



## One Baptist Association Doing Whatever It Takes

From WIRED to Hispanic outreach to back-to-school ministry and all points in between **Columbia Baptist Association** is on the move for Christ. Its aim is to do whatever it takes to reach its Jerusalem.

After fourteen years as director of missions, Jerry Grandstaff still dreams of penetrating his association's Jerusalem with the gospel. He has a heart for reaching the inner city, Hispanics, and other ethnic groups. He counts it a privilege to link arms with other like-minded ministers in fulfilling the Great Commission. Here are just a few of the ways his association is accomplishing its mission.

### WIRED

Are you WIRED? Youth, children, and adults in the Columbia Baptist Association are!

For over three years, Grandstaff met with youth ministers discussing how they could place in the hearts of the young people the "meeting needs, sharing Christ" concept. In 2005 WIRED was birthed out of these conversations. WIRED was chosen because Columbia Baptist Association is in the wiregrass area, and the term also illustrates being wired together in Christ.

Mark Anderson, WIRED Camp Director, defines WIRED as "a community-based mission camp connecting local churches together to more effectively reach our community for Christ through the compassion, love, and value we show them as we serve them regardless of their life circumstances."

Anderson says WIRED

- Builds unity among the student ministers.
- Lets participants see how the body of Christ extends into the world.
- Exposes local churches to the different ministry opportunities in their community.
- Enables local churches to become ministry partners year round.
- Builds Christ leaders for tomorrow by placing young adults in leadership roles.
- Has been a vessel for God to call over 100 young people into the ministry.
- Is fulfilling the Great Commission by reaching one's Jerusalem.



This year children's ministry venues were abuzz with 16 Vacation Bible Schools, two sports camps, and work at the local Boy and Girl's clubs. Social ministry opportunities included thrift stores, soup kitchens, nursing homes, adult daycare facilities, community senior centers, local hospice operations, special needs camps sponsored by the City of Dothan, and the local area food bank and rescue mission.

Those gifted in construction found work to do at local schools, homes of the elderly and less fortunate, some churches, and at the Ark, a ministry site operating out of an old hospital. All total there were 57 ministry teams—20 children's teams, 12 social ministry teams, and 25 construction teams serving Christ each day during the week of WIRED.

WIRED is a massive operation involving over 200 volunteers working each day to provide materials and meals for participants at all 57 sites. Daily these volunteers fed 765 WIRED participants and 65 staff members. To make this all happen 34 churches from eight different Baptist associations and one Methodist church united.

While WIRED exists to propel youth into ministry and leadership roles, adults make this an intergenerational event. Adult chaperones join each ministry team. Other adult volunteers cook, serve, and deliver meals to all WIRED participants. Some adults transport youth to ministry sites and remain to clean the facilities at each of the host churches.

So, what about follow up? Information is shared with the local churches and follow up is fashioned in a way each deems appropriate. Dr. Ken Farley, associational coordinator of youth work, returns to each construction site and makes sure the work was satisfactorily completed. Decisions of student participants are given directly to their respective student ministers for immediate follow-up.

Lives are forever changed because of the impact of WIRED. A worker at the Dothan Rescue Mission sums it up this way, "I am where I am today because of WIRED. My daughter attended WIRED last year and was saved. Consequently she started attending church and I went with her. We are now both active in church and were even involved in WIRED this year."

Anderson asks us to pray for a clear vision and a unified spirit. What began small has grown into a full-blown ministry.

Read more about WIRED [www.wiredweek.org](http://www.wiredweek.org). Contact Stacy Crunk or Farley at the Columbia Baptist Association (334) 794-6281 or talk directly to Anderson at (334) 790-0670 for any questions you might have.

### **Reaching Hispanics**

A Hispanic Coalition was formed as a joint effort by the North American Mission Board, the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions and seven associations of which Columbia Baptist Association is a member. Your gifts given through the Cooperative Program help NAMB Missionary John Gunter shape this outreach to the Hispanic community.

Gunter employs a variety of ministries, Bible studies, and works closely with a Hispanic congregation at Calvary Baptist Church in Dothan. Inroads are being made. Pray that additional churches will soon become a reality.

### **Back to School**

Crunk, Director of Church and Community Ministries, floods the churches with flyers in the middle of June seeking donations of school supplies. Due to the amount of families in need of school supplies, the ministry center is open three Wednesdays right before school starts to assist with this need.

Clients are interviewed and the gospel is shared with them. Crunk beams, "In 2008 we had a mother and daughter accept Christ just from our school supply ministry. This demonstrates that God can use anything to bring the lost to His saving grace!"

In 2009

- 157 book bags/plastic bags of school supplies were donated
- 63 families were assisted
- Extra school supplies were donated to two area schools
- 13 volunteers bagged supplies and prayed for recipients

The stores are stocked with school supplies right now. Maybe you need to consider if this is a ministry your association, church, or you can be involved in?

### **You can support this association by praying for:**

- Churches that are seeking pastors and staff members
- Recipients of the School Supply Ministry to have hearts open to the gospel
- Churches with revival services this month
- The possibility of opening another Ministry Center in the Northwest section of Dothan
- Follow-up of decisions made during WIRED
- And by giving through Associational Missions and the Cooperative Program.

Grandstaff and his staff are reaching their Jerusalem. Next step is Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth! Contact the Columbia Baptist Association at 334-794-2117 and find out how you can duplicate similar ministries in your area.

Janet Erwin is editor of *Missions Mosaic* and just returning from a mission trip to Latvia.