

# THE DALLAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY GLOBAL SPORTS MISSION INITIATIVE

Dallas Baptist University's Patriot Athletic Department launched the Global Sports Mission Initiative to allow DBU student-athletes the opportunity to share the love of Christ, while using their God-given athletic training and talents to minister and spread the Word of God abroad. The Global Sports Mission Initiative was created as a vision by DBU President Dr. Gary Cook, Executive Vice President Dr. Blair Blackburn, Dean of Students and Spiritual Life Jay Harley, and Director of Athletics Ryan Erwin.

In 2003, DBU established a student missions partnership with Buckner International (formerly Buckner Orphan Care International). The first trip DBU took with Buckner was in 2003 when Dr. Blackburn led 26 students on a combined study abroad/global mission trip to Central America. The course focused on servant leadership and the development of the student's own personal leadership philosophy; Dr. Blackburn wanted students to take what they had learned in the classroom and apply practical knowledge in this field-based, hands-on ministry to Guatemalan orphans. "DBU's hope was that the students would

develop a lifelong love and commitment to global missions as participants, faithful givers, and prayer supporters," shared Dr. Blackburn. DBU continued their mission activity to Guatemala, taking students on study-abroad mission trips several times over the next six years.

In January of 2007, Dr. Cook and Dr. Blackburn traveled with Dr. Ken Hall, Chief Executive Officer of Buckner International, and Dr. Albert Reyes, now President of Buckner International, to Guatemala to consider advancing DBU's and Buckner's partnership in missions. This was Dr. Reyes' first trip with Buckner in his role, at that time, as President of Children and Family Services. During the trip, Dr. Sergio Mollinedo, husband to the Buckner Guatemala's director, Chiqui de Mollinedo, introduced the opportunity to use sports as a part of the DBU missions ministry. Dr. Mollinedo was an avid softball player and was regarded as one of the country's best semi-professional softball pitchers.

Dr. Mollinedo and Dr. Blackburn began to brainstorm how to use sports in future mission trips. They felt led by the Lord to develop a mission trip using DBU's Baseball players to play baseball and share Christ through sports. With the support of Dr. Cook, Dr. Hall, and Dr. Reyes, the vision of DBU's Global Sports Mission Initiative was born.

Since the beginning of DBU's Global Sports Mission Initiative, the Patriot Athletic Department and its student-athletes have been involved in seven mission trips abroad and many local mission opportunities. The student-athletes, faculty, and staff who have been

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**Dr. Blair Blackburn**  
Executive Vice President, DBU



DBU Baseball player Clay Kelly cheers on a camper as the DBU Patriot Baseball Team hosts a camp for Guatemalan children.

This special edition of the *DBU Report* highlights the DBU Athletic Department's Global Sports Mission Initiative and is produced by the DBU Office of Marketing. *DBU Report*, 3000 Mountain Creek Parkway, Dallas, Texas 75211-9299. President-Dr. Gary Cook; Executive Vice President-Dr. J. Blair Blackburn; Marketing Director-Layna Evans; Editor-Kadra Fant.



DBU Cheerleader Kayli Jackson smiles for a picture with a camper at a DBU Cheer Camp hosted in Seoul, South Korea.



## DBU Global Sports Mission Trips

### OCTOBER 2007

*DBU's Patriot Baseball Team and Cheerleading Squad partnered with Buckner International*  
**Guatemala**

### MARCH 2009

*DBU Lady Patriot Women's Volleyball and Soccer Teams partnered with Buckner International*  
**Peru**

### OCTOBER 2009

*DBU Patriot Men's Basketball Team and Cheerleading Squad*  
**South Korea**

### MAY 2010

*DBU Patriot Men's and Women's Tennis Teams*  
**Northern England**

### JULY 2010

*DBU Patriot Men's and Women's Golf Teams*  
**United Kingdom**

### MAY 2011

*DBU Patriot Athletic Department partnered with Buckner International*  
**Honduras**

### MAY 2011

*DBU Patriot Cross Country/Track Team*  
**Brazil**

### OCTOBER 2011

*DBU's Patriot Baseball Team*  
**Dominican Republic**

**What started out as one mission trip for student-athletes has blossomed into an established program of sports missions with more than 170 student-athletes participating in global missions work.**

involved in DBU's Global Sports Mission Initiative have learned that when you serve and when you give, you receive a blessing in return. What started out as one mission trip for student-athletes has blossomed into an established program of sports missions with more than 170 student-athletes participating in global missions work.

NCAA rules prohibit teams from traveling and competing on a foreign tour more than once every four years, which has worked out perfectly for DBU, with the Athletic Department scheduling six trips over four years, and then starting the cycle of trips again among the athletic teams.

Besides these international mission trips, DBU student-athletes have been involved in many local opportunities to be servant leaders to those around them.

*Written by  
 Ryan Erwin*



DBU Volleyball player Tyler Bradsher hugs a child from Honduras.