

DIVERSITY



"...for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed a people for God from **every** tribe and language and people and nation..."

Revelation 5:9

The vision of Athletes in Action is to see a, "**Christ-Follower on Every Team, in Every Sport, in Every Nation**." Revelation 5:9 gives us a picture of heaven. Jesus' heart and actions show us that He is for "Every" tribe, tongue and nation. Sports has provided such a rich experience for me when it comes to cultural diversity because no matter your ethnic or cultural background if you can speak the language of sport you can communicate, compete, bond and respect one another. Sport is a way to go after "Every" person. That is why I joined staff with Athletes in Action and stay on staff with AIA. We live in a unique time where sport, although wrongly idolized, provides a platform to tell others about Jesus and to disciple others.

AIA has a lot of awesome things in place and I love my job/calling here. But we have a problem along with many other para-church organizations. The method of modern day missions in the U.S. does not give ethnic minorities a fair share in raising financial support.

I was on a team this past year with some other AIA staff from our Next Generation Leadership that had four different modules for leadership development. On our last one it felt like a mixture of "Shark tank" and Donald Trump's show "The Apprentice" except I don't think any of us got fired.

For three months my team dealt with the issue of diversity within our staff (ethnically, culturally and economically). My part of the team was to do research on the financial component of how to get more ethnically diverse people on staff and stay on staff. The evidence for the financial set backs in both the quantity and

quality of contacts to support them financially overall is far inferior to that of the majority culture. Also the method in which most para-church organizations go about training staff to raise support as missionaries can be limited to a white middle class cultural model.

The more research and interviews the heavier this got for me. This was foreign to me because of my background of where I grew up, went to school and the sports I played. I was use to seeing ethnic minorities in leadership positions over me. This is not true in our organization and there are many reasons for this. This became a heavy burden for me. One almost causing me to think about leaving staff, it was so heavy. But that would not change or make things any better.

Athletes in Action has recognized this as a gospel issue and has taken some positive baby steps in the right direction. One thing in place is the Lenses Institute which every staff is required to attend. www.LensesInstitute.com

My team along with four others gave a presentation in our respective areas to our executive leadership team in how to best move our organization forward in each of the following areas: Our Sports Complex, Digital Strategies, Evangelism & Diversity. This month we will hear back from them to see if they will accept our proposals. Please pray for AIA as a whole to take significant strides forward in all four areas. Please pray for ethnically and culturally diverse people who love Jesus and are awesome leaders to join our staff and stay on staff so we can more effectively reach "Every Athlete, Every Tribe, Every People and Every Nation."

~Taylor~

SHOUT OUTS TO JESUS!

● **SportLinc Team**- Last year we had three on our team, now we have seven! Pray Psalm 78:72, we want to have the right heart and effective skillful hands.

● **SportLinc** - As the director I have had to grow a lot in organizational leadership. I am still coaching campus via Skype/Google Hangout (4 this year compared to 6) but a lot more of my time is spent pouring into my staff team.

● **Sinclair Open Doors**. 38 baseball players heard a testimony from our local college pastor and the gospel in T-Grove baseball language in mid August. One guy has given his life to Jesus! Many more to follow up with and who are spiritually hungry. 12 Softball players heard a testimony from another student athlete and are starting to get involved in our weekly meetings partnered with University of Dayton. 1 Volleyball girl named Carly gave her life to Jesus last week and 11 of 13 volleyball girls expressed having a 9 or 10 of spiritual interest on a scale of 1 to 10 after one of the team meetings. Pray for an open door with the men's basketball team and for follow up with Sinclair woman's basketball

● **937 Leadership Retreat**- There were seven colleges at our 937-leadership team retreat. I taught on Psalm 27. If you want the ammo from that gun let me know and I will shoot you with it. God's word has power!

● **Serving the homeless** at Target Dayton. The is a church in downtown Dayton for street people that both proclaims God's word and demonstrate it by feeding people in a restaurant type setting multiple times a week. Pray for sixty athletes from seven colleges to sign up and learn how to serve.

● **New Campuses** We have launching retreats in four cities (Atlanta, Chicago, L.A. and Philadelphia) I will be in Philly Nov 11-13. Please pray for us and myself as I lead our launching new campuses.

● Pray for SportLinc's organizational budget 43% of \$450,000 has been raised!

● Jesus Film Translation for a people group in 10-40 window with one million speakers (\$36,000)

● Praise God for some new monthly support (\$275) that has come in. Still about \$525 short of monthly support

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