

SBC DIGEST: WMU selects Acteens panel; GuideStone to host COVID-19 webcast

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National WMU selects national Acteens panel

By Abigail Lawson

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) -- National WMU selected four outstanding Acteens as national Acteens panelists.

Serving on this year's panel are Madeleine Davis of Deep Springs Baptist Church in Peachland, N.C.; Jada Hanson of St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church in La Puente, Calif.; Hannah Howard of Retama Park Baptist Church in Kingsville, Texas; and Myriam Romero of Freeman Heights Baptist Church in Garland, Texas.



Madeleine Davis

Acteens is the WMU-sponsored missions group for girls in grades 7-12. For the past 50 years, Acteens has provided generations with the opportunity to grow in their faith with others who share the same goal: to be actively involved in missions. This includes learning about missions, praying for missions, supporting missions, doing missions and telling others about Jesus.

"We are so proud of these dynamic young women and their commitment to grow in their faith and share Christ with others," said Heather Keller, the WMU's national ministry consultant for children and students. "As they to continue to seek God's direction for their lives after high school, they go with a firm foundation based on their faith in Christ, biblical knowledge, and the benefit of godly leaders who have poured into them during these formative years."

National Panelists must demonstrate academic excellence, leadership skills and involvement in church and community. Each of these girls has served through Acteens from four to seven years.

As the only Acteens member at her church this past year, Davis plays a significant role in getting others involved in missions, including serving as a Children in Action leader in her church.

Reflecting on the importance of living a missional lifestyle, Davis said, "I believe whole-heartedly that missions should be the very heart of every Christian.

"Living a missions lifestyle means to understand our role on this earth and to abide in Christ so deeply that you constantly see and seize opportunities to lend a hand to someone and share Christ," she continued. "Caring for one's physical needs opens doors for us to also share Christ and care for their spiritual needs."

Hanson said she learned the importance of missions and about being a young woman of God through Acteens.

"Involvement in missions is important to me because it allows me to share the most valuable, yet undeserved gift that I have ever received, the gift of Christ," Hanson shared. "Jesus Christ made the paramount sacrifice so that we would be able to have a personal relationship with God, and it is only right that I share that gift with as many people as possible."

Hanson said the most meaningful thing she's done in Acteens was participate in a mission trip to Hawaii where her team hosted a Vacation Bible School among other outreach opportunities, some not planned in advance.

"This taught me that no matter how much you plan out something, you should always be flexible and trust God to be in control because His plan is the best plan," Hanson said.



Jada Hanson



Hannah Howard

Howard's family moved from Wyoming to Texas in January 2019. Their new church didn't have Acteens, so she and her mom started a group. Their first mission project was participating in a neighboring Baptist church's ministry to collect and deliver clothes, food and backpacks to migrants seeking asylum after they are processed through border security.

"As Christians we have been charged to care for the strangers that God sends our way ... to share with them both spiritual and physical hope," Howard said. "I am passionate about missions because the thought of billions of people throughout the world being eternally separated from God breaks my heart. Telling others about Christ is our privilege and responsibility. When we wake up each day seeking ways to show God's unconditional love with others, we will find that God gives us those opportunities on a regular basis."

Romero saw the power of missions firsthand, as she learned about God's love from a missionary named Audrey Gibbs. Gibbs poured into Romero's family and demonstrated the impact missions can have on an entire family. Now a believer, Romero too is mindful of opportunities to share the love of Christ.

"Living a missions lifestyle to me means going through my everyday life with the purpose of sharing God's love with everyone that I come in contact with," Romero said. "Right now, that includes my home, school, church and community. Being a part of the after-school tutoring program



Myriam Romero

has allowed me to be a missionary in my own neighborhood. As an adult, I plan to go into the medical field and know there will be daily opportunities for me to share Christ's love with the people I work with and the patients that I help."

These four panelists were to be featured during Blume, a missions gathering for girls, July 8-11, 2020 in Memphis, Tenn. However, due to COVID-19 concerns, Blume has been postponed until summer 2021. In the meantime, these girls will continue to take an active part in planning this event for 2021.

They will serve through 2020, and each will receive a \$1,000 scholarship from the WMU Foundation. They also may have speaking opportunities in their respective states and will write blogs for Acteens at wmu.com/students.

GuideStone invites pastors, church leaders for a COVID-19 webcast

By Roy Hayhurst

DALLAS (BP) -- With the COVID-19 crisis impacting the global economy, and with it the budgets of churches and ministries, GuideStone will host a webcast on Tuesday, April 21, to discuss the implications for churches.

The 90-minute online forum kicks off at 1 p.m. and will feature GuideStone staff discussing topics facing SBC churches and ministries, including:

- The CARES Act assistance
- Employee benefit implications
- Important staffing considerations
- Risk management guidance
- Word of encouragement from GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins
- Plus, a 30-minute Q&A session

The webcast is free; however, registration is required and space is limited. Pastors and other church leaders can visit GuideStone.org/COVIDWebcast to register.

"We are committed to serving as a trusted advocate and source of information for our participants who are navigating the current COVID-19 crisis," Hawkins said. "These are historic times; however, we know the Lord has a plan for His church and will see us through to the other side of this crisis."

