

Athletes in Action

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“He says, ‘Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.’” Psalm 46:10

Hello again! I write to you today with an overflowing heart after experiencing God move and work on our recent spring break trip to South Africa. It’s difficult to put into words what He did while we were there, but suffice to say our lives are forever changed. Going into the trip we were somewhat uncertain about what we would be doing in Cape Town, knowing we would hear more about our mission once we arrived from our South African AIA staff. Come to find out, we were being asked to find Christians — not typically what you expect from a mission trip! Our task was to help launch an AIA movement on the campus of the University of Western Cape, and experience has taught our staff that to do so you must first find committed Christians who can be trained to reach their peers for Christ. So during our week there, we trusted God to lead us to student-athletes who walked with the Lord and would say “yes” to leading AIA on their campus. It seemed like a daunting task as we were starting from scratch, but now looking back on how the pieces all fell together, I have a greater appreciation for the above verse. God’s desire is to exalt Himself among the nations...and He will do it! We need to trust that He is already at work and look to join Him in that work. It’s not about scrambling to make things happen, but about being still, going to Him in prayer, and knowing that your labor prompted by faith will be used by Him...whether you see the results or not. Our team is abundantly grateful that the Lord *did* allow us to see some results of our labor as 4 South African student-athletes were raised up as a result of our time there! We are now trusting God that He will use those 4 men and women to shine the light of Christ on their campus. To Him be all the glory!



To the left: Our group ready to hit the campus! Back row-Taylor, MacKenzi, Nicki, Katherine, Allie, Bri, Ramona, Mikayla. Front row-Shaina, Meg, Dee, Sarah, Sdu (our South African AIA staff)

Below: Michigan volleyball past and present was represented on the trip. Two of my former teammates and two current players...so fun!



As people have asked me what my favorite part of the trip was, it’s hard for me to say anything different than just being with the team of people that went. God raised up an incredible group of people from different generations and different spiritual maturities and it was so great to see people challenging and encouraging one another. For some people, this was their first real taste of Christian community and we had SO much fun together!

This picture captures my favorite story from the trip. On our mission to find Christians we were able to meet with a few of the sports teams on campus. On our way back from speaking with the soccer team, we saw a group of girls gathering on a nearby court and decided to approach them. They turned out to be the university's netball team and their coach just "happened" to be late :) Well, we took that opportunity to introduce ourselves and they allowed us to share about AIA. After one of our students shared her testimony we all sat in a circle and shared a bit about ourselves. It was so cool to see two cultures come together like that!

As the team then began to practice, one of the players came over to us and said she had just moved from the neighboring country of Namibia and was new to the team. She was a follower of Christ and had just been praying THAT MORNING asking God for insight into how to reach out to a disciple women on her team! Then we showed up. Can you believe that??



Dee, Vendji, Sdu, Me

So needless to say, we took down Vendji's contact information and met up with her a few times later in the week. As we left, we passed off her number to the Michigan State AIA team that was arriving the week after us for their spring break. Hannah, our MSU AIA staff, hung out with Vendji almost the entire week and here is what Vendji had to say about their time together, "In 6 days, you taught me so much which is totally life changing !!! I know it's a cliché how people always use that line, hahaha, but I mean it, from the very core of my heart. I am so ready now to take up the Word of God and spread it amongst the athletes, win souls for Christ and build long lasting relationships. I trust that Holy Spirit will lead me in all ways." Incredible.



To the left is Nicki with Petunia, a student on the track team. Petunia saw our group sitting in the stadium one day and immediately got her coach and a few of her teammates together to hear more about AIA. She has the sweetest spirit and is super excited to help with launching the AIA movement on her campus. The week after we left, the South Africa students organized their first AIA social time and **70 students came!** Go God!



Bri and Taylor sharing their testimonies with the track and soccer teams. While we did a lot of looking for Christians, we were also able to share the gospel. So fun to watch some of our students do that for the first time and to be able to take the experience back to Michigan!

Please pray...
 ...for the new AIA movement at the University of Western Cape (UWC). Pray for the students who stepped up to lead that God would empower them to reach their campus. Pray against the Enemy coming to steal, kill and destroy what was started there.
 ...for Henk, our South African AIA staff who is raising his financial support to get to UWC. Pray God would raise the money quickly.
 ...for our Michigan students that went. Pray they would continue to passionately pursue the Lord.
 ...for rest for Colby as he is pretty run down by handling all the kids and his seminary and campus roles!



Words cannot express how much of a gift it was to have our oldest daughter, Mikayla, on the trip! To watch her step out in faith and trust God made this momma's heart happy!

Lives were changed in South Africa and YOU played a big role in that...thank you!! May God bless you richly!