

Bounce students bring hope and restoration to South Austin

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AUSTIN—Chris Rubs was cleaning his garage one evening in October 2013, unaware torrential rains had caused a neighborhood creek to overflow.



Andrew Kingsley from Hunters Glen Baptist Church in Plano uses a power drill, working on a Bounce disaster recovery project in South Austin. (PHOTO / Leah Allen / BGCT) He suddenly heard screams from outside and opened the garage door to an unnerving sight—floodwaters engulfing his neighborhood and neighbors chasing a little girl who had been swept off her feet by the rapids. Together with other men and the help of a chainlink fence that snagged the girl’s clothing, Rubs helped bring her safely home.

Once he waded through water back to his own home, Rubs crawled through a window to get inside, where he found four feet of water.

“The water was to my chest,” he said. “I didn’t have a chance to save anything.”



Students from Mimosa Lane Baptist Church in Mesquite spend spring break working on a Bounce disaster recovery project in South Austin. (PHOTO / Leah Allen / BGCT)Rubs is among 19 Austin homeowners who received assistance from student volunteers during spring break. [Bounce](#), Texas Baptists' student disaster recovery program, engaged 162 youth and youth leaders from nine churches who donned tool belts and bandanas, built fences, mixed concrete, hauled lumber and cleaned yards.

Rubs and his neighbors have been recovering nearly 16 months, and the students' labor in rebuilding his fence and cleaning his yard provided huge help, he said.

Down the road, students from Hunter's Glen Baptist Church in Plano built a fence for a woman who had lived in her home 19 years.



Jackson Maezell from Hunters Glen Baptist Church in Plano uses a circular saw, working on a Bounce disaster recovery project in South Austin. (PHOTO / Leah Allen / BGCT) Hallie Storrie, the team's student chaplain, and Alex Kingsley, hydration specialist, said spending their spring break building fences and pouring concrete was a humbling experience.

"Jesus was a servant, and we strive to be like him," Storrie said. "In whatever way we can, we try to serve others and show them the love that God has for us."

Throughout the week, Kingsley thought about Mark 10:45, which says Jesus came to serve. The Scripture reminded him to work hard and be servant-hearted.

“We’re not supposed to always be the demanding people. Sometimes we’re supposed to do the hard work for the least of these,” just like Jesus did, he said.

Students worked two full days and concluded their evenings with worship and youth group reflections. Manchaca Baptist Church in Manchaca served as hosts for the youth, providing space for them to eat, worship, sleep on air mattresses and use shower trailers.



Student volunteers Parker Black (left) and Hunter Parker, both from Graceview Baptist Church in Tomball, work on a Bounce disaster recovery project in South Austin. (PHOTO / Leah Allen / BGCT) “I am grateful for student ministries that have a missional element and encourage their students to serve Christ through mission opportunities,” said David Scott, director of Bounce. “No doubt, these students have given the people of South Austin hope.”

In addition to the spring break missions experience, Bounce offers a variety of mission trips throughout the summer to give students opportunities to help communities bounce back from devastation after a disaster. For more information, visit texasbaptists.org/bounce.