

Students rehabilitate South Dallas homes during Bounce

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DALLAS—Armed with hammers, power tools, paint and enthusiasm, 100 junior high and high school students served in South Dallas June 8-13 to help repair homes through [Urban Bounce](#).

Texas Baptists' Student Disaster Recovery program, which began in 2014, started a new track this year with an emphasis on urban areas in need of rehabilitation.



Students formed nine teams and worked to repair seven homes. (BGCT Photo / Olivia Williams)The students formed nine teams and worked on seven homes, identified and secured through a partnership with [People Helping People](#) through the City of Dallas.

“Our partnership with People Helping People is a great asset,” said David Scott, director of Bounce. “They help identify qualified homeowners for the projects and secure funding for materials. We then provide the labor, which

helps the rehabilitation project go so much further.”

Darby Cavanaugh, a junior from Cross Plains Community Church in Hobbs, N.M., valued the hands-on missions involvement Bounce offered. She not only learned how to roof a house during the week, but also learned what it means to serve humbly without recognition, she noted.

“This has been a good way to help give back to the community,” Cavanaugh said. “It’s a time to serve and come to get closer to God through my work—and just to share Jesus.”

While the teams spent most of each day repairing houses, the groups also met together in the evenings for worship and Bible study at [First Baptist Church in Duncanville](#). Ryan Jespersen, director of Urban Missions, served as the speaker for the first week of Bounce.



An Urban Bounce team reroofs a South Dallas home. (BGCT Photo / Olivia Williams)“During Urban Bounce this week, I saw in students being the church—not just the future of the church but the church itself living out our call in the world,” Jespersen said. “We encouraged the students that their work was glorifying Christ and helped his church grow in the community.”

Club 28:19—a ministry that draws its name from Christ’s Great Commission in Matthew 28:19—also provided a mission emphasis, with visitors each night telling about mission opportunities for students through [Go Now Missions](#), [iGo Global](#) and other programs.

“We want to challenge the students to give a summer or semester of their time to missions before they graduate college,” Scott said. “One of the most important messages we want to communicate through this week is missions as a lifestyle.”

Walker McWilliams, youth minister at [First Baptist Church of Lufkin](#), brought his students to Bounce for the second year, after serving last year in West, repairing homes damaged by the fertilizer plant explosion in that Central Texas town.

“This week has been wonderful,” McWilliams said. “Our group is smaller but has bonded already, and we have enjoyed spending time together, serving the Lord while also serving the homeowner. It is great as a student pastor to work with my students and see them put into practice the things we teach them about service.”



About 100 junior high and high school students served in South Dallas June 8-13. (BGCT Photo /

Olivia Williams) Three adults from the Lufkin church already have children who have graduated from high school, but continue to sponsor trips like this because they believe in the mission and ministry of Bounce.

Stephen Conway is one such sponsor who served on his 11th mission trip with First Baptist youth and took a week of vacation time to come serve alongside the students.

“This type of ministry teaches our students to put service first,” Conway said. “The students will amaze you with what they can do. It’s good for them to learn new skills, as well. Some of the students have never used a hammer. This week helps train students in many ways to be better student leaders.”

Bounce trips are planned this summer for Waco, Mineral Wells and Moore, Okla., along with a newly added trip to San Marcos/Wimberley following the recent flooding. For more information, [click here](#).