

Poverty simulation prompts Waco youth to provide water for Haitians

March 4, 2011

WACO—A weekend of thirst led the youth at [Meadowbrook Baptist Church](#) to raise money to provide pure water for people in Haiti.

The youth at the Waco church originally had a goal to raise \$2,500 to help Mission Waco drill a well in Haiti, but they collected more than twice that amount. More than a year after an earthquake rocked the island nation, many people still drink contaminated water from rivers and other polluted sources.



Students at Meadowbrook Baptist Church in Waco designed, created and sold T-shirts to raise money for a Mission Waco well-drilling project in Haiti. When all the fund-raising efforts ended, the church collected more than \$5,800 for the ministry. (PHOTO/Courtesy of Meadowbrook Baptist Church)

Involvement began when members of the youth group participated in a poverty simulation weekend organized by [Mission Waco](#)—an event that became a life-transforming experience for many of the 18 people involved, youth minister Bo Faulkner said.

About that time, some of the youth group also became involved in a Bible study based on [*You Were Made to Make a Difference*](#), a book by Max Lucado that includes stories of young people who have made a difference in their hometowns.

“When we finished that, the kids said: ‘We don’t want to just be hearers of the word. We want to be doers,’” Faulkner said.

The teenagers then brainstormed ideas about things they could do, coming up with a list of about 25 possibilities. But when they [saw a video](#) on the Mission Waco website about the need for clean water in Haiti, they group unanimously decided to raise money for clean water for Haitians.



Five years ago, Mission Waco bought and shipped to Haiti this truck-mounted water well-drilling machine that can drill one or two wells a day in the northeast area of the island.

Additional funds—such as the \$5,800 from Meadowbrook Baptist Church in Waco—will enable Mission Waco to expand well-drilling projects in the earthquake-ravaged region around Port-au-Prince. (PHOTO/Mission Waco)

Many of the youth recalled their own experience during the poverty simulation when they had to find their own sources of water.

“They were incredibly thirsty. Once they watched the video, they couldn’t

believe there were people who didn't have clean water to drink every day," Faulkner explained.

"Throughout their spiritual formation, they've gotten a broader view of things, and the poverty simulation really opened their eyes to how fortunate they are."

To raise funds, some students worked and brought their wages to the church. Others scrimped when their parents gave them money to go out to eat and brought their savings to donate.

Students also designed and created T-shirts they sold to friends at school.

Because the students owned the idea, they worked diligently at it, Faulkner said.

"If I had said, 'This is an idea I had,' and I had spearheaded it, it wouldn't have been the same. But because it was their idea and it really did have an opportunity to fail, I think they realized that and persevered," he said.

Adults in the church caught the youth group's contagious enthusiasm for the project, Faulkner said.

"The excitement started to spread long before we brought it to the church. They told their parents, and they talked about it in small groups. So, we had adults asking how they could help before we ever mentioned it to the church," he said.

The church presented a \$5,800 check Janet Dorrell of Mission Waco to pay for a well and assist with other water projects such as purification filters and well repairs.

"And we've had even more money come in, so we'll have to send them another check," Faulkner said.

