

MCLAUGHLIN



Be Strong | Stand for Truth | Live for Eternity



Dylan and Brandon with me. These are two of the three guys (Joey not in photo) who trusted Christ this past summer!



Photo with Gabe (one of our Ohio interns) and his girlfriend Paige who trusted Christ this past summer with Natalie and me at Bob Evans in Xenia, OH!



Great reunion photo of John and Mike Pineda, who traveled with John last year Panama and Guatemala.

LOCAL MINISTRY - PANAMA



I have mentioned Gregory in previous newsletters. He became the key contact for Isaac, our AIA staff in Panama. I asked Gregory to share a bit more about his life, his AIA experience with our team, and his vision for ministry in Panama. I would like to highlight those comments to share with you the greater vision we have for

investing in “local” individuals/missionaries so as to exponentially increase our ministry outreach. There is great joy when individuals like Gregory understand the vision and the mission.

For Gregory it began in 2012 when he received a contract with the Red Sox’s to play with them in the minor leagues in the Dominican Republic. For him it all seemed to be perfect and working just as he planned for his life. Suddenly, he was reminded of something God taught him when he was little - that he was to be a light to the world. He thought he was going to do this through playing baseball professionally. But what he realized was that he was serving an idol that was above God - baseball. He realized his whole identity as a person depended on the game. It all came crashing down a year after he was signed when the Red Sox’s called to tell him they were cutting him from the team. He was shocked. Gregory was crushed, but God helped him to understand He had a bigger job for him to do. God helped him understand how He used baseball to bring him back to Panama to do the Lord’s work in a different way. Weeks after he started going to the church of a friend from school, he began to find peace in what God had planned for him.

In fact, last year 2016 our AIA international team went to give a clinic at a baseball academy where Gregory was working at the time. It was at this time our friendship began and still being passionate about baseball, God began to clarify for him the strategies that would enable him to take God’s word to the baseball world. Watching the AIA model, He was able to see how we were teaching and training not only in God’s word but also in baseball. Ultimately now, that’s why he is pursuing a career at his university called physical science in sport and recreation.



A great photo of all the minority players with our team in Xenia, OH!

Prayer Requests

1. Continued prayer for the players of all of our summer baseball teams as they transition back to campus. Our pray is for them to stay strong in their faith and love of Christ!
2. Prayer for our family as we are finally able to get some much needed vacation. We will be heading east to spend some time with Natalie's side of the family!
3. Continued prayer for John as he initiates the SLI program. There will be a lot of self-evaluating and assessing to better understand himself and how he can grow as a leader. There will be some travel involved over the next two years so we are trusting God for His provision to meet the travel expenses associated to such training.

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By God's grace he is already one of the coaches in his country approved by MLB (Major League Baseball) which now ultimately gives him access to be close to more athletes.

Here a few words from Gregory about his two week experience as a team member of our AIA International Baseball team in Panama:

"For me this experience that God gave me with you (AIA Baseball) was a "before and after" seeing the fulfillment of God's promises in His word and in my life. I thank God for giving me the opportunity to be with you as a player and enjoy a team that has the same purpose of expanding the kingdom of God and give all the glory to God.

God healed deep wounds in my life that I had from the past because of baseball and He showed me that the best way to play is not doing it for any idol but for God's glory with a biblical motivation. It changed my view of game and the way I view baseball.

I was so thankful to be with coaches that helped me grow not only as a player but also as a child of God and that has no comparison in life. Today I am a coach and I'm preparing for the Father's work here in my Panama country. I want to give my place of influence in the same manner the experiences that you gave me.

For me; God + Baseball = Perfection. Thank God for AIA because they were and are a perfect example for me in my life!"



Character | Competence | Capacity | Community

Over the last 10 years, Cru has provided a leadership development program designed to identify, equip, develop, and coach emerging leaders for our expanding

movement for national and global positions. This program is called the Senior Leadership Initiative (SLI). SLI's particular role is to intentionally invest in a select group of current leaders over two years to give them the capacity to lead at the national and executive level.

The vision of SLI is to develop leaders of all cultures who are cross-culturally aware, and who can lead in both ethnic-specific and multi-ethnic contexts within and outside of Cru.

SLI is a two-year leadership development program which includes four weeklong development modules, along with practical ongoing learning assignments, in-depth leadership assessments, vibrant coaching, practical research projects, and communal growth experiences. Since the commitment to SLI is so extensive, a rearrangement of current job commitments will be necessary for a successful experience.

I, John, have been asked to participate in this particular program. I am excited to see how God will use this to challenge and grow me in the months to come.