

Rachel Bediako's Story



Rachel is a five-time Quest attendee and served as a wonderful assistant Quest director in 2017. She and Rev. Sandra Wimpelberg led the rededication litany at the 75th anniversary banquet on August 9, 2019.

Public speaking is the #1 fear for most people. Rachel Bediako feels the fear and embraces it.

Rachel attended one of Green Lake's Quest youth conferences in 2012 with a group from her Cleveland church, Antioch Baptist. Always on the lookout for future staff leadership, Quest Director Rev. Dr. Heather Henson spotted Rachel and her potential. With additional prodding from her parents, Rachel applied. The engaging college junior bloomed while working at Quest the summers of 2014 and 2015.

Before she worked at Green Lake, Rachel experienced some pretty tough stuff. Adapting to the unknown through a series of moves with her family plagued Rachel with terrifying times of anxiety. "I was unable to eat, explain what was wrong, and would frequently get sick," Rachel recalls. This continued right up to the time she left home for college. Her anxiety eventually subsided, only to crop up again with the prospect of "starting over" as a Quest staff member, again facing a new situation, new people and new responsibilities.

But feeling the fear fueled Rachel's desire to be open to it. "If it's scary, I feel like it's something God must want me to try," she says.

The mix of nerves and anxiousness of public speaking was now upon Rachel because she was one of the staff members picked to preach throughout the week. Rachel had never preached before. Her dad told her to use what she knows that impacts people. "She has natural power and strength," Heather said. She did well and Heather

suggested she attend Green Lake's Festival of Young Preachers in both 2014 and 2015. The Festival's mission is to identify, network, support and inspire young people in the call to gospel preaching. At the festival, participants preach for 15 minutes and receive an encouraging consultation from a preaching expert, peer discussion time and feedback from the audience. Being heard and receiving that feedback was invaluable to her.

Inspired by her father, grandfather "Papa T" and engaging pastors at her church, Rachel's chief rhetorical tools are reciting scripture and use of repetition. Her style is powerful and effective, and sharing her personal story through her sermons helps her overcome her anxiety while opening up connections with her listeners. "I love God more than my fears," she says.

Rachel credits Green Lake's Quest program for developing not only her presentation skills but also her confidence, faith and independence. During her first summer on staff she fell in love with the person she became by the end of the summer. She learned "how to be Rachel" during this 'Rachel-based' summer. But her second summer proved to be outward-focused as she left a lot of her anxiety at home, mentored Quest students and came into herself. She says, "Heather provides a platform for us to exercise our strengths. There's no place I can see myself flourishing more than at Green Lake."



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