

ARKANSAS: TRANSFORMED

Stories of Transformed Lives



Ministry for College Students

By Dan Carson, Director • Student Ministry Matters / BMA of Ark. Youth Department

Our job, as student ministry workers, isn't just to assist our students from sixth grade through their senior year. At the end of our formal time with our students, we need to help them make that transition to what is next. For many of our students, that means college. Other students may jump directly into the work force and may be closer to home. However, those that head off to college could use some advice and encouragement to continue following Christ when they leave. That is where campus ministries come into play. They work as a resource for college students as they seek to navigate the sometimes confusing world of college-life.

While many of our college towns have churches with college ministries, campus ministries have the ability to reach out in different ways. Unlike the church, their focus is singular. They exist to minister to and disciple college-age students. In Arkansas, we have three such ministries that are connected to our churches — The Association of Baptist Students (ABS) at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, the ABS at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia and Perspective College Ministry of Conway. Stuart Estes in Fayetteville, Jimmy Brock in Magnolia and Ryan Anderson in Conway all work to provide love and biblical guidance to young adults.

If your students are heading to one of these communities, I encourage you to reach out and help them get connected to one of these groups. Read below about how God is using the ABS ministry at SAU in Magnolia to transform lives:

ABS

Southern Arkansas University



The Hidden Gem Of Ministry in the BMAA By Jimmy Brock, Director • ABS at SAU

The Association of Baptist Students (ABS) at Southern Arkansas University exists to fulfill the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) by loving God, loving people and making disciples of all nations. We also exist to connect college students to the local church, knowing **we don't replace the church, but are an extension of it**. The ABS is a unique and necessary ministry because we are able to do what the local churches usually cannot do on a regular basis, which is to be present and engage the college campus for Christ. In other words, **college/campus ministry is important — very important!**

In my opinion, the work of the ABS chapters is a hidden gem in the BMAA that not many people get to see or experience. If I could go back to my youth ministry days, I would certainly place more importance on investing in our students that graduate from our ministry instead of handing them a baton and hoping for the best. College-age students are strategic for discipleship for a couple of reasons:



- **They are at the age where they are making important decisions that will set the trajectory for the rest of their lives.** They are deciding what career path they should choose, who they should marry, where they want to live and what they truly believe apart from their parents. We are thankful for the opportunity to walk alongside these students as they make these important decisions.

- **College students are the most available, trainable and sendable people on earth.** I don't see myself as just a missionary or minister, but also as a mission's mobilizer. We don't want to just evangelize; we want to make evangelists. We don't want to just disciple; we want to make disciple makers. We don't want to just pray for the harvest; we want to send laborers into the harvest. Most people know what they are saved from, but fewer know what they are saved for.

We have a big vision for our campus, but make no mistake about it, college ministry can be challenging. I've already been asked to officiate two weddings and to take three couples through premarital counseling in the last two years. Before college ministry, I had only been asked to perform one wedding — my Father-in-law's, which was a daunting task. He ended up opting out of the pre-marital counseling. Amen and amen!

My wife, Lana, has also been very involved in the life of our ministry, particularly with the girls. Lana and I had the pleasure of ministering to a girl who was invited by her roommate this past spring semester. She grew up in a home where Christianity is despised, and the Bible is forbidden, but she came anyway and was very curious about the faith. She had never heard about the creation account in Genesis. She didn't know about David and Goliath or Jonah and the whale. She was never told about the sacrifice of Christ on the cross on our behalf to make salvation possible. As a matter of fact, she told us that **the first time she had ever opened a Bible was at the ABS**. We believe the Holy Spirit is beginning to draw her to salvation, so please make it a point to pray for her. Lana has shared the gospel with her, and we are in the process of answering her questions and helping her to read the Bible for herself.

Campus ministry is often challenging but always worth it. Would you pray for our ministry as we are preparing to engage the college campus for Christ this upcoming year?



- Register for the Student Ministry Matters Workers Retreat at [SMWR2023.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/student-ministry-matters-workers-retreat-2023).

- Check out the Student Ministry Matters podcast at studentministrymatters.podbean.com or through most major podcasting platforms.

- Join the Student Ministry Matters Community on Facebook at [Facebook.com/groups/StudentMinistryMattersCommunity](https://www.facebook.com/groups/StudentMinistryMattersCommunity).





