

# GoNow missionaries reap summer harvest

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DALLAS—When seven Texas college students stepped onto the grounds of a university in East Asia, they were amazed at how quickly people responded as they shared the hope of Christ.

“There were 30 to 40 people who really saw life changes,” said Hannah Fyne, a senior at the University of Texas at Austin. “We started discipling them, and several people were baptized. We got to see a new house church start from some of the new believers. And some of the guys were training the men to lead out.”

The East Asia campus outreach team spends time with Asian college students they met while visiting several universities.

All involved with the trip knew they were seeing a harvest only God could have orchestrated, said Brenda Sanders, director of Go Now Missions, the student missions program of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Summer mission teams have been engaging students in that Asian city and attempting to connect them to Christ since 1995. But none of the former teams saw progress like the team saw this summer.

“This just does not happen,” Sanders said. “When you go to countries that are closed to the gospel, you know it isn’t normal to have people come to Christ so quickly in an encounter like this.”

During 2009, Go Now Missions commissioned 330 student missionaries, with 242 of them serving this summer. These students served in 18 Texas

towns, as well as 14 states and 33 countries.



Steadying a pipe as water first comes out are Derek Dodson (left), BSM director at Tarleton State University, and Cheli Urquiza, a junior communications major at Angelo State University.

“In the last few weeks, we have just seen a harvest happen in many of the places students are serving,” Sanders said. “The students have been very faithful this year to share their faith. Because we have had long-term partnerships, we are really seeing the fruit from that in some places.”

For Daniel Armendariz, a senior at the University of Texas-Pan American, this summer was a harvest from the gospel seeds he planted during summer 2008 in a Hispanic community near Colts Neck, N.J.

“Last summer was a lot of ground work—meeting people and trying to make contacts,” Armendariz said. “We tried to do some (English as a Second Language) projects, but we had a lot of doors close and trouble finding a building to hold programs.”

Armendariz saw the fruit of his perseverance during last summer as God provided a harvest through Backyard Bible Clubs when he returned this summer.

“One family accepted Christ the first time they came to the Backyard Bible Club. Then we went to their home and took the club to an apartment nearby. Then nine kids accepted Christ,” Armendariz said.



Daniel Armendariz (left) prays with a group of believers during a baptism service on the beach. John (center), asked to be baptized in the Atlantic Ocean because that was the place where he realized he needed Christ. Also pictured are Debbie Weiss and Chris Ferrar.

Other students saw outgrowth come through personal spiritual renewal and new understanding of God’s role in their lives. That was the case for Cheli Urquiza, a junior at Angelo State University.

Urquiza learned about loving others and living in joy as she served with a team that dug a well and held health education programs in Guatemala for two weeks in July.

“Our team was able to provide water to a village through a gift of a new well, but we did it because God has called us to be his servants,” Urquiza said. “I’ve been on trips where our purpose was to share Bible stories and see salvations, but this trip was about much more than numbers. It was about the joy of the local people, the simplicity of life and how it should be lived in the love of God.”



The community at Spring Terrace Apartments gathers for prayer during a block party in Freehold Boro, N.J. Daniel Armendariz ministered to this Hispanic community for two months this summer as he served as a summer Go Now missionary.

Because participating in missions causes a change in students' hearts, Go Now Missions strives to help change their experiences into a missional lifestyle. To help with the transition, Go Now sent each student missionary a booklet to help process their experiences and journal about the move back home.

"My hope for the students is twofold—that they will be involved in the significant work on the field, joining those who are already there sharing the hope of Christ, and that they will have their lives transformed," Sanders said.

"I hope they will not be able to look at their lives the same after serving and returning home."

As Go Now is helping these students transition back to their campuses, they also are sending out another group of 22 student missionaries to serve in Texas and around the world during the fall semester.

For more information about Go Now Missions, visit

[www.gonowmissions.com](http://www.gonowmissions.com) . Opportunities for spring and summer 2010 will be posted by Sept. 4.