

EVERYONE CAN TELL THEIR STORY

reaching people

Evangelism

Associational Outreach — Many associations are experiencing growth as a result of Associational Outreach Leadership strategies (AOL), a partnership between the BGCO and local associations to strategically reach the lost. Panhandle Association has experienced an 88 percent increase in baptisms while many other associations are experiencing similar growth as a result of AOL.

Oklahoma Life — Reaching the Un-churched — What are un-churched people looking for in a church? How do they feel about Baptists? Do they understand the Gospel? These questions were answered during the summer of 2005 following a comprehensive study of un-churched people in Oklahoma. Results from the study, commissioned by the



Student witnessing training is possible through your Cooperative Program dollars.

BGCO Evangelism Group, are being used by ministers to develop targeted outreach strategies for the local church and a statewide media outreach campaign entitled *Oklahoma Life*. The report is available through the BGCO.

New Church Starts — Oklahoma Baptists planted 44 new churches in the first eight months of 2005. The Cooperative Program provides support for church planting across the state. Since 2004, over 1,203 people have been baptized through new church starts and 5,442 people have participated in Sunday worship services at new Southern Baptist churches.

Chaplaincy and Community Outreach — With 315 chaplains statewide, Oklahoma Baptists are touching the lives of thousands through wagon trail experiences, horseshoe-pitching competitions, Cowboy churches, disaster response and chaplaincy ministries to inmates. There are currently 17 active Evangelism Explosion ministries in state penitentiaries. The

one-on-one chaplaincy program at the Oklahoma County jail has reached 18,375 individuals with 2,321 making professions of faith.

Baptist Collegiate Ministries — BCM reaches over 13,000 young adults on 39 campuses each year. In 2005, over 1,000 BCM students participated in witnessing training resulting in 559 of their peers making decisions for Christ. College-aged students are utilizing cyberspace to share their testimonies through majorthing.com, a strategic tool developed to help reach young adults for Christ. The Web site is promoted through a customized vehicle which travels to various campuses throughout Oklahoma and is equipped with audio and video capabilities for outdoor ministry activities. ■



Through the Cooperative Program, majorthing.com challenges students to share the Gospel with university students statewide.

God's Disciples Behind Prison Walls

I met DeRay as he was serving a 47-year sentence at Lawton Correctional Facility. After DeRay learned that God was not stopped by prison walls, he was able to understand the importance of sharing his faith with others in his situation. Many of those men began witnessing to other inmates within the prison walls and beyond. Later, I was amazed to meet Rodney, an inmate at a county jail who has become a great Christian influence in prison for the last two years. I was blessed to discover that Rodney was witnessed to by a gentleman that DeRay led to the Lord many miles away, behind different bars and different razor wire. Numerous men have been paroled because of their life change, including DeRay. ■

— Eddie Coast
Coordinator, Criminal Justice Ministries
BGCO