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The Blessing of Second-Generation Ministry

By Michael Hight, Hispanic Coordinator • BMA of Arkansas State Missions

One of the greatest thrills of my current ministry has been to see how God continues to work through the second-generation men in our Hispanic work. I had the privilege of baptizing German Galindo in the beginning months of our mission work. I know I have said a lot about him, but to see how God gripped his heart to return to Mexico to reach his people has been exciting, to say the least! He already has three Bible study groups started since returning and our Hispanic churches in Central Arkansas are continuing the DNA of our association by supporting him spiritually, physically, by sending supplies and financially through a small stipend.

German is just one of the second-generation men that God is working through, and I am so glad I get to have a small part of this ministry! I am also convinced that there will be others in the future who will heed the call to ministry or missions. Many are faithfully serving in their churches, and the work continues to prosper.



Who is Drew Whitton?

By Clinton Morris, Missionary Pastor • The Table, Springdale

Drew Whitton is the newly ordained pastor who will be leading The Table Baptist Mission beyond the organization service on June 25. While this is an exciting feature that has occurred in the last two months, this does not paint the full picture.

Drew has been married to Kaley for 10 years, and they have been praying that God would give them a child. She is a schoolteacher, and he is a graphic designer and manager at Rausch Coleman. They have been living in the Northwest Arkansas area for around eight years. God had been working on Drew and Kaley for four and a half years and has been encouraging them to do more for the kingdom of God.

I met Drew and Kaley in January of 2020 at the very beginning of our church planting endeavors. I wrote a report for the Baptist Trumpet way back then. I met them on the same day my family and I had gone down to visit Darrin Smith and Life Journey. Later that same day, I hung out with a small group of Christians who were meeting up to play boardgames. This was the first time I met them, and God made that meeting stand out. Over the next few months, we had more meetings and the birth of The Table Bible Study, and the transition from our house to the Old Pine Coffee Shop.

I kept asking God who was to pastor the future church, and God made it clear it was to be Drew. Over the last year and a half, I have seen Drew become a fantastic pastor. After the organization service, Drew and I plan to have a weekly one-hour call so that we can continue vision casting for the future. Even as I go to plant more churches, I am looking forward to the day that The Table will plant its first church.





A Blessing

By Johnny Shew, Missionary Pastor • Faith Chapel, Flippin

When Bro. Paul asked me to write about someone who has been a blessing to Faith Chapel, I struggled because there have been so many, both from our membership and outside. We have been blessed by many individuals, churches, local associations, the state association and the national association with prayers and support, especially since we started the building project for our mission, it is humbling. The Lord has truly blessed us through the faithfulness and obedience of His people in the BMA, and as I said, we are humbled.

But as I thought about the sheer number of people who have prayed, given and helped us, that have truly blessed us, someone stood out, or I should say some stood out. Because it wasn't a person, it was a group that I chose to write about. I want to tell you about a group that you know well, and we can never thank enough — The Master's Builders.

Karen and I have known Eddie and Carol Sikes for several years now. We consider them dear friends and had planned and hoped to have The Builders help us ever since we knew we would build a building, but we really didn't know any of the rest of the group. We wanted to have them up last year, but we simply were not

ready, so we committed to get ready. We finalized our plans, counted the costs, downsized our plans, counted the costs again, did the dirt work, parking lot and septic system first to accommodate their campers, then poured the concrete slab.

We had originally planned for them to come in March, but again, we simply were not ready. But thanks to some creative scheduling, they were able to switch us with their April commitment, and this time we were ready. April 3 was the day we began framing, and make no mistake, we give God the glory for making everything come together in His own time. He made it all happen, and it was amazing to be a part of God's plan.

The first to arrive were Eddie and Carol, then David and Dusty Axe. They got the power for their campers and the jobsite straightened out, then went to Haskell to get the work truck and trailer, and I must say they are well equipped and organized. The framing lumber and trusses were delivered on Friday, and on Saturday, April 1, they began rolling in and, with every camper, I wondered if we had made them enough room. After they had all arrived, they all fit, a little tightly, but they all fit. Praise God!

