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LEADER

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Faces of LEADERSHIP
Regent University Distinguished Alumni





Danette Easterday Crawford

A Youth Pastor at age 19, and a traveling evangelist

at 21, Danette Easterday Crawford ('89, School of Psychology & Counseling) always knew that her mission was to preach the Gospel. After graduating from Regent University and founding Joy Ministries, she realized that counseling the wounded goes hand-in-hand with preaching to them.

"People are so hurt and wounded," she says. "We need to have an understanding of the hurts and wounds in their lives. We can't just preach the Word at them."

A non-profit evangelistic outreach organization, Joy Ministries shares salvation and restoration of mind, body and soul through programs designed to educate, develop character and help the poor and fatherless break free of the cycle of poverty. Its chief outreach is the TV program *Abundant Life*, during which Crawford preaches the Word. The program is seen on the INSP network,

SkyAngel and various local stations. Another major outreach is the annual Mother's Day Celebration in which approximately 1,500 single mothers, widows and military wives whose husbands are deployed are treated to a meal and special recognition on Mother's Day. Crawford organized the event five years ago after talking to a woman whose husband had recently died and who was estranged from her only child. That conversation, along with the end of her marriage several years ago and her new status as a single mother, fueled Crawford's desire to minister to these women.

The organization also sponsors a summer reading camp to teach children in low income areas how to read, and "First Day Challenge" in which 500 children board a bus to hear the Gospel message from Crawford and then get to select backpacks filled with school supplies. Joy Ministries also assists students and their parents through the Destiny Scholarship Fund. Named for Crawford's 6-year-old daughter, the fund awards scholarships to children from single parent homes who are enrolled in Christian schools.

"We encourage them with the Gospel message and by meeting their practical needs," Crawford says. "People are very gracious and thankful, but it's an honor that God has allowed me to function in my calling. He's miraculously provided for us and gives me grace and strength."