KAIROS TEAM GOES TO PANAMA

It is often quoted that the best laid plans of mice or men go astray. Because God is continually at work, man’s planning may not always pan out to what is to be. Originally, a mission team planned on going to Brazil. But when a few changes arose, this team was invited to go to Panama instead.

This past June, Jennifer Mullins, Baptist Collegiate Minister at Radford University, led a Kairos collegiate and young adult team of 12 to Arrajjan, Panama, for a 10-day mission trip. The team included young adults ages 19-27 from Radford University and the churches around it; Jennifer’s husband, Rusty, volunteer Associate Collegiate Minister at Radford; and Jennifer’s teenage son. This group shared God’s love through different experiences in Panama.

One ministry experience brought them the opportunity to work with children, ages 5-15, from various schools in and around El Chorrera. The day started between 5:30 – 7:00 a.m., and they met with the children from 8:00 a.m. to early afternoon. Together, the group sang songs, taught the Bible, presented dramatic skits, shared the gospel through making and giving salvation bracelets, gave testimonies, and led in sports and recreation. Sidewalk chalk, soap for making bubbles, soccer, football, and softball all helped to build relationships in Christ’s love. These three different schools – First Baptist of El Chorrera, another school of a church, and a rural school in the deep forest of Panama – gave the group a chance to interact with different cultures of Panama.

The team spent a lot of time with Pastor Antonio at the schools as well as during worship at his church, Luz del Mondo. They also participated in two evening worship services at Primer Iglesia Bautisto. One was a special worship and testimony night, and another featured a special associational youth night. Youth and pastors from churches throughout the association were invited to this event.
They shared in music, testimonies, and dramas.

The Kairos team led a significant portion of this evening service. Members of the team gave testimonies, performed two dramas, led a few worship songs, and presented “cardboard testimonies,” which were well received by the congregation. Translators were available to assist in creating the cardboard messages in Spanish. This Spirit-filled evening ended with fun and games.

The Kairos team also spent time serving at Ciudad de Niños, a Catholic-run orphanage for boys. The substandard conditions were heartbreaking. They were requested to clean the facilities, and they found mold inside the cribs. In addition to cleaning, they engaged in games, music, and recreation with the boys. The on-site pastors were most appreciative that the Kairos group was able to share Christ’s love with these children. From this time spent, one of the local doctors who participated on this day, is now the point person to build future ministry opportunities in the orphanage.

The trip brought cultural times to celebrate and times to observe. The group enjoyed cultural meals, conversations, and sightseeing at the Panama Canal. The son of Pastor Moises, Aaron, was a drummer in a community parade. The group was invited to attend, and they cheered for Aaron along the route. Pastor Ulisses lost his father early in the week, and the group attended this man’s Panamanian funeral.

Mullins said, “This team worked beautifully together and showed amazing flexibility, compassion, creativity, hard work, and love.” She added, “We became so close that they are trying to form a team to come to see us in Radford. The week was beautiful, and we are thankful to God!”

For more information about how you and your church can be involved in the Kairos Leadership Initiative, contact:
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