Over the course of the weekend, we all met and fellowshiped, and they joined us for worship on Sunday. We immediately loved them all. Our rented building was full! It was amazing! Then Monday morning came, and about 6:40 a.m., we all began to meet on the slab. It was a glorious morning and, at 7 a.m., our members joined hands with their members, and had devotional and prayer. God's blessings began to flow, along with my tears, and the next three weeks were indeed something to behold. We went from a bare slab to dried in with shingles — 4,000 sq. ft. in 13 days! That is incredible by anyone's standards, but especially for a group whose average age is 77 years old! We, and they, give God the glory for that, too!

In the middle of that 13 days was Easter Sunday, and we decided to have a "service on the slab." It was amazing! At this point, we only had the walls standing, with a wide-open roof, but we took a portable piano up there and lawn chairs, and we had a wonderful service with a record attendance. Once again, God's blessings and my tears flowed abundantly.

By the time that they had to move on to other jobs after three weeks with us, we went from a field to a beautiful, wonderful building I must say. But what we mostly built over that time were lifetime friendships and an agape love for them that will never go away.

These men and women of the Master's Builders are, indeed, special, and I hope the BMA treasures them. We sure do, and



Monday night Bible study group.

God is Faithful

By Ruben Isturiz, Missionary Pastor • Misión Ebenezer, West Little Rock

"He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psa. 126:6 ESV).

God is faithful to His Word. Sowing the Word of God in the Hispanic community is a difficult task, especially if we want our work to reach the unbelievers. At Ebenezer, we aim to present the gospel to those who have never made their decision for Christ or have never had contact with a Christian church.

Working with Hispanics is changing our schedule, and our approach is very different. In general, our people work every day until the sun goes down. Thank God, we have been able to establish two new home groups with people who do not attend a church. The experience with these two groups is that we start at 7 p.m. and usually finish at 9 p.m.

Together with you, we have been praying for people who are thirsty for the Word of God. The Lord has responded with two groups thirsting for His Word. On one occasion, Kory and I did not leave the Wednesday night group until 11 p.m. because they had many questions. We arrived home tired but with the joy of seeing the thirst for His Word.

With these two groups we started three weeks ago, there have been many questions regarding the gospel, and what we have done is to sow His Word, pray and pray. It was a wonderful thing that, in the same week, two in the Monday group made their decision for Christ. On Wednesday, four made their decision for Christ for a total of six new people for the kingdom of God.

With joy, Kory and I said to each other, "It was worth it — to talk, to leave home late, to arrive tired and to wake up early the next day to work." God has gloried in bringing people into the flock. God is faithful, we have returned home with the joy of the Lord.



Wednesday night Bible study group.

as I said, we can never thank them enough. I want to try and name them, and thank them, and tell them how much we love them, and these are in no particular order, I'm going down the line of their campers in my mind, trying not to forget anyone — Eddie and Carol Sikes, David and Dusty Axe, Dick and Rose Bittner, John and

Kathy Bateman, Wayne and Leona Wimberly, Danny and Nelda Malone, Mike Green, Charles and Linda Bobo, Leon and Sabra Murphree, Leo and Myrtle Sketo, Billy and Dawanna Keys, Bobby Samuels and Donnie Cockerel. We are forever in your debt. And just one more thing — "You're doin' fine boys, keep it up!"

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Mustang Message

What CBC Means to Me

When I think about the meaning of CBC, the words **caring** and **sharing** come to mind. The college has been my home away from home for more than 50 years. I basically grew up here. My mom brought me to campus from our dairy farm in Texarkana in 1964. It was a five-hour drive, on a two-lane highway. I knew very few people when I arrived, but I did know C.O. Strong and I ran into his daughter in Old Main. The cafeteria wasn't open yet. I was aware of that and had planned on walking to a nearby grocery store to buy food for a day or so. She graciously invited me to eat with her family. Imagine my relief when I got to eat with the Strong's. CBC has always been like that — a place filled with people who care not only about each other, but for incoming lonely students as well.

I didn't think I would make it as a student. I was not confident in my ability to obtain a college degree. I had received a church scholarship to attend CBC and fully expected to not be able to handle the courses. God placed the faculty I needed to help my confidence grow and enabled me to do well in class.

