

Athletes in Action

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"All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own...they were longing for a better country — a heavenly one."

Hebrews 11: 13, 14, 16

Greetings from arctic land! Hopefully those of you in the North have been keeping warm these past few weeks with these crazy cold temperatures. I think it is safe to say we are all looking forward to spring's arrival! Surprisingly enough, the frigid weather has not kept students from making the trek out to our weekly meetings every Wednesday night. Earlier this month I had the privilege to share a bit of my story with our weekly meeting crew, as February 11th marked the twenty year anniversary of me becoming a Christian. Preparing for that time and thinking through the ways Christ has impacted my life over those twenty years was both encouraging and humbling. I am beyond grateful for how the Lord revealed Himself to me and gave me a new perspective and purpose in life. The above passage in Hebrews is one I find myself going back to over and over again. In the midst of the craziness, confusion and seemingly purposelessness of life, God reminds me that this world is not my real home — heaven is. I am an "alien and stranger" here on earth, and the more I can invest my time in eternal things, the more purpose and motivation I can find in life. This puts things in perspective as I journey through this thing called life. Investing in God, His Word, and people's souls is the only investment that will last forever. Lord, help me to bring glory to You as I humbly go about the work You have called me to do.

Spring break adventures

Over our years here at Michigan, we have found the week of spring break to be a great opportunity to take student-athletes on mission trips. We have been to Orlando, Los Angeles, Detroit, Puerto Rico, and this year we have sensed the Lord leading us to the other side of the world...New Zealand.

Our AIA staff in Auckland have asked for help in starting up a campus ministry at a university there. The timing of our spring break actually fits perfectly with their ministry as we are showing up during the first week of their fall semester (the seasons are opposite in that hemisphere!). We will be active in helping get the word out about AIA, sharing the gospel, and following up people who are interested.

We actually have a few fun New Zealand connections that helped us in deciding to take this trip. First, one of the AIA staff in New Zealand spent two summers with us as a student and intern on the Colorado Project which we used to lead in Colorado each summer. It was a blessing to watch Kelsey grow while with us those two summers and it will be fun to come alongside her in New Zealand and encourage her in the work the Lord now has her in.

Second, there is a former Michigan field hockey player also serving on AIA staff in New Zealand. Jess came to faith in Christ during her time here at Michigan, and has been on staff

in Australia (her native country) ever since. She just showed up in New Zealand a few weeks ago to join the work there.

Our final connection is with Nick Willis, a Kiwi Olympic runner and 2008 Silver Medalist, who ran track for U of Michigan in the early 2000's. He also came to know the Lord through AIA during his time here and has been active in partnering with our ministry over the years. Nick is a national hero in New Zealand and will be there helping us with an outreach event.

Please be praying for the 5 AIA staff and 6 six students from Michigan who will be in NZ from 2/27-3/7.



My parents are coming from MN to be with our kids while we are gone...please pray for their sanity throughout the week :)

Winter Retreat 2015

At the end of January we took around 20 student athletes from Michigan and Eastern Michigan to Chicago for our annual AIA Winter Retreat. Our students joined about another 130 athletes from around the region for a weekend of being challenged and encouraged in their faith. This weekend is always one of the highlights of the year for me, as it is so encouraging to see the students get excited about their faith and walk away inspired to live it out in even greater ways on campus.

Here are a few quotes about what the students said they took away from the weekend...

"God has refreshed my idea of faith. I've been falling away from it since being at school and this weekend restored my idea of community."

"God has shown me that he accepts me and loves me for who I am and my past/family does not have to define me. He defines me."

"I have learned that God is good. And he is good all the time. I learned what it feels like to share the gospel with others. And it feels amazing. This weekend has changed my life for the good and I am very happy that I decided to come."

"He's helped me see my priorities in life and what I should truly be investing in. He's reminded me that He is in control, and I do not have to worry because He's got my back."



It's so great to see student from rival schools hanging out...here's some Michigan and Northwestern students.

Please pray...

...for our spring break trip to New Zealand. We leave Feb 26th and return March 7th. Pray for many opportunities to share the gospel and be a blessing to our AIA staff and the people there.

...for our kids to behave extra well for my parents while we are gone!

...for the students who returned to campus this month from the Winter Retreat. Pray for God's protection on them as they seek to live out their faith among their peers.

...for continued favor for our staff in the athletic department here at Michigan. Pray God would open doors to reach out to many more students.



Here are a few of the gals who came with us from Michigan. The two to the right of me (in matching shirts) are two freshmen on the track team who decided to come to the retreat a day before we left! It was so fun to see their eyes opened up to the Lord!

"Through all the people I have been surrounded with this weekend, God has elevated my standards of relationships and who I want to surround myself with in order go in His direction."

"He showed me that anyone can share the gospel even if I don't think I am equipped to do so. Also He reminded me time and time again that His love is endless and will never fail."



While at the retreat, the students took part in an outreach at a local youth basketball league where they were all able to share their faith. Most student said this was the highlight for them.

As you read the testimonies of the students who went on the retreat, please know that you play an integral part in their stories. We can't thank you enough for all you do for us! May God bless you!!