



# News From Colleen

Moblizing & Training Laborers into God's Harvest Field!

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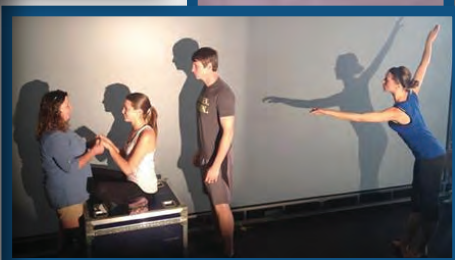
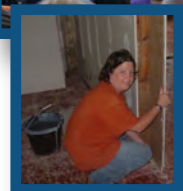
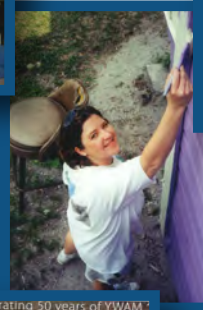
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September 2015

## WHAT? It's been 20 years!?!

This month 20 years ago (I know, I can't possibly be that old, right?), I was packing up and leaving home to attend a Discipleship Training School here at YWAM Orlando. At the time, I had no idea what that decision would turn into. I did not anticipate God calling me to be here for 20 years. I feel like I need to just keep saying it to believe it - 20 years, half my life, spent serving at YWAM Orlando. And what an honor it has been. Someone asked me yesterday, "Do you get paid?" I replied with, "No, I am a volunteer." They looked at me a little dumbfounded and asked, "Well, how do you live?" I responded about supporters, faith and the value of why I do it. These 20 years have really been a faith journey of seeing God provide all my needs and use me to bring His Kingdom to earth. Month to month, bills have been paid, trips have been taken, lives have been impacted. I recently spent some time looking back through 20 years of pictures and was reminded of so many forgotten journeys, so many people who God has brought in and out of my life, so many stories of His faithfulness. He is truly a great God and it really has been a privilege to serve Him this way. And 20 years is not long enough. I am looking forward to the next 20 years. Thanks to everyone who has partnered with me in giving and prayer to make this all possible!

Here are a few pictures from the last 20 years!





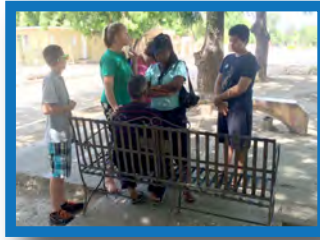
## And a Child Shall Lead Them!

Our summers are normally busy hosting youth outreaches. Here is an amazing story from a 12 year-old on a trip to the Dominican Republic this summer.

*We were walking down the street asking God who we were supposed to talk to. There were people everywhere, but God brought our attention to a man who was sitting quietly in front of his home. We slowly approached him and introduced ourselves. Eventually our conversation turned to spiritual things and I knew God wanted to communicate to this man how deeply He loves him. I explained the simple Gospel to him while he listened, staying intently focused on what we were saying, despite all the noise and commotion going on around us. We asked him if he had accepted Christ into his heart, and when he said he hadn't, we asked him if he wanted to. He said, "Yes," and we led him through a simple prayer as he committed his life to Christ for the first time!*

*After we prayed, his countenance was different. Where there was once a hint of sadness, there was now a glimmer of hope. A blank stare was replaced with a light that now shines in his eyes.*

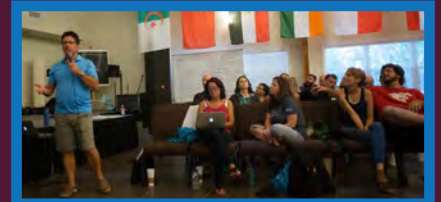
*Then I heard God say to me, "See? I will use anyone, if they will only obey me. I can change hearts, just obey me." I'm so thankful God used me. He spoke, we obeyed, and now we have a new brother in Christ!"*



## Staff Training

At the end of every summer we have a week together as a complete staff team.

This year our first 4 days were an amazing time talking through our values and realigning ourselves to God and each other. Then we had a fun 4 days playing together at the beach! It is always such a refreshing week!



## A Cup of Soup, Some Hope, and a Party in Heaven!

Our Spring Discipleship Training School just returned from 2 months in South Africa a couple of weeks ago. Here is a story by the team leader and her husband.

*"One day we went to provide food for a neighborhood in Worcester that is known for poverty and gang activity. When we arrived I was struck by the appearance - several rundown apartment buildings lined the courtyard, which was a giant stretch of dusty land; graffitied dumpsters sat, rusted and half full.*

*As we made our way to the center of the courtyard, the neighborhood children began making their way toward us; there was light in their eyes, a hope that broke my heart. I looked around, taking in my surroundings, and noticed that there were almost no adults among the children. The adults that chose not to emerge from their homes were peeking through tattered curtains to see what the fuss was all about. It was in that moment that I sensed the contrast of hope in the children and weariness in the adults.*

*We set up a big pot of soup and served from our van, parked in the middle of the courtyard. The children, each carrying some variation of bowl, cup, or giant spoon to receive their food, clambered toward us, hunger in their eyes. My heart sank as I realized I was looking at the face of starvation. This wasn't the Western "starving," where we throw the word around after missing an afternoon snack. No. For some of these children, this would be their first meal in two days, maybe more.*

*Once the food was gone and tummies were full, we were able to spend time hanging out with the kids. Our entire team was enjoying getting to know the kids when three teenage guys approached me. I was guarded at first, but quickly realized that they were kind, polite, and genuine in their interest in our group. Soon Charles joined us and we were both able to answer their questions; we were also trying to get a feel for where they stood with the Lord.*

*As the conversation seemed to naturally end, Damien (the most talkative of the three) said, "Please, as you get on your plane back to America, will you pray for us?" Charles said, without hesitation, that we absolutely would. After he asked if there was anything specific they wanted us to pray for, Damien said, "There are just so many things in my life that need to change."*

*I knew God was giving me this opportunity, so I took it! I told Damien and his friends about Jesus - that He is the only one who can truly transform their lives. I could see a sense of relief flood over them; they were so ready to leave their old lives behind. My heart overflowed with a motherly love for them, and before I knew it, I was speaking words of life over them. I was speaking their destiny over them. They are men of God, created with purpose, passion, and a unique calling. I explained the simple, complete Gospel to them, and then I invited them to accept Jesus - to give their lives to Him and follow Him. He is so worth it. One of the boys already knew Jesus and one wasn't quite ready. But Damien was all in; he knew the changes he would have to make and the things he would be leaving behind, but he was ready.*

*Right there, in a dusty courtyard that looked abandoned, troubled, defeated, I saw Damien come alive with hope. I led him in a simple prayer that will forever change him. I connected him with a local YWAM staff member so he can receive quality discipleship as he cultivates this new relationship."*

God Bless,  
Colleen Crawford  
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