

“Six essentials to a summer project”

Greek
Summit in
the early
years



Several years ago I saw a commercial about Michael Jordan. You could hear his voice in the back ground listing all his failures. Then his last sentence was something like, “I have failed time and time again and that is why I succeed”. I would say that sums up my 27 years in the ministry. Any success in ministry I have seen is only due to lots of failures and God’s grace.

This past spring break I helped lead my 27th mission trip overseas. I have also had the privilege of helping lead 12 state side summer projects. If you are planning or leading a summer project, these are six essentials to what you need. It’s hard to say which are more important than the others but each is equally important. Whether you are leading a summer project overseas or not, I think these are 6 key ingredients you need:

1. community

You need lots of community. Think of ways to help the students feel like they are part of a larger family. One of the reasons The Greek Summit in Destin is so successful every year is largely due to the students spending so much time being around each other. They get to see a little of what I think heaven will be like. All these people broken like them but feeling accepted and loved.

2. care (individual discipleship)

The director should shepherd the staff and the staff disciple the students. At the Greek Summit, we pair up 4-6 student staff with one married staff. Each of the student staff meet with 4-6 students. They meet as a group and then each leader also meets with each of his guy’s one on one to talk about the content discussed in the bible study as well as talking about purity and accountability.

3. theological training

Your students need to know the basics. I have noticed over the years that students are knowing less and less of the Bible when they go to college. So we study the word with them regularly plus talk about the basics. We talk about the core doctrines: Salvation; assurance of salvation; identity in Christ; the Holy Spirit:

4. ministry training for a lifetime of ministry

At the Greek Summit, we have every student know how to do these basics: How to study the Bible; How to give your testimony; How to share your faith; How to lead a Bible study. How to follow up a person in your bible study or someone

from a contact card and even what it looks like to start a personal ministry in your area of influence.

5. developing a heart for the nations

Developing a heart to reach the nations is so critical for our students. If you want them to read through a book then I would have them read, *Let the Nations be Glad* by John Piper. It is my favorite book on helping develop a heart for missions. I would take at least one full meeting to talk about the need to go to the nations. I stress that we probably will not develop a heart for a people group until we go!

6. developing a plan

Before our students leave our project, they have to meet with their small group leader and present a plan with three action points on how they are going to reach their area of influence. For example: If their area of influence is a Greek chapter then their plan might include things like sharing their testimony with the pledge class and then starting a bible study with the pledges. Having a plan of action for the fall before they leave project verses no plan is a key to them seeing ministry success in the fall.

Finally understand that Prayer is the foundation to all these points. You and your staff need to take regular times of prayer and even fasting and prayer for your students.