

DBU student feels called to help the persecuted

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DALLAS—Dallas Baptist University student Sean McAndrews feels God has called him to help persecuted people.



Sean McAndrews worked in the Washington, D.C., area this summer with the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative, living out his passion to help persecuted people. (DBU Photo)McAndrews, a junior majoring in political science, answered the call this summer by serving as an intern with the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative just outside Washington, D.C.

Founded in 2014, the organization seeks to raise awareness about religious persecution and to work with governments, advocacy groups and religious organizations around the world to achieve religious freedom for persecuted people.

McAndrews' passion for the persecuted arose from an internship the previous summer, working in the Dallas area with Refugee Services of Texas.

"I served as a resettlement intern, which meant I assisted one of the case managers and primarily worked with Syrian and Iraqi refugee families who were resettling in the Dallas area," he said.

In that role, he not only helped families complete paperwork and job applications, but also helped prepared their apartments before they arrived, arranged their transportation to medical appointments and offered a continuing presence to aid them.

While his heart for refugees and victims of religious persecution grew, he learned about an internship opportunity at the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative.

"I applied for the position almost as soon as I heard about it," he said. "I knew that it would be an incredible opportunity to build upon what I had learned last summer close to home and use that in another part of the country to influence lives around the world."

The experience in the nation's capital offered him an opportunity to serve in a place outside his comfort zone.

"Without a doubt the most challenging part of the whole experience was living in a new city in which I had no prior connections or relationships," he said. "This summer also presented its challenges in terms of living in a spiritually dark place. I had to rely fully on the Lord every day."

At the Wilberforce Initiative, McAndrews focused on church outreach and publications.

"So, I had many unique experiences in connecting with churches, as well as

making visits to Capitol Hill,” he said.

He also helped develop campus chapters to help the Wilberforce Initiative engage students in the fight against religious persecution. He plans to be a part of the chapter that will start this year at DBU.

Looking back on his summer internship, McAndrews said it strengthened his calling to work in international affairs and to fight for justice and human rights.

“This experience showed me how essential it is as Christians to fight for the freedoms of not only other Christ-followers, but also for all people of all faiths,” he said.

“In regard to my own faith, this summer strengthened my relationship with the Lord as I was pushed to lean on him through a new city, new surroundings and new opportunities. I was reminded of the sufficiency and goodness of God through this incredible experience.”