

# Around the State: Texas Baptist student groups study and minister globally

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Jacob Chesser, a student at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, works with children at a YMCA afterschool program on Cayman Brac. (UMHB Photo)

Students from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor College of Christian Studies led worship and served in a variety of settings during a trip to the Cayman Islands. Ten students and two faculty from the UMHB College of Christian Studies traveled to the Cayman Islands for a weeklong trip that involved students preaching, serving and leading worship in seven churches and schools. Student participants were **Kaitlin Anderson** of Cibolo, **Rozzell Barber-Harris** of Houston, **Sammy Castaneda** of Mesquite, **Jacob Chesser** of Boerne, **Rebekah Graff** of Dripping Springs, **Cory Joe Martin** of Manvel, **Hannah Murray** of Arlington, **Audrey Smith** of Harker Heights, **Zach Welch** of Flower Mound and **Don Williams** of New Orleans.



Six representatives of Howard Payne University's Baptist Student Ministry—(left to right) Madison Zardiackas, Destiny Ramirez, Keith Platte, TJ Shands, Tyler Dingle and Ryan McCord—recently traveled to New York City to serve with area churches. (HPU Photo)

Six representatives from the Howard Payne University Baptist Student Ministry recently traveled to New York City to serve with churches in the city. During the 10-day trip, the team spent three days at Graffiti Church helping with the church's afterschool program and served meals to people in local parks through the Free Lunch in the Park program. They attended a Sunday worship service at First Polish Baptist Church and helped clean around the church building. They also visited Maranatha Romanian Baptist Church. **Tyler Dingle**, a junior from Bellville, preached at both churches. Other HPU students were **Ryan McCord**, a sophomore from Round Rock; **Destiny Ramirez**, a senior from Odessa; **TJ Shands**, a freshman from Stanton; and **Madison Zardiackas**, a sophomore from Lockhart. BSM Director **Keith Platte** led the student group.

**Priscilla Selvaraj**, associate professor of psychology and counseling at Hardin-Simmons University, led six students to India to study the family structures of a different culture. She also wanted to introduce students to

her home country. “I wanted them to experience cultural learning in a place that is new and uncomfortable with a new language, different customs, traditions and family values,” she said. As the group toured the slums in Chennai, several students were affected by the level of poverty they saw among the Indian people. One student, **Jenny Shaw**, said she initially questioned how God could allow such suffering until a friend reminded her of biblical admonitions to “defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Proverbs 31:8-9) and to provide for the vulnerable.



Barry Evans, dean and professor of business administration at East Texas Baptist University, and Jenny Hoover, assistant professor of history, and their students participate in a joint forum with faculty and students of the University of Economics and Finance. As a part of the Global Study and Serve Program, students in the the ETBU Fred Hale School of Business and Department of History and Political Science traveled to Vietnam. (ETBU Photo)

A student group from the East Texas Baptist University Fred Hale School of Business and department of history and political science traveled to

Vietnam as a part of the university's Global Study and Serve Program. **Barry Evans**, dean and professor of business administration at East Texas Baptist University, and **Jenny Hoover**, assistant professor of history, led the group. Students earned academic credit as they studied and served in cities across Vietnam, including Hanoi, Dien Bien Phu, Hue, Da Nang, Hoi An and Ho Chi Minh City. From ministering at a Christian orphanage and teaching English at an interdenominational church to visiting historical sites and museums, students learned about local history and culture while sharing their faith with the people of Vietnam. In Hanoi, the ETBU group also worshipped with women at Naomi's House, a ministry focused on helping women overcome drug addictions.



Pastors for Texas Children presented its Heroes of Children Award to Don Rogers, executive director of the Texas Rural Education Association. (Photo / Ken Camp)

Pastors for Texas Children presented its Heroes of Children Award to **Don Rogers**, who has announced his retirement as executive director of the Texas Rural Education Association. Rogers served 17 years as

superintendent of the Eanes Independent School District. **Charles Foster Johnson**, executive director of Pastors for Texas Children, presented the award to Rogers during a luncheon at Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas.



**Janelle and Dennis O'Connell,**

professors of physical therapy at Hardin-Simmons University, received the Humanitarian Award from the American Physical Therapy Association. The national association presents the award to members “who exemplify the compassionate nature of the physical therapy profession by actively expressing a commitment to humanity and exhibiting admirable degrees of selflessness in addressing key health concerns.” The O'Connells started the HSU physical therapy ministries in 1999. In addition to engaging students in service locally and around the state, they have led student mission trips to Mexico, Guatemala, South Texas, Haiti, Peru and Thailand.



Rachel Myers, a senior at Howard Payne University, was named the first recipient of the Robert G. and Cheryl Mangrum Endowed

Scholarship. She is pictured with the Mangrums. (HPU Photo)

**Rachel Myers** from Buffalo Gap, a senior at Howard Payne University majoring in cross-cultural studies, was named the inaugural recipient of the Robert G. and Cheryl Mangrum Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship was created by the Mangrums to assist HPU students from Dallas or Taylor counties or who are history or music majors. Both **Robert and Cheryl Mangrum** have served more than 30 years in numerous capacities at HPU. He holds the Coley Chair of History and is both university historian and sponsor of HPU's chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, a national honorary band fraternity. For 13 years, he was the director of the Guy D. Newman Honors Academy. He has served as associate dean of the School of Humanities and chair of the history department. She is associate director of admissions. She was named an honorary band alumna and member of HPU's chapters of national honorary band sorority Tau Beta Sigma and of Kappa Kappa Psi. She was recognized as the university's Outstanding Staff Member for the 1999-2000 academic year.

East Texas Baptist University entered a Christian Education Partnership Agreement with Hawaii Baptist Academy. This agreement, signed by ETBU President **Blair Blackburn** and HBA President **Ron Shiira**, ensures a smooth transition for HBA students to pursue higher education at ETBU. Hawaii Baptist Academy is a Christian college-preparatory school in Honolulu. Established in 1949 by Southern Baptist missionaries, the academy now has more than 1,000 students enrolled. "An education with a biblical foundation is the best gift a child can receive," Shiira said. "Through this partnership with ETBU, we are pleased that our students will continue to have their values and world views shaped by Christian educators, which will ultimately impact the next generation of leaders of his kingdom."

Hardin-Simmons University will offer two sessions of Threshold, its summer program designed to provide “challenge and enrichment” to advanced and gifted learners, July 8-12 and July 15-19. A three-hour half-day program is offered for students entering kindergarten through the fifth grade. A full-day program, with lunch provided, serves students in the sixth through tenth grades. For more information, click [here](#).