

Athletes in Action

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April 2018

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“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.”
Ephesians 4:1

Greeting from the Keefer clan! As I write this newsletter, the Michigan students are taking their final exams and getting ready for the summer. I think I say this every year, but where did the semester go? Wasn't it just Christmas?? Unfortunately as much as I would like time to slow down, it just doesn't happen and leaning into God through the changing seasons is so important for me. So as we wrap up this winter semester and head into the spring and summer semesters, we continue to trust God for changed lives here at the University of Michigan. Most of the student-athletes stick around in the summer to take classes and continue to train for their sport, and the atmosphere around the athletic department feels a bit more relaxed. It's really a fun time to do ministry with the athletes as they have more availability and are also more apt to invite their friends to our events. This spring we will be meeting weekly on Tuesday nights with the students to help them learn how their sport can be an opportunity to worship God. They will be challenged with where their motivation to compete comes from, and prayerfully they will see how playing for an Audience of One can bring freedom in their lives. As well as meeting weekly in the larger group, our hope is to be able to meet individually with a number of up-and-coming student leaders, helping them to grow into people who can be used by God to reach out to their peers. Thank you for your commitment to come alongside us in all of this! We couldn't do it without you!!

New Leaders

One of those up and coming leaders is Nicki, a freshman on the soccer team. Here's a text I received from her after our last Monthly Gathering of the semester...

“Hi Sarah! I really thought about it and ever since I joined AIA I've always wanted to be a discipleship group leader. I know I am not ready so I was wondering if I could meet with you sometimes over the summer and you could talk to me about how to have qualities of a d-group leader...especially like Taylor and Sarah because I look up to them a lot.”

The girls she refers to in her text are upperclassmen on her team who led discipleship groups this year. I love how Nicki saw their faith and commitment and how God is now stirring in her to do the same!



Nicki and Rubina



Faithful Followers

Here's a picture of five of the *twenty* Core group leaders we had this year on campus. They faithfully came to our Core group meetings each week to be poured into by our staff, and then took that material to their peers as they led discipleship groups of their own. We could not be more encouraged by all of them and their heart to leave a spiritual legacy here at Michigan.

Pictured in the back row is Adeja, Me & Taylor, and in the front row is Kali, Sarah & Bri.

Seniors!

Perhaps the most difficult part of our job is saying good-bye to the graduating seniors. Having invested a number of years into their lives, we feel like a piece of our heart is leaving with them.

At our final Monthly Gathering this month we took time to honor the seniors and allow them to share about how God shaped them during their years at Michigan. One student shared that before coming to college he felt he had had an “education” about God, but now he is leaving with a relationship with Him. Another shared that during her years here God taught her about who she really was, and that was found in who He declared her to be. Another shared about how she came to understand the value of Christian community. To God be the glory for changing lives!



Pictured above is Colby with Nate and Adam, two seniors he has been investing in for four years. These two leave behind a trail of other men who are dedicated to seeking the Lord because of their faithfulness.

Working with Michigan students oftentimes means we are sending these men and women into influential places after graduation. Nate is set to work at top consulting firm. Adam, who has his masters in aerospace engineering, wants to be the first “big man” in space. May God use all of our seniors to make a Kingdom impact wherever they go!



Colby gave a brief charge to the seniors encouraging them with the truths we learned in Ephesians this year...to understand our identity in Christ, to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge.

Please pray...

...for our seniors that are moving on from Michigan. Pray they would be able to find a church home and continue to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. Pray God would use them to make disciples wherever they go!

...for the AIA student-athletes that are here for the summer. Pray they would continue in community and that God would use them to reach out to their peers.

...for the development of new leaders this summer.
...for us to experience God as we go to Him in prayer and in the Word.



In case you can't see it, that's the Lincoln Memorial behind our heads...the Keefer's hit DC over our kids' spring break...so many memories made!

As we send these seniors, we are mindful that you are sending them, as well. Thank you for the role you play in making all this happen! God bless you!