,” said Ivy.

“There’s nothing spectacular about that, except there’s a treasure that needs to be disbursed, and that’s the Gospel,” he pointed out. “That’s what we try to tell our students – it’s not so much the destination, but the need you’re going to meet.

“The special thing about a mission trip is that the Gospel needs to be shared. Our BSU directors work in tandem with the state office [Collegiate Ministries Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board] and, really, the whole convention board on being able to go.”

Participating students raise their own local support. BSU directors visit local churches to speak to Woman’s Missionary Union groups, Sunday School classes, and other receptive audiences to help raise funds. It gives an opportunity for Baptist communities to come alongside the students and the work of the BSUs.



Baptist Student Union Spring Break Mission Trip – New York City

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Many students came back from their Spring Break experiences with a hunger to move forward and devote a full summer to missions, Ivy observed. “They say, ‘Wow, this is just a taste of what I can do for eight to 10 weeks of my life on a summer mission project.’”

Approximately 126 BSUsers have already signed up to serve in missions this summer in 15 states and 18 countries. “Later on in life, they may not have the luxury to drop what they’re doing to go and serve like this,” Ivy said. “That’s why our BSUs really press the idea of taking advantage of these mission opportunities now. It might be 40 more years before they can give up that much time again.”

Ivy is grateful for each of the students who put aside personal plans on how to spend their Spring Break and dedicated that time to serving the Lord. “It’s a brand new canvas that God uses them to paint,” Ivy said. “It’s a masterpiece they get to work on. They get a glimpse of seeing what living on mission for a lifetime can look like.”

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