

# PATRIOTS

in the

# FAR EAST

DBU's basketball and cheerleading teams travel to South Korea, playing games, running camps, and ministering with Korean Christians

by John Turnage

Spiritual rejuvenation is not always the same as physical relaxation. Just ask the DBU Men's Basketball Team and Cheerleading Squad, who spent their fall break ministering on the other side of the world. Joined by DBU students, coaches, trainers, and staff, the group of 42 traveled to Seoul, South Korea on October 2-9, overcoming jet lag, a foreign diet, and tiresome long days to provide service to children and homeless individuals of a distant land.

The trip was the latest effort in DBU's Global Sports Mission Initiative, which in the past several years has seen the University send teams to Guatemala and Peru on missions-based trips.

"DBU's Global Sports Mission Initiative was created to allow our student-athletes the opportunity to experience other cultures by living and serving as 'Champions for Christ' abroad, which is exactly what the basketball players and cheerleaders did," stated Ryan Erwin, DBU director of athletics, who helped organize the trip. "It was a blessing and truly amazing to watch these young men and women serve and share their faith in Christ as they used their God-given talents to minister and spread the Word among the people of South Korea."

Rising early each morning, the group traveled the city, experiencing the

bustling urban life of Seoul and ministering along the way. Sports clinics provided Patriot basketball players and cheerleaders many opportunities to share their athletic knowledge and prowess and, most importantly, their testimonies of God's grace and love with children of all ages.

"It was truly amazing," shared DBU basketball player Braxton Adamson, "to be able to teach these young students the fundamentals of basketball while sharing the love of Christ."



*Dr. Billy Kim, world-renowned Korean Baptist leader, translates a sermon by Jay Harley, DBU dean of spiritual life. Dr. Kim is the former pastor of Suwon Central Baptist Church and has also served as head of the Far East Broadcasting Company, as well as president of the Baptist World Alliance. Dr. Kim, and his son, Dr. Joseph Kim, helped organize the DBU visit to South Korea.*

The DBU student athletes, who received significant fanfare from their young observers, joyfully gave autographs to their supporters and delighted them in their very personal and friendly approach. Cheerleaders worked diligently to teach special cheers to their students and invited them to join them in the limelight of performing at the DBU basketball games during their stay in South Korea.

"I was so proud of the girls that week," reflected DBU Head Cheer Coach Skyla Alvarado. "They were able to bless hundreds of lives through their teaching, while also providing a great service for these schools."

Along their journey throughout Seoul, the group also embraced the homeless. An afternoon spent at Seoul Station saw them deliver meals and engage in a very

memorable time of fellowship and prayer.

"Despite the language barrier, I was able to see God work through prayer with the homeless people," said DBU cheerleader Michelle Grose. "It was so moving to see the Holy Spirit intercede during prayer to impact the homeless. It was very evident that they experienced the love of God."

Aside from their ministry efforts, the Patriots enjoyed several occasions of spiritual rejuvenation in the company of fellow believers. They attended services at Wonchon Baptist Church and Suwon Central Baptist Church. They also had the pleasure and distinct privilege of hearing a sermon presented by the renowned Dr. Billy Kim, former pastor of Suwon Central Baptist Church and past president of the Baptist World Alliance, as well as former head of the Far East Broadcasting Company. In addition, the group had the opportunity to tour the facilities of the Far East Broadcasting Company, which airs Christian music and sermons throughout the Eastern Hemisphere, including broadcasts that can be heard in North Korea.

Americans and Koreans, but Christians all, their testimonies inspired one another. "Grateful for our commitment to make this journey, the Korean Christians in turn inspired us by their passion for Christ," explained DBU Head Basketball Coach Blake Flickner. "All over South Korea, thousands of believers go to early morning prayer services six days a week. The churches are full, and their enthusiasm was contagious."

Interspersed with their mission work, the DBU Men's Basketball Team performed well in their three official games during the week. Following friendly pre-game exchanges of cultural gifts and pleasantries, the Patriots took on two of Korea's premier institutions, Kyung Hee University and Chung-Ang University. The games proved to be the first of the new season for the Patriots, who,

according to NCAA guidelines, were only allowed to practice a few times prior to the trip. Battling hard, the Patriots fell to the Korean universities in both contests.

Their final game on the trip pitted the Dallas Baptist Patriots against American Patriots as the team took on an all-star squad from OSAN United States Air Force Base. Battling to the end, DBU secured the victory.

"Our trip to Seoul was an incredible opportunity," said

Coach Flickner. "We thoroughly enjoyed playing the various teams, and we learned several things that will make us better for the season ahead."

"However, basketball was a very small part of our experience. The trip was memorable because of the fellowship and worship we were able to enjoy with believers from half-way around the world. The clinics we held provided a great opportunity for our players to share their testimonies and to be a witness to the next generation of young people in South Korea. I was very proud of our student athletes and the love they showed to these kids. I know that we have grown tremendously through the experience."



The Patriot Basketball team played exhibition games against Kyung Hee University and Chung-Ang University. The Patriot players are pictured above with the Chung-Ang University men's basketball team.



DBU players gather together for a prayer with U.S. servicemen following an exhibition game at the OSAN U.S. Air Force Base.



Justin Pinckney, former DBU player and current graduate assistant coach, helps in drills at a basketball camp held for children in Korea.



DBU Cheerleaders lead the crowd during a game. Cheerleaders also held cheer camps for Korean children.