

today and tomorrow

by Wanda Kidd, CBFNC Collegiate Engagement Coordinator

Carol Ann Hoard has served as Youth Minister at First, Shelby, since 1998 and has a passion for investing in youth and young adults. One of the ways she has consistently and faithfully done that is through mentoring interns.



Carol Ann, right, with Amy Brown

We posed some questions to her to encourage other CBF ministers to take up the mantle of mentoring young adults as the church of today and tomorrow.

Why do you think it is important to mentor young adults? It is important for me to help young adults have a positive experience working in a church setting so they can see the ins and outs of how church life works. I try to be transparent with the young adults I mentor by sharing not only positive ministry experiences I have had over the years but also sharing hard and negative experiences. I value the impact of a church investing and giving back to young adults by offering a place to serve, grow, and learn while being encouraged through the process.

In the 15 years you have had interns, what results have you seen of your investment? I have had some of the best interns go on to do wonderful things in ministry. Three of my interns from the past are currently working in CBF churches in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Mississippi. Another intern is serving as a campus pastor in South Carolina, while another is preparing to serve in the mission field. Many of the young adults I have mentored are attending or have graduated from Divinity School. Some interns have discerned their call to ministry after serving with youth, while others have determined that youth ministry is not where God is calling them.

What are some of the challenges of working with young adults in the role of mentor? The challenges have changed over the years and are different for everyone I have mentored. I feel like I have a stronger relationship with the interns who spent multiple summers working with me or grew up at First, Shelby. Another challenge of mentoring young adults is making sure expectations are clearly understood. Ministers should be constantly looking for students who show interest or in whom you sense a calling. Mentoring rarely just happens.

What are some of the things that young adults have told you about their time interning with your program? Amy Brown said, “The summers I spent interning at First, Shelby, and working with Carol Ann gave me real-life experience. I felt equipped when I started working at a church. I was always thankful that I knew I could call Carol Ann and she would still be there for me. We have developed a great friendship over the years.”