

# DBU dance team spreads gospel in England

February 14, 2017

DALLAS—The Dallas Baptist University Patriettes spent a week ministering in Northern England, using dance to share the love of Christ.

The trip marked the second time the dance team has traveled overseas as a part of DBU Athletics' Global Sports Mission Initiative program, which allows athletic teams to travel internationally on mission once every four years. This year, the team connected with UKUSA Ministries and served in Teeside and York.

## Ministry in schools



The DBU Patriettes dance team, along with DBU staff and sponsors, spent a week ministering in England. (Photo / Brittini Bean)The team spent the week in area schools, assisting as guest instructors in dance, drama and religious education classes. During the evenings, the teams worked with church youth groups and outreach ministries in coffee shops.

“Every day, we prayed that the Lord would provide us with opportunities to be blessings to the schools and churches,” Patriettes Head Coach Brittini

Bean said. “And every day, he proved faithful to answer our prayers.”

In the schools, the Patriettes spent much of their time teaching dance and drama, using the lessons as a platform upon which they could begin relationships and conversations with students. Often, conversations that began in a dance class quickly went much deeper than just small talk.

“I was able to share my personal testimony daily with different small groups,” said Alexis Hazelmyer, a freshman from Arlington. “And the children were responsive, curious and eager to learn about the hope that I have in Jesus. They asked challenging questions and some even began to understand a little more of who Jesus is and how deep his love is for us.”

### **Using a passion for dance as a platform to share the gospel**

Dance proved to be a particularly effective way to connect with students. Many of the school children were eager to learn why the members of the Patriettes chose to pursue dance.



Patriette Anjhara Garces presented the gospel to these two students during a small-group session. (Photo / Brittini Bean) “One of my favorite parts of the trip was being able to use dance as a way to spread the gospel,” said Mackenzie Lohnes, a freshman from Albuquerque, N.M. “One of the girls asked me, ‘Why do you dance?’ And I just simply said that I dance to glorify the Lord. That exchange opened so many doors in our conversation to be able to discuss the gospel.”

Lindsey Peters, a junior from Waco and co-captain of the Patriettes, discovered ways in which their performances throughout the year connected with the students in special ways.

“We visited the drama classes, and they were studying a play about anorexia,” Peters explained. “The play connected with the themes of a dance we performed for our December Christmas show called ‘No Longer Slaves,’ which served as an expression of the freedom we have found in Christ. It was incredible to be able to share a little bit of our testimony through this.”

### **New perspective gained**

Throughout their time spent with students, dancing, and experiencing the culture around them, the team walked away from the trip with fresh perspectives on their roles as followers of Christ.

“After traveling to Northern England, I was reminded that the gospel truly prevails through all things,” Hazelmyer said. “Though the areas we visited were spiritually dark, it was clear that the work of the Lord was being done. While my heart was often burdened for the people in England, my spirits were lifted by seeing the seeds that were being planted and knowing that they will be watered by the believers currently serving long-term in the area.”

Bria Roberts of Tyler, co-captain of the team, called the experience “an amazing opportunity” to spread the gospel.

“London opened my eyes to see that there are so many moments every day to share Christ’s love everywhere, not just on mission trips,” she said.

The team’s coach noted the joy she experienced on the trip.

“While we want to see every dancer grow in their talent, our true hope is to

see them grow in their walks with the Lord,” Bean said. “And seeing how each member of the team responded throughout the trip made me so thankful to be a part of this incredible group of girls.”