

Aggie BSM students minister at Mardis Gras of the North

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Aggie BSM students minister at ‘Mardis Gras of the North’

By **John Hall**

Texas Baptist Communications

NOME, Ala.—Each spring, racers pack their sleds and hook up teams of dogs to challenge the Alaskan landscape as they race more than 1,150 miles for the Iditarod championship.

This year, a little bit of Texas hospitality was waiting for them at the finish line.

A team of 14 from the Texas A&M University Baptist Student Ministries volunteered as part of a larger group to support the race, specifically helping visitors in Nome, Ala., where the race ended. During the day the group provided free hot chocolate, coffee and Bibles to people throughout the town.

At night, they helped keep the streets safe in the “Mardis Gras of the North,” where bars stay open until 5 a.m. The volunteers provided vouchers for free cab rides and helped people make it home safely.



Katherine Jaynes, Elizabeth Sobol and Jeff Turner work on the concessions team during a Texas A&M BSM mission trip to Alaska.

“We averaged about four hours a sleep a night, we were so busy,” said Chris Boule, an intern at the Texas A&M BSM.

The Texas A&M team also staffed a concession stand for a basketball tournament for Alaska natives, with all the profit going to help a local women’s shelter. Before the tournament was through, the group had raised \$10,000, which was going to be matched by a grant.

God honored the team’s servant attitude and allowed them to enter into spiritual conversations with people, Boule said. In all, 45 people professed faith in Christ.

“Alaska is not like the lower 48,” Boule said. “It’s a totally different world. But the people are amazing and so gracious. You just fall in love with it immediately.”

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