

Athletes in Action Sports Performance

Changing lives through Sports Medicine and Strength & Conditioning

HISTORY – Athletes in Action was founded in 1966 and quickly entered the world of Sports Performance. AIA founder, Dave Hannah; World Champion & 2-time Olympian Russ Knipp, and Wes Neal made up the first weight lifting team touring the United States annually from 1969 until 1976. Their impact was widespread among college and high school campuses and the United States Military. Wes Neal went on to develop “Making An Athlete of God”, the forerunner to the AIA Athletic Principles.



Today, AIA Sports Performance impacts professionals and students in sports medicine and strength & conditioning with a vision to see a Christ follower in every sports medicine and strength & conditioning facility in the world! Our staff aims to fulfill this vision through outreaches at professional meetings, recruiting volunteers to experience missions in their field of expertise, and Bible studies using discipleship materials written specifically for those in these fields. Since professionals and students in these fields impact every sport in every nation every day, by meeting their physical needs, they will have excellent opportunities to meet others' spiritual needs as well.

Ed Gold became AIA's first Certified Athletic Trainer in 1973, building a staff of four medical professionals serving AIA's five teams. Jim Porter served as the Director of Sports Medicine from 1983 to 1987, developing a network of Christians involved in the field of sports medicine. Porter called the group the Christian Sports Medicine Association (CSMA). In 1989 five certified athletic trainers met at the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) Annual Meeting & Clinical Symposium to discuss developing an organization designed to reach sports medicine professionals for Christ. The NATA has over 35,000 members who are recognized as leaders in providing health care to the active population in the United States. The CSMA was redeveloped in that meeting. A partnership of volunteers from Athletes in Action, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and other sports ministries was forged with the guiding principle that these individuals and ministries could do more together than separate.



Since 1990, the CSMA has held an event at the NATA annual meeting (25 years)! Fellowships, breakfasts, luncheons and worship services have been held throughout the years to meet the needs of thousands of attendees. AIA and FCA have been the leading organizations in hosting these events with a variety of individual volunteers helping out. AIA, FCA, and Christian Sports Performance started partnering in 2005 in an effort to recreate the CSMA's ministry within the National Strength & Conditioning Association. In 2012, AIA began partnering with members of the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine to provide a chapel service for the physicians and other professionals attending their annual meeting.

AIA's international vision continued to develop through various certified athletic trainers doing impromptu medical and educational clinics while traveling with AIA sports teams. AIA Power was formed in 1997 to use strength & conditioning as a platform to reach others for Christ. Within six years AIA Power impacted six countries on two continents. In 2003 Power included sports medicine professionals on a clinical education team to Guatemala serving as a catalyst for the national staff seeking to establish a sport ministry there. In 2008 the Sports Performance Department was officially formed to use the platforms of sports medicine and strength & conditioning to change lives through the love of Jesus Christ. Since 1997, thirty-eight international mission teams have been sent out, conducting hundreds of clinics, and 3 interns have served extended periods overseas and hundreds of volunteers have travelled with competitive sports tours. In addition to sending mission teams, the International Sports Medicine & Strength Coaches Academy receives individuals from other countries in the US for two weeks of training. As of 2015 AIA Sports Performance's ministry has impacted 30 countries on five continents.



For more information visit: www.aisportperformance.org

ONE WORLD to reach, ONE LANGUAGE of sport, ONE MESSAGE of victory