

Mission Arlington: Making an impact

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Four students from the Baptist Student Ministry at Rice University served at Mission Arlington during spring break. On the first day we worked there, our task was to transfer donated clothes from the main site to Grace Street Fellowship Church, where they would be distributed the next day.

We also drove a bus filled with furniture, appliances and other assorted goods to a low-income mobile home park. We hit a small snag when the doors flew open on the highway, and some paintings fell out, but that did not stop us from impacting the community. We sent students to homes to let people know that we were giving away a busload of stuff, and the people responded well. We were able to give away most of the items. This was a great way to show the love of Christ, and we are praying Mission Arlington continues to impact this community.

On Sunday morning, we helped host one of the many apartment-based churches, led by Mission Arlington staff member who grew up attending a similar apartment church. We played games and did crafts with the kids, and we led a Bible study for them. The kids ranged in age from 3 to 14 years old. Daniel, one of the older kids, said he had been attending the apartment church several years, and he told us he could not wait until he was old enough to serve with Mission Arlington.

“All of the kids I met were wonderful and always smiling,” said Ashley, a sophomore at Rice. “It was fulfilling to know that the time I spent with the kids was meaningful, because in addition to playing with them, I was also able to share the Word with them.”

After church, we spent the rest of the day knocking on doors and passing out fliers promoting the spring break activities Mission Arlington was hosting with the help of churches and BSMs.

Monday through Wednesday, we went to a different apartment complex and did the same thing we did Sunday morning. Our students not only learned that kids never get tired of tag, but also learned the impact one can make after only a few days. One young girl named Karter was incredibly shy and spent most of her day alone because her parents were working. By the end of our time in Arlington, she had opened up to us and was participating in the Bible lessons. It was a big win, considering she barely spoke to us the first day.

We also met a Muslim family who had just moved from Nigeria. They had six children ranging from ages 2 to 18. Although the family is Muslim, they had positive views of Christians because of how Mission Arlington had served them in the past, supplying furniture, other necessities, and helping them secure a place to live.

Two of our students, Blessing and Chukwudi, also immigrated from Nigeria as children. This shared culture, combined with the efforts of Mission Arlington, enabled them to connect with this family. Because Blessing and Chuk were able to relate to this family in a special way, we were able to talk to all of them about who Jesus is. The younger children participated in the Bible study while Blessing listened to the oldest, Sophia, tell her family’s story.

Rice students are very passionate about serving others and striving to make the world better. Unfortunately, the university’s rigorous academic requirements often make serving difficult. But by leaving campus and setting aside time to serve God, were able to see what can happen when we follow God’s call to serve the least among us and share the good news of Jesus Christ.

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