

Acton volunteers aid BUA because they want to 'be like Jesus'

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SAN ANTONIO—Braving sweltering 100-degree summer heat, 56 men, women and children from [Acton Baptist Church in Granbury](#) spent a week at Baptist University of the Americas in San Antonio to renovate a 50-year-old building and lead a Vacation Bible School for neighborhood children.

Glenn Ward has led annual mission trips since 1979 because he believes "one of the greatest things we can do is to try to be like Jesus and help people."

"One of the greatest things we can do is to try to be like Jesus and try to help others," said Pastor Glenn Ward, recently named director of missions for Paluxy Baptist Association.

"We've been doing this since 1979, and it's always the highlight of the year. I love to give my talent and skills to contribute to ministry work."

The team painted, repaired air conditioning units, moved walls, and removed and replaced plumbing fixtures. They also staffed Vacation Bible School.

"Wherever there's a need, we go," said Amy Briggs, leader of the VBS team.

“In recent years in Juarez, Mexico, we built a school house, a clinic and a tortilla factory. A few weeks ago, we went to Joplin, Mo., to help clean up tornado wreckage. We always think we’re going to be a blessing wherever we go, but we always end up being more blessed—and that happened at BUA, too.”

BUA President René Maciel disagreed.

“Even though the Acton folks could, in many ways, see how they were blessing us—by the electrical wiring run and the walls moved in the construction project and by the ear-to-ear smiles and thoughtful questions of the children at the VBS—their gifts went far beyond that,” Maciel said.

“They brought a spirit of encouragement, ears willing to hear the story of how this school is changing lives to change our world, hearts eager to learn how to pray for us. They left with good words to share with others about what God is doing here. We were the ones most blessed.”

Team member Bill Stone concluded he could not have found a better way to spend a summer week.

“If I could do things over, I would have started doing these missions trips 10 years earlier,” Stone said. “From the outside, this may look like too much work. But from the inside, the experience is very rewarding. You won’t know until you’ve done it.”

Michael McCarthy, chief financial officer at BUA, praised the team for their hard work and positive attitudes.

“The spirit of the mission team was great. They worked hard and were a phenomenal example of what it means to be on mission for Christ,” McCarthy said.

“They were an encouragement to our entire body of students and staff.”

The upstairs apartments in one building, constructed in the 1960s, “were in dire need of restoration as were the student and fitness centers on the first floor,” McCarthy noted.

“We’re extremely grateful for the labor and materials that First Baptist Church Acton provided for BUA. We could not have attempted this project without their help.”