

Wayland students help build houses in Haiti

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PLAINVIEW—Don't expect to hear one group of [Wayland Baptist University](#) students complaining about being "poor college students"—not after they spent time in Haiti.



Wayland Baptist University students (left to right) Baylee Moore, Angel Hernandez, Laura Poe, Hailey Budnick and Carly Sheumaker break up rubble and load it into a 5-gallon bucket so it can be transported to the Haitian building site for the rubble house on which the team was working. (PHOTOS/Wayland Baptist University BSM)

Wayland Baptist Student Ministries Director Donnie Brown led the team of 10 Wayland students, joined by students from the BSM at [Tarleton State University](#). They worked in Grand Goave, a community of about 10,000 residents, building houses for homeless people using rubble left by the massive earthquake that devastated much of Haiti two years ago.

The [Haiti Housing Network](#), a collaborative effort of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Fuller Center for Housing, the Baptist General Convention of Texas and Conscience International, coordinated the work.

The building process involves breaking up truckloads of earthquake rubble into chunks small enough to be carried in 5-gallon buckets. Volunteers frame the walls of houses with lumber and heavy wire, and the rubble is poured into those wire frames before being plastered over by local workers. The projects benefit the local economies where the houses are constructed by putting residents to work finishing the houses, Brown added.

The completed homes measure 14-feet by 20-feet and include two windows, a skylight and two small patios in front and back. The non-rigid foundation and flexible walls make the structures more capable of withstanding future earthquakes and hurricanes, according to information on the Haiti Housing Network website.

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Wayland Baptist University students Laura Poe (left) and Kelli West break rocks to be used for construction of a rubble House in Grand Goave, Haiti. The two were part of the Wayland Baptist Student Ministry team that went to Haiti over the Christmas break to help build Rubble Houses using rubble left from the earthquake that devastated the country two years ago.

about six tons of rubble is required to complete each house, Brown noted. The BSM team was able to "rubble in" about one complete house and one-fourth of another, he said. Each house costs \$4,000 to build, and Stonebridge Fellowship in Plainview and First Baptist Church in Kress each donated \$1,000 toward the work of the team in Haiti, matched by a \$2,000 contribution from the BGCT.

Phil Avants, a senior from Chico, noted the student workers typically would walk two miles to the worksite each morning after breakfast. There, the rubble would have been dumped from a truck, and they would start breaking it up with hammers.

Students worked until noon, walked back to the compound for lunch, and then walked back to the job site for an afternoon of hard labor.

"By the next day, you're just throbbing," he said, adding that even after being home a few days, his hands still were sore from working with the rubble.

Some students struggled to readjust when they returned to Texas. Krista Campbell, a junior from Big Lake, said the most difficult part of the trip was "having to see what they live without and knowing here we have such an abundance."

The experience could end up being life-changing for Hailey Budnick, a senior from Houston.

After the trip, she explained she has begun to feel a new calling from God on her life. She always had envisioned becoming a doctor and doing short-term mission work as she was able. Not any more.

"God's plan for me is not what I imagined at all. ... I'm pretty sure I'm called to Haiti for the rest of my life as a doctor," she said

"I loved Haiti. I didn't so much love building houses, but I liked getting to interact with the people in a practical way. They were just easy people to love."