

# Athletes in Action

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“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors...” 2 Cor. 5:18-20

Happy Fall! I just love October. Not only because the landscape is amazingly beautiful with the changing colors, but also because it’s the time in campus ministry that you typically begin to see some fruit from your labor. September is usually spent rounding up our returning students, as well as making plans to visit teams and meet the new students God has been working in. It’s a lot of figuring out people’s class schedules and finding times to get together, along with contacting coaches to set up meetings with their teams. So now as we near the end of October, the hard work of set up is over and we are able to see more clearly the hand of God moving on our campuses. God has definitely been at work here at the University of Michigan and at Eastern Michigan University! Thank you for coming alongside us in prayer this past month, as we know the Lord has been listening and answering. We are going to devote the rest of this newsletter to sharing highlights of His work here. Thank you for the crucial role you play in what He is doing!

- ◆ This group of lovely ladies to the right are our student leaders on the women’s side. They have been doing such a great job of stepping out in faith and leading their peers. To share a few stories... Abby is starting a bible study with her volleyball team this week. Sarah K doesn’t have class on Fridays and now calls them “Faith Fridays” where she meets with new people interested in AIA. Steph is leading a weekly community group where she is reaching out to younger athletes on different women’s teams. And Sarah J, being a new believer herself, reached out to initiate a conversation about Christ with a new freshman softball player.



Madison, Abby, Sarah J, Steph, Sara D, Nicky, Sarah K, me

- ◆ At a recent AIA weekly meeting, the students were in groups discussing what the speaker had shared. The question for discussion was, “Is there anything God has called you to walk away from that you have struggled with?” Nicky, who is just growing like a weed in her faith, answered that she knew her answer wouldn’t be popular, but shared how last year God had encouraged her heart to move away from the typical college party lifestyle. There happened to be a men’s ice hockey player sitting by her who had already told the group he wasn’t a Christian, but was at our meeting to check things out. Well, he was able to hear Nicky, one of his peers, share about how her life was so impacted by God that she would choose to walk away from what most college students see as normal. I can’t help but believe Nicky’s words impacted him, and I look forward to seeing how God will continue to work in his life.
- ◆ Colby was meeting with Blake, a freshman on the track team, the other day. They were walking through a bible study on the foundations of the Christian faith that we take many of our students through. Growing up in the church, Blake had understood that Jesus had died for him, but he wondered if he had done enough to be worthy of Christ’s sacrifice for him. After explaining that salvation is a completely free gift we don’t need to “do enough” for, Colby watched a smile spread across Blake’s face as he understood more fully the depth of Christ’s love for him.

- ◆ Pictured to the right is Austin, a sophomore on the track/cross country team, with Nick Willis, a former Michigan runner who is now an Olympian. Nick, who came to know Christ through his involvement in AIA at Michigan a few years back, joined us at one of our weekly meetings this month to share his faith story. It was a perfect opportunity for Austin to invite the current Michigan cross country team to hear one of it's most famous alumni speak. Austin really has been doing an amazing job of gathering and reaching out to other athletes so far this year. He is set to begin a men's bible study this week, co-leading it with another one of our student leaders. We have been so proud of our student leaders on the guy's side...they have been active in meeting with interested new students, and involving them in what is going on with the ministry.



- ◆ I am not sure if you can read the words written on the tape on this football players arm, but they read "Glory be to God". This arm belongs to Sione, one of our senior leaders, who is trusting God to live out his faith on the field. Sione attended one of AIA's Ultimate Training Camps a few summers back and learned what it means to worship God through his competition. With their sport being such a integral part of their lives, our desire is to help our student athletes see how they can experience and glorify God as they practice and compete. And with the exposure that Michigan athletes receive, we pray they will have opportunities to share that testimony with others.

Please pray...

...for our student leaders as they continue to initiate into the lives of their peers. Pray for many opportunities to share the gospel, and that as a result more and more people would be plugged into bible studies and discipleship.

...for the follow up of the women's lacrosse team. We recently met with their team and around 10 players are interested in hearing more about AIA.

...for our hearts to be soft to the Lord and His leading. Pray we would hear from Him as we lead these precious students.

...for our kiddos to know and serve Jesus.

- ◆ "Hi Sarah, just got back from AIA! Pastor Sonny really encouraged us to engage in our community, and to think more of our purpose here at Michigan, and not to just become the next 'Michigan' man or woman. He could not be more on point. It's truly amazing how God works. It was just so, so good to be back in His presence tonight. I'm so glad I went and saw everyone also. Thanks for meeting up with me today!!" This is a text I received the another night from a student whom I had met up with that day on campus. She was involved with AIA last year, but hasn't been around much this year. Coming from a Christian home and having a relationship with Christ, she has been feeling a bit lost in her faith as she disengaged from Christian community these first few months of school. It was a blessing to be able to encourage her, and even more of a blessing to see how God worked in her life as she took the step of faith to return back to our fellowship. Yay!



How can it be that our oldest child, Mikayla, turned 12 this month?? Where did those years go?

*We hope you have been encouraged by hearing what God has been doing here on campus. Thank you for ALL you do to make this happen!*