Twenty-five students from Dallas Baptist University spent the first part of their summer break on a 12-day trip ministering to orphans in Guatemala. The students have become part of a growing ministry partnership that DBU has developed with Buckner International, a Christian social service organization based in Dallas.

DBU's first trip to Guatemala in 2003 took students to Xela, Guatemala, a town located approximately seven hours outside of Guatemala City. This summer, the students returned to Xela, teaching Bible lessons, repairing and cleaning buildings, and above all else, sharing the love of Christ with the orphaned children.

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“broken shoes,” said Hendricks. “He wore a pair with a sole that had come undone from the shoe. Every time he would kick a soccer ball, the sole would drag on the ground, and it got worse and worse every day.”

To help Chito, Hendricks and fellow DBU student Chris Holloway pooled their money together to buy Chito a new pair of shoes. “We got the shoes on the last day that we were there, and it was good timing, because when we went to give them to Chito, we noticed that he was completely barefoot. His old shoes finally went to the trash.”

“I remember one of the days, Chito fell asleep in my arms for a couple of hours,” continued Hendricks. “During his nap, I prayed for him, asking God to grant him peace and comfort and the knowledge that he is deeply loved by his Heavenly Father, even though his earthly parents abandoned him. I know that I will probably never see him again in this life, but I pray that I will have a chance in the next.”

Jill Beard also grew attached to a special little child, a girl with disabilities named Yessica. “When I walked up to the girls’ room, I noticed something lying on the bed,” Beard explained. “As I got closer, this little girl popped up with a huge grin on her face. She had such compassion, and although she could not walk or hold herself up or speak very clearly, she sang with all of her might and showed love to those around her. My favorite memories were when we would just sit and sing together.”

“Every trip that our students make with Buckner to orphanages around the world, something special happens,” commented Jay Harley, DBU dean of spiritual life and sponsor for the trip. “Our students have the chance to put their faith to action. It is exciting to see them share the love of Christ with kids who may not receive much love on a regular basis. God uses all of these trips to teach students about His work around the world and about His calling to serve others with our lives.”