



Rebuilding Hope: *one student's journey home*

Miguel Faúndez (pictured above), a Dallas Baptist University student, awoke last February to a phone call telling him the news: his home country of Chile had just been devastated by an earthquake.

The epicenter, which struck near his hometown, registered at a magnitude of 8.8. Streets crumbled, buildings caved, and power lines fell, fueling fires and causing more post-quake damage. Electricity was quickly lost, leaving Miguel unable to make any contact with his family and friends in Chile.

Shortly thereafter, he received another unexpected phone call. "I have to say I was surprised that the president of DBU called me to ask about my family," stated Miguel. "It's good to be part of a University family that takes care of you."

"Once we found out that the earthquake impacted Miguel's hometown, we asked what we could do to help," explained Dr. Gary Cook, DBU president.

The University administration worked with Miguel to find a flight to Chile as soon as possible. With over a week of no communication with his family, Miguel had no idea what awaited him. All he could do was show up at his parents' home—praying for the best.

Unlike so many others whose lives were altered by the Chilean earthquake and tsunami, Miguel's story had a happy ending. His family was safe, and he was able to return to DBU with the good news. But, the need for help was far from over.

"After Miguel returned and told us about some of



the work that was needed," continued Dr. Cook, "we decided we wanted to send some of our students to serve in Chile."

"It was like a dream to have students from DBU

wanting to help my home country," Miguel said. "Preparing servant leaders' is not a nice quote—it is something you live every day in DBU campus life."

DBU began planning a mission trip with Miguel that was set to take place

later in the year. While it was obvious Chile needed help with reconstruction, Miguel also said that they needed ambassadors of Christ to come and minister to the people.

This past October, a team of 14 students and staff from DBU traveled to Concepción, one of the nation's largest cities and not far from Miguel's hometown. They served in collaboration with *Especialidades Juveniles* (a missions organization that Miguel works with), taught in schools, helped paint and rebuilt houses, and even stayed in host homes of local people.

"We were able to work alongside men and women who had lost their homes in the disaster. It was heartbreaking to talk with the students in the schools and hear stories about the night of the earthquake," recalled Jennifer Spain, a DBU senior.

"I hope all of the friends we made in Chile were blessed by our team—because they certainly blessed us."

To people who have lost as much as many of the Chileans did, questions about God understandably weighed on their hearts. "I think God has used this tragedy as an opportunity to share the good news of Christ with the Chilean people," continued Miguel. "God worked through the hands and feet of the DBU students to respond to real needs of the Chilean people. Christianity is not only words, but actions as well."

