

HONORING HIS SISTER'S LEGACY



Kurt Schwarz
ISC Executive Director

Hannah's heart for Jesus and marginalized people was evident in every aspect of her life. It directed her studies, her work, where she lived, and who she married. She served victims of sex trafficking in Thailand, at-risk children in Nepal, and had just begun a career in Christian counseling when her life was tragically cut short. She was struck and killed by two hit-and-run drivers during her daily morning run in late 2021. The suspects for this crime were never found, but her memory and impact are still on full display. Her powerful example and selfless life of service are the reason her brother, Jesse Larson, decided to serve as a counselor at Inspire Sports Camps this summer.

Jesse will be the first to tell you that he is not a quintessential ISC candidate and admits that when

the opportunity was first presented, he was terrified by the thought of serving inner-city kids at a sports camp. In fact, when our summer staff recruiter, Margaret Yates, presented the opportunity at his campus ministry at Alfred College in the Spring of 2021, he dismissed the idea completely. He thought, "I'm an engineering student, I grew up in rural NY state, I'm super shy,



This is the exact type of ministry my sister would have done.

and I'm not very athletic. There's no way!" But when Margaret came back the following year, just one month after Hannah's tragic passing, the Lord prompted Jesse differently.

Jesse remembers, "I hesitantly responded by jotting down my email for more info but I still wasn't sure. The only thing I knew is, this is the exact type of ministry my sister would have done. After speaking with Margaret about some of my concerns she encouraged me to speak with a veteran counselor over the phone, which I also did.

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EAGLE'S PERSPECTIVE

By Lilianna Giedrys, Ministry Director
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We have been sending youth to ISC for six years! Each summer we know they will have a chance to get away and learn about God in a safe environment. Receiving the youth back after camp is proof of His faithfulness. It makes me feel like what we do all year is worth it. One teenage girl, who has battled through many issues, is getting baptized this Fall after her encounter with Christ at ISC this summer. She directly told me, "I now want to live differently." Another boy from Paterson, who could have

been running the streets, would now rather spend time in our local church youth group.

ISC helps all of our young people develop their faith in Jesus. Either they get to meet Him for the first time or grow more in Him. If they have any faith at all before camp, ISC is the absolute best place for them because they come back even more excited about what Jesus has done for them. Even the most introverted kids come back and talk about how they grew in



their walk with Christ! Our partnership with ISC gives the seeds we have planted year-round a chance to bloom. The ultimate joy of my life is witnessing our young people from tough backgrounds return with a desire to live for Christ!



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I applied, interviewed, and was hired to serve. It was surreal because all of this was so out of character for me. When I got to staff training, my initial thought was this is scary. I am a naturally quiet person, and there were a lot of high-energy people! I had to keep telling myself that this is not something that I can do, but I need to ask God to work through me. I was nervous, to say the least. As I began connecting with other summer staffers, I realized how similar we were because of the faith we shared. By the end of Staff Training, I was more encouraged but still nervous about the unknown of serving in this way.”

For his camp term, Jesse was paired up with Edwin, an athletic second-year counselor from Philadelphia with a strong but kind spirit. Jesse shares, “I was grateful to be with Edwin, but as the week started, I was a little discouraged. We had a pretty rowdy group of campers, and I wasn’t sure that I was capable of connecting with

any of them. However, I looked for opportunities throughout the day to ask questions and learn about them as best as I could. To be honest, it was hard to tell if I was getting anywhere. Then mid-week, I realized that a couple of the boys were sitting on the sideline during sports and other activities, and I could relate to that. I encouraged them to participate, but I also took the opportunity to sit with them and get to know them better. One of my clearest memories is a conversation I had with one of them while the rest of the cabin was playing GaGa Ball.”

This was exactly what each of these boys needed, and whether Jesse realized it or not, he had found the outcasts just like his sister Hannah always had. Jesse recounted, “Each of them told me about how hard life was at home. One of them shared about loneliness and his struggle to relate with others. By the end of the week, both of these boys ended up praying with me and giving their life to Jesus Christ.” God perfectly placed Jesse with a couple of introverted campers and used his quiet and compassionate personality powerfully.

Jesse shared, “I initially decided to serve at ISC to honor Hannah, but it became much more than that. ISC gave me an opportunity to do things that made me uncomfortable, and I now see that God has a plan for using me in the same way He used my sister.” This beautiful tribute is now a life lesson for all of us.

Counselor’s CORNER



Maddie Grayson

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This was my first summer serving at Inspire Sports Camps and it was unlike anything I have ever done. In just one week, I not only saw growth and hunger for more of God in my campers, but I experienced the same thing myself. Lives really are transformed at camp! There are so many amazing counselors and staff, but it’s more than that. We all made ourselves available, like empty vessels ready to be used. This summer I learned how to surrender, and was able to witness the Holy Spirit move in ways I never have before.

THANK YOU!

You make ISC a reality for young people from inner-city neighborhoods across the Northeast.

On behalf of our campers, staff, and entire leadership team we "Thank You" for your relentless prayers and generous support.



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