I found CBC to be a place that sheltered me from the world and where Christian ideals were practiced and expected from the students. My teachers openly talked about Jesus and shared their faith. I loved that! Dr. Harold Cooper was my teacher, mentor and friend. He was always available to talk and share his wisdom. That was such a blessing. I spent many hours in his office, learning life lessons concerning teaching, marriage, children and the challenges of everyday life. We walked early in the morning in the gym as he invested his time and wisdom in me.

I am blessed that CBC has provided me with a job where I can live out my life's passion. The summer I graduated from college, Dr. Cooper came to my home and asked me to begin teaching in two weeks! I was frightened, but excited. CBC has blessed me by allowing me to become a part of students' lives and to teach in a Christ-centered environment.

During my years at CBC, I've been able to make friends and, as it turns out, they have become friends for a lifetime. They have been members of local churches, my fellow classmates, teachers, staff and students. Each year, new students and new staff members arrive on campus, providing me with the opportunity to make more friends. Each student is a unique individual that enriches my life. All these new friends add to my life experiences as we interact on campus daily. Each is a unique opportunity to grow my circle of friends. These friends are the kind you may not see for years, but, when you see each other, no matter how much time has passed, you are forever connected. If I need a friend to talk to, someone to pray with me, share a burden or a new blessing, I can reach out to these friends any time of day or night. Some of these friends have graduated on to Heaven. I look forward to visiting with them again someday.

My colleagues at CBC have been one of life's many blessings. They are always available if I need to discuss a classroom or departmental need or idea. Sometimes I have concerns and I just need them to listen while I share my thoughts. These friends share my blessings as well as my trials. They are ever ready to give insightful observations, ideas or concerns. I can count on them to pray for me as well as with me. I never feel that I am intruding into their time. If I need help, they are always willing to provide for the need. Sometimes, they come and offer help when I didn't even know I needed it.

One of my favorite things as a teacher at CBC is the ability to share Scripture in the classroom. Dr. Cooper had the habit of sharing a scripture before each lecture. Those short devotionals enriched my life. When I began teaching, I felt that God wanted me to continue Dr. Cooper's tradition. So before beginning each lecture, I share a scripture and try to relate it to real life experiences. This allows me to share how God has taught me life lessons through prayer and His Word.



By Judy Gabbard

Judy Gabbard

1964–Present
Over 55 years of
Dedication



1964

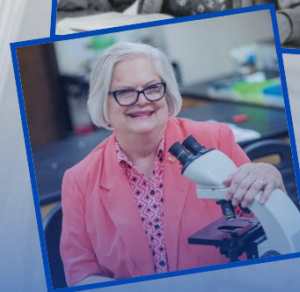
Freshman
Central Baptist
College



Science & Math
Instructor
Central
Baptist College

1968

Science & Math
Department
Chair
Central
Baptist College



“My colleagues
at CBC have been
one of life's
many blessings.”

Occasionally, these discussions prompt more in-depth discussion of the shared verses. I am given the opportunity to share about God's intervention in my personal life as well. I share personal events, concerns, hopes and dreams.

Through this great institution, I can share my love of biology with my students. At CBC, I am free to integrate God into my lectures. I can share my wonder of a God who is the Creator of life. I can share that He is the Master Planner and Agent of Creation in our dimension. Truly, we are wonderfully and fearfully made. I am free to share that God's creation of our body defies man's fumbling attempts to create devices to aid us in moment-to-moment body functions. We can compare man's answer to heart function, kidney function or many other functions with the organs He created. Man's attempts fall short. The very complexity of life demands that there is a Creator. I have the privilege of sharing this every day with my students.

CBC was a place where my husband and I chose to send our children to obtain a college education. We knew each class would be taught from a Christian perspective. What a blessing it is to be able to trust that your children will receive an education infused with godly principles. There are so many false ideas presented as facts in secular colleges. These young minds will forever be affected by the ideas they are taught. Christian principles can be emphasized or ridiculed as superstitious in the classroom. At CBC, Christian ideals are part of the classroom environment. Our teachers become lifelong mentors and friends. Students are welcome in faculty offices to obtain one-on-one help with their classes as well as one-on-one life discussions. Faculty office doors are always open to students whatever their need. What a joy it is to have a student come into my office for help or just to share a blessing, a burden or just to talk.

I praise God for allowing me to be a student, faculty member, colleague and friend of CBC.

CBC is committed to transforming lives by providing an education that integrates Christian faith and academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment.