

Nazarene Youth International (NYI)

President's Report for 2019-2020

Who would have even thought we would have gone through what we all had had to go through this past year? We have had to find new ways of having church and even though I feel that we have done a great job I also feel that it has taken its toll on all of us. I know that God will see us through and that we will have many victory stories on the other side of all of this. But let us look back to the past year and how North/East Texas NYI has grown over the past year.

The past year started off with the closing of district assembly and just a few short hours later 108 of our NYI delegates boarded buses headed for the Nazarene Youth Conference in Phoenix Arizona. The 108 representatives were the largest delegation to attend NYC from North/East Texas (Dallas) district. This week was filled with great times together, new friendships were made, lives where changed, and many heard the message of good news and sanctification.

Above all the fun that we had together the thing I bring back that I am most excited about is that we had 20 students accept or recommit to Christ in response to the messages at NYC 19. In addition to those who accepted or recommitted we had two hear the call to missions, one called to the ministry as a pastor, and several others called to help others and surrender to him. Nazarene Youth Conference continues to be a wonderful tool for us to reach the younger generations. It allows us to reach them on their level and to meet them where they are in their walk and allow the youth to evaluate their life, ask questions, and make life altering decisions. The next NYC is scheduled for July of 2023 and will be held in Tampa Bay Florida. We look to continue this great tradition and impact the lives of our youth with this event.

Our time apart as a district did not last long as we got together for our Autumn Awesomeness held at Yesterland farms in Canton Texas. This was a great time to sit back relax and just enjoy each other's company. The time I enjoyed most was sitting around the campfire and seeing each group coming around the corner and seeing the smiles on their faces. The relationships that were made at camp and NYC were building even more and seeing the diverse group of youth hanging out and enjoying each other's company was a joyous feeling for me. We just enjoyed going through the corn maze, riding rides, and eating together building those important fellowship relationships as we did.

This years Rally was held at Richardson Church of the Nazarene and whirly ball. We had a great message from Wally Yeager and worship was led by the Richardson Church youth band. The teen room at RCN was standing room only and afterwards we filed whirly ball with laughter and more fellowship. One of the things that I pride myself on is the complement I got from the workers at whirlyball. When Leaving the manager came to me and said thank you, she went on to say that all the groups that she has rented out to we wee by far her favorite group. She thanked us for how our kids acted, how our sponsors led them and that we were welcomed back anytime. I take pride in that because I know we have an amazing group of teens and leaders and for outsiders to see this shows me that our youth are making changes in our world.

Up next we were headed to Southern Nazarene Universities Extravaganza...but then COVID-19 hit with a vengeance shutting everything down. This was such a difficult decision to make but felt that it was in the best interest and thankfully we made it when we did because we would

have been shut down anyways. We are a field council are already working on next year's extravaganza to make it bigger and better than years before.

Speaking of COVID-19, I don't think we can ever be prepared for what we went through but I can say that I was impressed with the reaction our youth leaders had and after a few bumps in the road were able to continue to disciple our youth effectively. I personally got to be a part of several zoom meetings, zoom Sunday school lessons, and hangouts with our teens. I was able to host a virtual backyard bash to keep our teens connected and encouraged during the shutdown. I am encouraged to see this continue even as we are able to start meeting back in person.

Last year we talked about how we were encouraging and equipping the one called. We continue to make this a focal point of our ministry. Helping those hear the call on their lives and what the next steps are for them. However, in light of recent events I feel that we need to discuss being united with one another. Not necessarily being united with one another with those we relate to the most but rather a generational unity.

I feel that it is important for all of us to work towards generational understanding rather than feeding the generation divide that is present. To Gen Z and the millennials I say to you I hear you, I understand that you are frustrated with being called snowflakes, and being blamed for everything that is wrong with the world. It is not fair to you nor is it warranted. I know that you each want to be heard, and that does not mean that you necessarily want everyone to see it your way, but rather to be heard and at least listened to and be acknowledged with having ideas that can bring something tangible to the table. I am reminded of 1 Timothy 4:12 ¹² Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. Just because you are the younger generation it does not mean you do not have anything to add to the conversation. But I also say to you don't close out the older generations, strive to be part of the solution that brings generational understanding, look through a different lens and get a different perspective if you have to.

To the older generations, I ask that you work with me to help understand the younger generations and how we can together break down barriers that are between us. Listen to them and work with them rather than discredit them. Be willing to try something new and different that may reach the younger generation. The younger generations value education so, try and help learn, they value people and relationships so, foster healthy relationships with them. Don't discredit the younger generations, look through a different lens and get a new perspective if you have to.

Again, I say that generational understanding does not mean everyone gets their way but rather there is an understanding of where each one of us is coming from and there is a common ground that we can all meet at to work together for the greater good. I truly believe that we can all work together to create generational understanding and we can be united with one another.

Respectfully Submitted.

Chip Lee, North/East Texas NYI District President