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## June/July 2022 Newsletter

“Ah, Lord God! It is you who made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.” Jeremiah 32:17

Happy summer! The month of June zoomed by and the Keefer family is about to embark on an almost three week road trip...yikes! In just under a week we are traveling to my home state of Minnesota to spend some vacation time on the lake with family. Boating, cousin craziness, and fun in the sun will be in store for us there as we get some much needed relaxation time. Then we pack up our big silver van again and head from there to Milwaukee, where we will join another five thousand Cru/Athlete in Action staff at our biennial staff conference. While there, we will receive vision, training and encouragement as we continue to pursue the mission that God has called us to on staff with AIA. Our kiddos won't be forgotten that week, as they will be in a staff kid camp of their own while Colby and I attend meetings. Besides the part where we are living for a week in a hotel room all together, I am really looking forward to our staff conference! Because we will be traveling almost the entire month of July, you won't hear from us again until August when we will fill you in on all of the details. Please be praying along with us for our student leaders who are taking the baton to run our summer ministry at Michigan while we are gone. We are excited to see how they will step up and lead, as well as how God will use them in the lives of their peers. We are praying that God will bring new students along in our absence and expectantly look forward to meeting them in August! Thank you for being a part of what is going on here!

## Summer AIA

When the spring semester begins here at Michigan in early May, the pace of our ministry slows down as students drift in and out of town based on their class, practice and internship schedules. Because of that, we switch from the dedicated weekly small discipleship groups we run in the fall and winter semesters to larger co-ed weekly summer bible studies.

We actually never know who will be walking in the door on those nights which keeps things interesting :) However, one night we were especially surprised by who walked in the door.

As we were setting up tables in the local campus church we use for our bible studies, Zach, a wrestler involved in our ministry, saw his teammate walk by the front door. Zach yelled out a greeting to his teammate who came in and asked what Zach was doing there. Zach said he was there for “AIA...you know, kind of like church”. To which his teammate said OK, and looked a little surprised.

Long story short, Zach's teammate came back the following week with him and has been consistently coming ever since! Colby sat down for coffee with him a few weeks later and was able to hear his story and tell him about AIA.

This story reminds me that you never know who is spiritually interested in your life. Sometimes it just takes an invitation to allow someone to say yes to exploring their faith.



## Ultimate Training Camp

We were so excited to have three Michigan students attend our AIA Ultimate Training Camps (UTC's) this past month to learn how to incorporate their faith into their competition (and to life!). Avery, Jackson and Kim had incredible weeks as they were surrounded by 150+ other college students listening to talks and engaging in competition. Here's what they had to say about their time:

*"Heaven on earth. This camp was something I have never experienced before as it showed a glimpse of what heaven will look like... The environment that we were in really pushed us out of our comfort zones and challenged us mentally to keep our eyes on Jesus in every moment of the game. Also, being surrounded by Christian athletes really helped to remind me that when I mess up I am still accepted by God and wanted on His team. This environment was like no other, yet the real challenge is taking this to our college teams." ~Avery*

*"UTC was simultaneously the most challenging, yet rewarding experience of my life. Through the sessions and labs, I was continuously challenged with where my identity was: understanding that I am fully secure in Christ and do not need the approval of those around me to be loved or enough... This week was particularly special because of the people around me. Their love for Jesus poured out with everything they did, which encouraged me through every single moment." ~Jackson*



Avery and Jackson



*"My experience at UTC Twin Cities was one I will never forget. I went to this camp as a Student Athletic Trainer, excited to be able to serve athletes in a faith-focused environment. What I came back home with was so much more than I had expected. Though I grew up as a believer, my faith was strengthened here in ways it had never been before. At UTC God met me and showed me that following Him is more fulfilling than anything this world has to offer. I learned what it truly means to surrender everything completely to Him. In caring for athletes' medical needs during the S.P.E.C.I.A.L., I was humbled by the way the Lord was working through each person and I learned that even in our suffering, God is enough for us and that he uses our hard times to bring us closer to Him. God worked on my heart and re-ignited my passion for Him through UTC. I am now more equipped than ever to be a servant leader and a witness to the gospel of Christ." ~ Kim*

Kim graduated from Michigan in May and heads to the U of Detroit Mercy in August to begin her master's degree while she serves as a certified athletic trainer there. Her heart's desire is to be used by God to love and serve athletes in the name of Christ.

Please pray...

...for the Michigan wrestling team. For God to build up and strengthen the believers there, and for Him to use them to minister to others.

...for Avery, Jackson and Kim as they seek to continue to apply what they learned at UTC. Pray God would remind them often of the truths they learned there.

...for our student leaders as they lead our summer AIA while we are gone. Pray for new students to come!

...for us to be refreshed on our vacation and at our staff conference. Pray also for our kids to encounter God as they are in the camp for staff kids.

...for Mikayla as she transitions to college.

*You are SUCH a blessing to us! Thank you for all you do to make ministry here possible!*



Mikayla graduated from high school with honors this month. On to Marist College (NY) in August! Many tears coming from mom :)

Jairus has been up at grandma and grandpa's lake this month and look what he caught!

