

# DBU men's soccer team ministers in Brazil

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The [Dallas Baptist University](#) men's soccer team traveled to Curitiba, Brazil, during the 2014 FIFA World Cup to minister to the poor and needy.



Members of the Dallas Baptist University Patriots mission team included (front row, left to right) Kody Dale, Gerson Mendoza, Andrew Byrd, Riley Alvey, Landon Lacy, Brandon O'Donovan, (second row) Mason Stringer, Brian Robertson, Ryan Jackson, Adam Williams, Cameron Garner, Alex Becerra, Assistant Coach Austin White, (third row) Coach Chris Crawford, Cameron Gilbert, Chuck Schober, David Fraga, Cameron Hatch, David Balyeat and Leevi Schwartz. (PHOTOS/Courtesy of Dallas Baptist University)The Patriots' nine-day mission trip was part of DBU's Global Sports Mission Initiative, designed to give student athletes opportunities to share the love of Christ overseas.

The 20-person mission team originally planned to work at construction sites, schools and juvenile delinquent facilities, as well as connect with Brazilians through soccer.

However, before the team arrived in Curitiba, a massive storm dropped three months' worth of rain on the region in a matter of hours. Overnight, flash floods displaced more than 13,000 people from their homes.

Modifying their original plans, the mission volunteers shifted their focus from construction to supporting disaster relief efforts. On their first full day in Curitiba, the soccer team served at a clothing distribution center, sorting clothes after a surge of donations that followed the flooding.

Kicking off their Brazilian soccer debut, the DBU Patriots played the semiprofessional team Parana Futbol Clube, who defeated the student team 2-0.



DBU student athletes Ryan Jackson (left) and Riley Alvey help paint a facility for juvenile delinquents during a mission trip to Brazil. “To be able to play a team of that quality and skill on this trip was a huge blessing and a great challenge, which we handled well,” DBU junior Chuck Schober said.

The day after that match, the team returned to the clothing distribution center to collect, sort and distribute clothing and hygiene products to poverty-stricken people around Curitiba.

Later, the team traveled to a facility that offers children a safe place to play during the day, keeping them off the streets. The DBU Patriots interacted with the children, teaching them soccer and showing them the love of

Christ.

Traveling to a facility for juvenile delinquents, the team helped paint an aging 2,000-square-foot building. The staff of the facility noted with astonishment the work ethic and joy the soccer team exhibited in painting the interior and exterior of the building in a day and a half.

“The way that we have been able to help out in so many different ways and work with so many different people has been an eye opener for all of us,” DBU junior Landon Lacy said.



Kody Dale (left) and Leevi Schwartz (second from left), members of the Dallas Baptist University men’s soccer team, visit with Brazilian young people during a mission trip. The team attended a Saturday night worship service at First Baptist Church in Curitiba, where several students shared their Christian testimonies and provided information about DBU and its mission.

The Patriots soccer team spent their last two days in Curitiba participating in friendly soccer games and relationship building before traveling to the Portal Do Futuro sports complex in the village of Cajuro.

“Getting to play soccer and watching a World Cup game with the kids and

seeing how much of an impact you can make by doing these things is an amazing experience,” DBU freshman Gerson Mendoza said.

“I never thought that soccer could be so useful when trying to connect or show them some love. ... God has truly blessed us, and even though we came here to serve, I feel like I have received more than I could ever give.”