



| BY BECCA BROADDUS

# answering the call to Youth ministry



**m**any high school students mow lawns to make some money. But not many of those teenagers turn the mowing service into a career path.

**David Maness, BBA '02** and son of Dean Terry Maness, started a lawn service in high school “to just make some money.” When he went to Baylor, he kept the business. And before long, it began to grow. By senior year, Maness decided to “step out in faith” and make the business his full-time career after graduation. The lawn mowing service had turned into a successful landscape, construction and irrigation company.

In the meantime, Maness and his wife Stacy, also a Baylor graduate, decided to get involved with Young Life in Waco. The mission of Young Life, a national nonprofit organization, is to introduce adolescents to Jesus and help them grow in their faith.

“I did not do Young Life growing up,” Maness said. “I wasn’t interested. I went to church and was heavily involved in my youth group. I remember telling my mom in high school that one day I was going to become a youth pastor.”

From being a small group leader to teaching high school Sunday School classes, that passion for youth leadership continued.

“The area director of Young Life (at the time) invited me to coffee,” he said. “[The current director] said, **‘You’re called to this. You need to consider replacing me. I see this in you even though you don’t.’ I had flashbacks to what I told my mom. He called out my calling.**”

Six years after graduating, Maness sold his business and stepped in as the area director for Young Life in Waco. He oversees more than 80 volunteers and 10 staff members who minister on 10 campuses in the area through the following programs: Young Life (high school students), Wyld Life (middle school students), Young Lives (teen mothers) and College Life (college students).

“We train volunteers to go where kids are,” he said. “Our volunteers show up at the Baylor campus, in high school and middle school cafeterias, basketball practice, football games... Our work there is to create unconditional relationships. It’s a relationship-focused ministry. **I feel uniquely called to the mission of Young Life**—to the way we pursue kids, to the types of kids we pursue and the nature of what we do.”



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