During our week at First Baptist Church in Grand Isle we were blessed with the opportunity to help with many different projects for the benefit of the church and the community. The biggest job we had was to remove the old lattice from the church building and set up a new, sturdier one. Like most other structures on the island, the Pastor John’s house was built out of wood, which deteriorates quickly in the proximity of salt water, so we also sanded and repainted his house’s front porch and staircase.

Along with these maintenance jobs, a group of us helped with the small thrift shop that the church operates as part of their ministry to the community. We helped set up the merchandise in the church and organized the donations. Because the church was close to commercial establishments like Wal-Mart, we promoted the thrift shop and the church’s service with flyers that we put on cars in different parking lots. We also went door to door telling people about the church and asking them about their relationship with Jesus Christ. Although most houses were empty given the time at which we visited, most of the people we talked to seemed open and friendly to us.

We were also able to be part of the weekly youth and children’s gathering in which we played basketball, volleyball, and other games with the kids of Grand Isle. It was a wonderful experience, and I’m sure we benefitted as much as the community did, if not out of our involvement.

-Ana Barahona
What did we learn?

From being down in Grand Isle, Louisiana, our group was able to learn how to go with the flow. I know from my life especially, I’m always scheduling it out and will show up early to meetings to make sure I am on time. And when something doesn’t start on time, I start to get uptight. However, in the south things kind of adhere to a time schedule, but not really. They happen when they happen. It is something to get used to, to know that we won’t start right at 8:30AM, but instead 9:30-10:00AM. This change of pace helped us all to slow down and take a break from our lives as a student, and to enjoy the sun-shine filled days that did not have a schedule to them.

-Shelby Rae Lofthus

Back Page Story Headline

I spent this past spring break in Grand Isle, LA with 13 other students and faculty (and child of faculty!). Not only did I learn a whole lot and have a blast helping the people of Grand Isle, I also had a wonderful experience where God showed his awesome love through a little girl.

One day in the middle of work I decided to take a short break to put more sunscreen on inside the church (it was really hot!). As I walked in, I saw the pastor’s daughter, Hannah, playing with her baby brother Micah. Shewatched him a lot during the day because her mother was busy with a lot of things and had to rest often because of her pregnancy. Her love for Micah is so apparent! As they were playing, I thought about my experiences with my own siblings. I realized then, that I didn’t care for my siblings nearly as much as Hannah cares for Micah. After this realization, I felt guilty because I know I should have been there for my siblings when they were younger; unfortunately, I think that has hindered our relationship today. Seeing how Hannah acts with Micah made me want to be a better sister to my siblings. I know that something like this is not an easy task to accomplish. It will take time and very much patience! But, I know that through the possible tough times there will be beautiful times and God will be there with me every step of the way.

-Michelle Putlak