

Athletes in Action

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“We proclaim him, admonishing every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.”

Colossians 1:28-29

Happy Thanksgiving! We hope this letter finds you well, enjoying the beginning of the holiday season with your family and friends. As I sit here and type this, my mind is racing, filled with much gratitude for the many ways God has blessed our family over the past year. First of all, when I think about our kids, I see how even amidst the seemingly endless bickering that goes on here, there have been many sweet times of play among them. I can see how God is beginning to develop deep friendships among our kids, and if that doesn't fill a momma's heart with gratitude, I'm not sure what would! Then, I am beyond thankful for how God has used some challenging parenting and life situations this year to draw my and Colby's hearts all the more together. Where in the past those types of challenges might have caused friction between us, we are seeing growth in the way we communicate with each other while depending on the Lord...yay! Also, we are thankful for how this has just been a really fun season of campus ministry! We are seeing some of our student leaders really “getting” it in their faith, and are not only deepening their love for God, but also understanding the value of investing spiritually into others. For example, two days after suffering a season-ending knee injury, one of the Eastern Michigan wrestlers (who is only a year old in his own faith) sat down to meet with two other student-athletes to share with them about how they can grow in Christ. When the world would have told him to wallow in self-pity, this wrestler saw the eternal value in investing in the bigger picture. So fun! Lastly, I know we say this every month and I hope you don't just glance over it, but this Thanksgiving season we can't help but express our gratitude for YOU! You really do feel like family to us, as you are with us on this adventure God has us on. May you be blessed in the knowledge that God is using your partnership to change lives!

Operation Christmas Child!

For the past few years, we have partnered with Samaritan's Purse and participated in their Operation Christmas Child project. If you haven't heard of their ministry, it is fantastic! OCC annually sends out millions of shoeboxes filled with toys and supplies for needy kids around the world, all the while proclaiming the good news of Jesus to them... and it has been fun to rally our students around that cause! This past week we had around 60 students jammed into our meeting room on campus, wrapping shoeboxes, eating Christmas goodies, and getting into the holiday spirit. One of the great things for us about this project is that many student-athletes who do not come to our regular meetings will come to this one because of the service nature of it. Below is a picture of about half of the women's soccer team who came out to pack boxes...so fun!



An Unnerving Text

In the absence of any full-time Athletes in Action staff women on our team, Colby and our other male staff members have been following up on some of the female athletes interested in learning more about our ministry. Recently, Colby met with Paige, a sophomore, and was able to talk through the basics of the gospel with her. Here's a snippet of a text conversation Colby had with Paige following their appointment:

Hey Colby, sorry to get back so late, had a long night of studying. I'd maybe like to chat a bit a little before/after AIA tomorrow night. Just wanted to give a little feedback after how things have been since understanding the KGP [Knowing God Personally gospel booklet].

Hey Paige, thanks for being willing to give feedback...always open to it...I really want to hear your thoughts.

Okay, no problem, I'll give you a little feedback tonight and if I feel like I want to talk more we can figure out a meeting.

Wanting to give “feedback” is not something we necessarily hear our students volunteering to do! So when Colby received these texts he was quite curious about what Paige might say. Did he offend her? Were her feelings hurt in some way? What had he done wrong?! Well to his pleasant surprise, Paige wanted to tell him that when he shared the gospel with her, even though she had grown up around the church, she understood God’s grace for her for the first time. She talked of the freedom she had found that week in not trying to “perform” for God. That when she made a mistake, or didn’t spend time with Him, she didn’t have to “make it up to Him” in some way. His love for her is constant no matter her performance. How refreshing! We’ll take that feedback any day...praise God!



More OCC pictures...our boys had a ton of fun helping out their favorite players!

Please pray...

...for Paige and other students who are understanding God’s love and grace for them on deeper levels. Pray they would carry what they learn here with them and that future generations would be impacted.

...for the OCC boxes that were packed. Pray those kids would find hope in God, and that their lives would be changed.

...for our staff team as we begin to plan and prepare for next semester already. Pray for wisdom and unity.

...for God to grow us and our children to have grateful hearts.

...for our first love to be Christ.



Abby (in the middle on the bottom), a sophomore on the VB team has been reaching out to the freshmen on her team. We recently had her and two of the frosh over for dinner. They were all such good sports to play with our crazy kids!