

Mission to Haiti prompts launch of Bears for Orphans

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WACO—When the granddaughter of two former Southern Baptist missionaries returned to the United States after a trip to Haiti last year, she knew she needed to respond to God’s calling.

“When I was there, God just made it clear it was time to do something,” said Caroline Giles, a Baylor University sophomore.

✘ A girl waits for a meal at Coreluv’s feeding center Roboto, Haiti. Bearsforphans will help feed hundreds of children every week. After returning from her second trip with [Coreluv International](#), a nonprofit based out of Pinehurst that seeks to “defend the orphan,” Giles was burdened by the social injustice and sought to involve her campus in bringing hope to orphans across the world.

Giles and Baylor sophomores Meghan Bell, Madie Wisnie and Carly Kloack spearheaded an effort to increase awareness about the international orphan in April 2013. In December, [Bearsforphans](#) was chartered as an official Baylor University club.

Both Giles and Kloack are involved in the college group at [First Baptist Church Woodway](#) in Waco and appreciate the congregation’s missions focus. Giles attributed her heart for orphans in part to her Baptist background. Her grandparents, James and Mary Nell Giles, were [International Mission Board](#) missionaries in Colombia 37 years. Her parents met on a mission trip, and her first mission trip was to El Paso, at age 8.

“Being in a Baptist church, we had lots of opportunities, because missions

were always so important,” Giles said. “My parents were either going on trips, leading trips or sponsoring trips.”

For eight months, the four young women worked tirelessly to follow the university’s requirements to start an official organization on campus. They wrote a constitution, a business model and numerous essays, and they attended several meetings and workshops, on top of their class schedules.

☒ Children at an orphanage in Gonaives, Haiti, enjoy activities led by a mission team. “It was extremely stressful, and it was very monotonous and time consuming, but we knew God had called us to this, and it would be so rewarding,” Giles said.

As its first project, the group chose to raise funds to build a school next to one of Coreluv’s two orphanages in Gonaives, Haiti. Giles estimates a cost of \$175,000 to build the school and seeks to have the school fully funded by December. In addition to the school, the club also will provide other resources for Coreluv’s Haitian orphanages, such as water, food, shelter and education.

Guerrilla Troupe, the university’s improvisational comedy group, provided the first substantial donation to Bearsforphans, raising \$1,400 at a show in February.

Not only is building the school a primary focus, the organization also aims to bridge the gap between the university and international orphan care. The club meets regularly to raise awareness among Baylor students about the magnitude of social injustice and to spur them to action.

Meetings are scheduled at 31 minutes after the hour as a reminder to “defend the rights of the poor and needy,” as commanded in Proverbs 31:9.

“Our theme is Proverbs 31:9, walking hand in hand with the fatherless,” Kloack said. “Jesus calls us to a greater care for orphans, to love them as

our own.”

For more information about Bearsforphans, “like” its [Facebook page](#) or follow the organization on [Twitter@Bearsforphans](#).