

COME ALONG WITH J WONG...

ON AN ADVENTURE TO MEXICO

MAY/JUNE 2014



(right) Puebla, Mexico, the first of two cities for our tour. Our players were going over offensive sets, during practice, at the Universidad De Las Américas Puebla (UDLAP). Overall, we went 6-3, which included some of the most thrilling games I've ever been a part of. **(2nd from top, right)** One loss in particular came at the hands of UDLAP's team. They are one of the top three college programs in all of Mexico. We played them twice in a four team tournament with the first game not going so well as we lost by 20 points. But the second game we held our own and only lost by 3. I was talking to our tour director and he said it best. The second loss was probably best for ministry purposes. We earned their respect by raising our level of competition, yet at the same time they stuck around after the game to talk and eat pizza with us. Had we won, many of their players would have left after the game in bitterness and frustration.



(left) One of the best highlights was having Diego, a 17-year old local kid, join our team. Diego is unlike any 17 year old kid I've ever met. He has an infectious, enthusiastic, and upbeat spirit and is very spiritually mature. One night in the dorms, as the team was playing card games, he whipped out his Bible and started preaching to the team from Isaiah 61! I received many responses from the team expressing how uplifting that was for them. On the flip side, our team was such a blessing for him. Being a part of a USA collegiate basketball team was a once in a lifetime experience for Diego. Something I'm sure he will never forget.



(right) The second city we ministered to was Querétaro, Mexico. The goal was to launch a new AIA movement in Querétaro with the help of a local pastor. Basketball clinics for children were our main avenue for getting our name and ministry out there. After the clinics were over, some of our team had the chance to share their testimony. Katherine, one of our athletic trainers nervously sat, sharing her story. But in the end, God used her in a great way as she did a fantastic job explaining why He is so important in her life.



(left) Prayer was a significant part of our tour, both for our team and for others we were trying to reach. I've said this before and I'll say it again, sport is a powerful platform. Through basketball we were able to freely pray and share our faith with many of the teams we played against. The Universidad Del Valle de Mexico (UVM) was one example. The head coach for UVM was so grateful to play us, he asked if we would come a second time to play. Not sure what happened, but when we came again, his team had doubled in players! Through this, relationships were started, ministry was built, and testimonies were shared.

(right) "Ahhh J Wong... This is probably the best thing that has happened in my life and two weeks ago I wasn't even gonna come." This was quoted on June 4 from TJ, one of our players. TJ was the vocal leader and spark on the team. He showed great character and charisma both on and off the court. One of my favorite memories was when we went shopping on our "day off" for souvenirs and gifts. Even though we weren't in "ministry mode," he still took the time to initiate with a local couple and share his faith and why all of us were there.



This isn't just a mountaintop experience for TJ. Several times during the tour and after we came back home, TJ has asked me to help him to bring the AIA Principles and his faith back to his community. In one text message he wrote, "I really wanna bring the aia principles and faith home. Bring it to some young guys from like 12 to 18. How could I do it?" Text messages like these bring so much joy to my heart. I know TJ gets "it" and desires to see others get "it" too.

For more information, check out my website at www.wongside.com/jeremy

Also, many times I like to send links and emails to my ministry partners showing more of my ministry with AIA. If you have an email address and would like to receive these notifications, please email me at jeremy.wong@athletesinaction.org