



Partnering

to Reach and Disciple Students

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For many student ministries, Disciple Now (DNow) weekends are a major component to reaching and discipling students. It takes a tremendous amount of time and energy to plan and implement a DNow weekend, including bathing each event in prayer. This year, several SBC of Virginia churches partnered to run DNow weekends together. Student pastors Luke Southall (**Mount Pleasant Baptist Church**, Colonial Heights) and Roger Jones (**North Main Baptist Church**, Danville) shared their churches' experiences.

Luke Southall, Student Pastor
Mount Pleasant Baptist Church
Colonial Heights

DNow weekends are designed as a discipleship intensive, placing students with stronger believers to help disciple them to follow the Lord. At our church, these

weekends include singing God's praises, instruction in Scripture, discussing how Scriptures apply to our lives, serving and loving our community, and fellowship.

One very special thing God has worked out through these weekends is the partnering of fellow churches. This was especially



true this year. Our church, Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, teamed up with three other SBCV churches: **Ironbridge Baptist Church** (Chesterfield), **Enon Baptist Church** (Chester), and **Swift Creek Baptist Church** (Colonial Heights). The weekend was, in a word, amazing! Seeing youth from different churches come together to worship, serve, learn, and discuss God's truths was an immeasurable blessing.

I was reminded of Jesus' prayer in John 17 "...for a perfect unity among those who will believe in me." This prayer echoes a statement Jesus gave His disciples in John 13:35, "...that by your love for one another, you will be known as my disciples." The

DNow weekend was such a sweet foretaste of what is to come.

There were so many wonderful moments. A group from Ironbridge delivered a week's worth of meals to a homebound widow from our church. The manager of our local pool told us her prayers were answered as students from our four churches cleaned up leaves and debris in preparation for the pool's summer opening. And the relationships we made during the DNow weekend continue. On a recent Sunday, a middle school girl from Swift Creek came to support one of our girls who decided at DNow to follow the Lord's command to be baptized.

Seeing churches worship together and love one another is a God-sized blessing. I would encourage you to pray that God would open doors for you to partner with His people for the Kingdom's sake.

Roger Jones, Student Pastor

North Main Baptist Church, Danville

Our Danville DNow weekend was held the first weekend in March. We had 17 churches represented this year with 375 students and leaders. We were grateful to have 9 first-time decisions and over 20 who reset their lives.

Networking and partnering with area churches has been a powerful tool we have used to grow our Danville DNow. In 2015, North Main Baptist Church partnered with another church for DNow, and this year we have seen 21 different churches partner for a DNow weekend.

DNow was just the beginning. We have partnered with our Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) in Fields of Faith. We've had coffee house events, Dare-to-Share events, 5th Quarter events, and See-You-at-the-Pole rallies.

Partnering with other churches has built trusted relationships, accountability, support, and encouragement. By meeting and praying together, we are reminded that we are not alone.

Our events are more effective because we rely on each other and use the gifts God has given each one of us. Community and networking have allowed us to discover our gifts and talents to bless others. Partnering with area churches has allowed us to encourage one another and share ideas with each other. Our greatest benefit of partnering is reaching the next generation for Christ. We accomplish more in ministry when we work together than when we attempt ministry on our own. Thank you, SBCV, for your support and partnership.

You hear and see the phrase, "You are not alone," throughout SBCV life. It is amazing to see how the Lord has worked and moved through these DNow weekends by Gospel partnership. We pray that more churches and ministries will partner to accomplish additional ministry opportunities like DNow weekends. Let us strive together to raise up the now and next generation to know Christ and make Him known! ■