

# West Texas A&M BSM serves from a temporary home

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Macie Groomer, a senior at West Texas A&M University, came to campus her freshman year searching for a community of like-minded believers.

At the invitation of a friend, Groomer participated in Baptist Student Ministry “Welcome Week” events and made strong connections. She decided to stick around.

Groomer said she wouldn’t have learned to take her faith seriously, if the new friends she met there didn’t dive into Scripture with her on a weekly basis that year.

“That first year, anytime we were at the BSM, we were digging into Scripture super deeply, and I was being encouraged by all the people around me [to] spend time in the word and not neglect that and keep going to church,” said Groomer.

“If I hadn’t had that experience of all of these people around me [encouraging me], I wouldn’t have taken my faith as seriously coming to college, because it was my first time on my own, and I [had to choose to] make this faith my own. And so, I think that was really special and really unique. And it just gave me a lot of boldness going into the years after that.”

Groomer learned how to share the gospel for the first time in her freshman year at the BSM, and she said it gave her the boldness to meet new students during Welcome Week in the following years.

“I think that foundation gave me something to stand on now, talking to

freshmen and new people, just the willingness and boldness to share the gospel,” Groomer said.

## Knowing, following and sharing Jesus



West Texas A&M BSM hosts 99 Cent Steak Night during Welcome Week. (Texas Baptists Photo)

Every August, the West Texas A&M University BSM participates in the campus' Welcome Week—hosting events each night of the week including Karaoke Night, 99 Cent Steak Night, 806 Worship, and this year's big finale, the Welcome Dance—to connect with new West Texas A&M University students.

This year, Welcome Week looked a little different for the West Texas A&M BSM, in light of its [new building project](#).

Eric Hunter, director of the BSM, said being in a smaller, temporary building was logistically challenging, but “we enjoy being on campus. It's good. I think it's even better to be on-campus [than in the building].”

Welcome Week is the most important week of the year because it sets the tone of the organization with new students, he said.

Current BSM students follow up for the rest of the year with new students they meet during Welcome Week, building relationships and sharing the

gospel, hoping to “see multitudes come to Christ, to go from death to life.”

“Our heart and prayer is that ... we would see revival; students who come to Christ, turn to Christ, get serious about their faith, that God would move mightily in the lives of believers that they would have a renewed passion and desire to know Jesus, to follow Jesus,” said Hunter.

“And then I think more than anything, that they would have a desire to share with other people.”

## **Sharing the gospel**

Tirzah Miranda, a senior student leader at West Texas A&M BSM, was drawn to the organization after transferring to the school by its unified goal to share the gospel. She said through discipleship and routinely going on campus to share the gospel with her peers, she had learned to make it a priority.

“Through everyone [at the BSM] coming together as a community and going to share the gospel as a normal thing, because that’s what we’re called to do as Christians, I just grew in learning how to evangelize,” said Miranda.

“[Sharing the gospel] was super uncomfortable for me—and it’s still actually kind of uncomfortable for me. It’s a challenging thing. But it’s important, and it’s necessary.”

Miranda said it has been encouraging to see her nonbelieving friends who “maybe wouldn’t necessarily step into the BSM, be interested in the Lord because of how I was equipped through the BSM of just how to share and how to equip other people.”

“They’ve given us the tools, so it’s not like everything is contained in this building. It’s not like: ‘We need to get them into this building so that they

can hear the gospel.' It's like: 'No, we're sending you out so that the campus can hear the gospel.'"

## Feeling valued on campus



BSM students participate in worship during West Texas A&M's Welcome Week. (Texas Baptists Photo)

Hunter said the BSM hopes students will glean two things during Welcome Week: first, that the BSM exists and exists to serve them, and second, that they would "find their people," hopefully among believers.

West Texas A&M freshman Ally Wilson said she is looking to plug in to an organization that will help her grow stronger in her faith. Throughout Welcome Week, she said she has been drawn to the BSM because she feels pursued by its students.

"What's making me interested [in the BSM] is them knowing my name, pursuing me, making me feel wanted here, 'cause other ministries on campus are good, but they're not actively seeking out, wanting me to grow, wanting me to be here with them," said Wilson.

"I think that's definitely something that I latched onto and really

appreciated—being wanted here.”

Miranda advised West Texas A&M freshmen hoping to invest in their faith in college to be “faithful to Jesus first.”

“We are called to be obedient, but we’re also called to be faithful to him. So, I would just encourage them to be faithful to Jesus first and as they are poured into by the Lord, to pour out,” she said.

“But it comes first from spending time with Jesus, the word [of God], worshipping, being in community, and from that place of being filled, we get to pour out into other people.”

## **Reaching more students with the gospel**

Groomer said she is excited to see how God will use the BSM’s temporary space and on-campus presence to reach more students with the gospel.

“I just expect for the Lord to move in really big ways, being more of an on-campus presence. Not that we weren’t already, but now we’re kind of forced to be there, so I’m hopeful that that will draw people in—and also give us boldness since we’re already there—to just go and reach more people and bring more people, not just to the BSM, but [also] encouraging people to know God and to love God and to worship God.”

The West Texas A&M BSM currently is raising funds to build [a new BSM building](#) to fulfill its vision to love, lead and launch students who will form community, hear and respond to the gospel, and become equipped and mobilized as disciple-makers.

To learn more about Texas BSM and the Texas Baptists’ Center for Collegiate Ministry, visit [txb.org/collegiate](http://txb.org/collegiate).