



A Deep Need



In every stage of life, no one wants to feel alone.

This was the heart behind the SBC of Virginia Young Adults Retreat held last fall.

Nearly 75 young adults from more than 10 different SBCV churches gathered at Watermarks Camp in Scottsville for a weekend filled with fellowship, games, worship from Red Letter Society, and biblical teaching from Pastor Adam Long.

The idea for the event started with 27-year-old Hanna Cauthorne, who simply wanted to organize a gathering for the young adults in her church, **Gwathmey Baptist Church** in Ashland.

Cauthorne slowly started inviting young adults from nearby churches. Eventually, Cauthorne partnered with the SBCV to open the event up to young adults across the state.

She viewed the event as meeting a deep need for many young adults.

"God has just been continuously showing me how important it is for young adults to have community and to want to be in that community," Cauthorne said.

"Through the young adults I was around, whether at my church or other groups I was a part of, everyone was genuinely looking for real, solid community.

"I got to watch people form new friendships and relationships, and I got to see people who had fallen away from the church realize how important it was to be in a relationship with the Lord and genuinely want to be around biblical community."

Ethan Callison, collegiate ministry coordinator for the SBCV, said the retreat also provided a chance for SBCV young adult leaders to connect on a deeper level.

Callison remarked, "Relationships must be built between young adults and all other generations so that everyone has a clear picture of what the Church is, and the young adults retreat provided that opportunity. We were able to see young men and women connect from across multiple churches, as well as young adult ministry leaders—and know that they are *Not Alone!*"

Since this retreat, some of these leaders have stayed in touch and partnered to reach young adults more effectively in their area.

Cauthorne praised the SBCV for the partnership and support they provided, as well as the ways they desire to support young adults moving forward.

"They truly came in with resources and support," Cauthorne said. "That was truly a blessing. They gave the green light, and we're set to go in a much bigger way next year, which is truly amazing. We're also looking at opportunities beyond the retreat for what we can do to build community and bring relationships together."

Cauthorne also has young adults making a significant impact in their local church.

"It's just really cool to see how young adults can truly give back to the church by their presence. Being willing to be there is a big thing. Truly getting to see how many young adults are fully all in for the Lord is such a blessing." ■

