



Serving with Purpose

My Summer with SBCV Disaster Relief

By Aidan Wolfgang

My name is Aidan Wolfgang, and I was extremely blessed by God to be given the opportunity to serve as a summer intern with the SBC of Virginia (SBCV) Disaster Relief ministry. My passion for disaster relief began when I joined a mission trip to Perry, Florida, where my team and I served residents impacted by Hurricanes Helene and Milton. While I was there, I experienced a sense of fulfillment and a calling like never before. That trip sparked a desire to get more involved, which eventually led me to meet Shawn Ames, Relief Ministries Director. When Shawn offered me a summer internship, I was beyond excited.

Throughout the summer, I was entrusted with a variety of responsibilities—from managing equipment reservations to organizing the disaster relief warehouse and assisting with numerous other tasks. I was able to see and take part in many different aspects of the ministry. One thing that's very important to me is having the opportunity to contribute meaningfully. This internship gave me just that. I felt useful, needed, and thankful to play a fundamental role in the mission.

Spending time in the Disaster Relief office opened my eyes to an entirely new side of this ministry—one I hadn't fully appreciated before. There's an incredible amount of

behind-the-scenes work involved in organizing a disaster response. From recruiting and coordinating volunteers to preparing and transporting heavy-duty equipment, the logistical demands are huge. The level of preparation and ongoing communication required is something I had definitely taken for granted before.

Working alongside experienced disaster relief leaders also gave me insight into the unique challenges this ministry faces. All ministry has its tough moments, but this work comes with its own set of difficulties. I had the privilege of sitting in on team discussions about real-life issues they were navigating—an invaluable experience that

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gave me a deeper appreciation for the work they do.

Towards the end of my internship, I was blessed to participate in one of SBCV's Disaster Relief Rebuild trips. It was a joy to engage in hands-on construction work, but even more so, it gave me the opportunity to connect with other team members. I had several meaningful conversations and built relationships with people I had just met—connections that I'll carry with me beyond this summer.

All in all, this internship blessed me more than I could have



imagined. It confirmed and strengthened the calling I feel toward disaster relief ministry. What I love most about this work is that it gives us, as followers of Christ, the opportunity to meet people's needs in some of the most tangible, practical ways. When disaster strikes, people are broken. They're reeling, and their lives may never look the same. They've lost the small comforts and securities of daily life.

When we step in as Disaster

Relief workers, whether on a Relief or Rebuild trip, we're given the chance to restore, encourage, and minister to them in a moment when they are deeply aware of life's fragility. Above all, we get to share the hope of the Gospel with those who need it most. ■

RESOURCE

For more information about Disaster Relief and how you can get involved and be trained, visit:

 sbcv.org/DR

