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Student-Athletes Spend Spring Break on Mission Trip to Nicaragua

Sixteen Eagles joined Athletes in Action in Nicaragua to provide water filters to those in need

Kristina Horsley



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Story Links

STATESBORO, Ga. – Most college students don't imagine spending their Spring Break doing mission work overseas; however, the typical Spring Break beach trip wouldn't have satisfied several Georgia Southern student-athletes who, on their week-long break away from school, traveled to Central America as part of the on-campus Athletes in Action ministry and helped provide clean drinking water to villages in Nicaragua.

Each year, Athletes in Action – a sports based ministry program for college student-athletes – departs on a Spring Break mission trip to an underserved area to help those in need and spread the Gospel. This Spring Break, the sports ministry partnered with Campus Crusade (CRU) and Filter of Hope, a nonprofit organization on a mission to eradicate the global water crisis, to provide clean drinking water to the people of Nicaragua. Sixteen current and former student-athletes, as well as 45 other Georgia Southern students helped distribute over 400 filters amongst two villages while sharing their testimonies to the local people. Among those student-athletes were junior volleyball player [Leah Joseph](#), junior women's basketball player [Alexis Sams](#) and redshirt freshman football player [LaBaron Anthony](#). Also on the trip were [Megan Chevalier](#) (VB), [Katie Bange](#) (VB), [Cori Dulmage](#) (WSOC), [Christina Moran](#) (S&D), [Shane Young](#) (FB), [Zander Yost](#) (FB), [Jeff Ward](#) (FB), [Blake Wilson](#) (MSOC), [Chase Herzog](#) (MSOC), [Thor Sveinbjornsson](#) (MSOC), [Chase Griffin](#) (BSB), [Patrick Riley](#) (BSB).

Matt Wise, Chaplain for the Georgia Southern football team, began this ministry option for student-athletes. "Our motto is 'Win. Build. Send.,'" Wise said. "Usually student-athletes' summers are spent training for their sport, so Spring Break is really their time to do something. I've always wanted to go to Nicaragua and finally the opportunity came up with Filter of Hope. About 70-80 percent of the people in Nicaragua don't have access to clean drinking water, so a lot of times they'll boil their water or even put peroxide or bleach in it and they think that's what cleans it for them. So we took these water filters and went into the local villages and towns and demonstrated with a bucket and a filter how you can take dirty water and make it clean, just like it came in a bottle to drink. In doing so, the athletes were able to share their stories with the people, which was really cool."

Q: What stood out to you as the most memorable moment?

[Alexis Sams](#) (Women's Basketball): It was amazing to see how God hand selected each person on the trip to go. The people who were on the trip really bonded and it was so awesome to see how they, individually, were called by God to speak to certain people that had similarities or certain common grounds. The Nicaraguans were so thankful and so kind. We would go into their homes and they would welcome us and bring us chairs and make us feel comfortable as guests. They were so appreciative of the water filters that we were bringing them and open to hearing the Gospel, it was incredible.

Q: What were you able to take-away from this experience?

[LaBaron Anthony](#) (Football): That was my first mission trip and it was very eye-opening for me to see how the Nicaraguans didn't have the things we have in America. It helped me to be grateful for everything we have here. [The Nicaraguans] have to use what's available to them, so to give back to them was a great experience for me. We had a soccer game the last day with all the kids we met, and I just imagined if those kids had the right guidance and practice like we do, they would all be great. Just to see them and their drive for completion blew my mind. This experience taught me to not take the opportunity I have here as an athlete for granted. The kids that I met don't have the

opportunity to practice every day, so that really kept me humble and showed me that what I have at Georgia Southern, both on and off the field, is something to be grateful for.

Leah Joseph (Volleyball): Even though we were there to help other people, God worked on me a lot too. It was amazing to see how much I grew. As athletes we get put on a higher pedestal, so it's important for us to use that to show who God is to us.

Alexis Sams: God's love and his Word knows no language and no boundaries. It's amazing when you're talking with someone and there is that language barrier how you can feel the sincerity and see it in their eyes, and it's almost like you don't even need the language. For me, the first week getting back was hard. I feel like I had to get accustomed to our way of life again. It was almost like my heart was still in Nicaragua. There are certain people that I met there that have impacted my life forever.

*Pictures submitted by Matt Wise, Alexis Sams and Leah Joseph
For more pictures, visit Matt Wise's Facebook Album - [HERE](#)*













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