

# TOO OLD FOR CAMP?



**Mike & Linda Hrichak,  
ISC Spiritual Advisors**

The room was buzzing with activity and alive with excitement. It seemed like everyone in our Young Adults Group was pumped about the prospect of serving with Inspire Sports Camps. They were looking forward to seeing old friends and making lots of new ones. They would spend time with kids from various cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. They would have a chance to give back to the community and share the Good News of the Gospel.

Kurt is pretty good at stirring up interest in ISC. Each time he speaks at Calvary Chapel Stroudsburg more of our young adults apply to be counselors for ISC. In the Spring of 2021, our group was fairly new, so we invited Kurt to teach a Bible study and give an overview of ISC. After the presentation, the flurry of questions confirmed to us that there would be

many new counselors joining ISC that year. But after a little while, we raised our hands and said, “This is a wonderful opportunity for the young people, but is there anything for us ‘old people’ to do?”

Without hesitation, Kurt said he could absolutely find something for us. We could see the wheels beginning to spin in his head.

A little while later, Kurt proposed the idea of creating a “Spiritual Advisor” position for ISC. He described it as an opportunity to “counsel the counselors” during the weeks of camp. Even though counselors attend an intensive training session that addresses many of the issues they may encounter, experience has shown that some counselors need someone to talk with, confide in, vent to, and pray with during the exhaustive week of camp. We loved the idea and immediately agreed to participate. We later learned that very few, if any, other camps had a position such as this. As far as we knew, this position was the first of its kind.



*The ISC team was willing to work with some old people who raised their hands...*

Since the position was brand-new, the first year was a serious learning curve. We had to build relationships and trust with the counselors and determine exactly where we fit within the hierarchy of the ISC leadership. We enjoyed the freedom of not being assigned to any specific cabin or group, but at the same time, we made sure we were available whenever the staff needed additional help. We would set appointments to meet with counselors during their breaks or just spend time with them while their campers were participating in activities.

*CONTINUED ON PG. 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE:

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Too Old for Camp?          | 1-2 |
| Counselor Corner           |     |
| John Obi                   | 2   |
| Isabella Maffei            | 3   |
| Host an ISC Sponsor Sunday | 3   |

## Counselor's CORNER



### John Obi

University of North Texas

**Double Major in Economics & Philosophy**

Going into ISC 2023, I had no idea what to expect. I had never been on a mission trip or even a summer camp. I felt out of my depth. Nevertheless, when camp started, I began to feel a sense of ease. I knew I was ready not because of any fantastic traits or qualities I possess but simply because The Lord equips those He calls.

Serving the campers at ISC was life-changing for me. I was blessed with the opportunity to see the power the Gospel has to soften hearts hardened by trauma, anxiety, depression, family trouble, drugs, and a host of vices common to young people in this fallen world. Not only that, but I saw young men come in and be transformed by the power of Jesus. I got to build lasting relationships with my campers and become a mentor figure to them. However, this was not a one-way relationship; I learned about myself and the gospel through my campers. Patience, love, selflessness, empathy, kindness, self-control, and forgiveness were some traits that I honed during my experience. Although it is no walk in the park, Inspire Sports Camps is not just about having fun (which we do have a lot of); it is a transformative experience for everyone — campers and counselors alike. An experience I hope to have again for years to come.

We could see immediate results in them after just a short conversation or prayer. Sometimes, we acted as intermediaries between the counselors and the staff. But most of the time we were just there to listen.

We hit a stride in 2023, it was our third year and by far, the best one yet. By this time, we knew many of the returning counselors and they felt even more comfortable opening up with their prayers, problems, and concerns. An interesting and unexpected benefit of this position was that the topics were not always ISC-related. We spent hours discussing personal lives, school, spirituality, relationships, jobs, and other issues with the counselors; and even better yet - the conversations didn't stop at the end of camp! Throughout the year, we spent countless hours online and in person with some of the young friends we made at camp. It

is truly a blessing that these young people would trust us enough to call for guidance, prayer, advice or just to talk.

The spiritual advisor position is now much more than just a wonderful experience for us. In fact, Kurt has said, "We will never do another week of ISC without male and female Spiritual Advisors." During the past couple of years, ISC has been able to fill these roles with some amazing men and women who are seasoned in their walks with Christ, yet totally down to earth. We have heard countless stories of how summer staff people's lives have been impacted and changed because of their relationships with ISC Spiritual Advisors.

This now vital aspect of the ministry happened all because the ISC team was willing to work with some "old people" who raised their hands and offered to help.



## HOST AN ISC SPONSOR SUNDAY!



**Kurt Schwarz,**  
Executive Director

ISC is more than just a summer mission. All year, our team is working to make sure that camp is the best that it can be when the buses arrive each week of the summer. To do this, we visit many different church services, Bible studies, small groups, and missions meetings to share how people can join the ISC mission by serving with us in the summer and by sponsoring campers. We call this the ISC Sponsor Sunday Tour. A Sponsor Sunday is catered to each church's needs but typically is a 5-minute presentation and an info table after service.

These important church visits have helped us add countless people to the ISC Family as amazing summer staff, volunteers, and camper sponsors. We would love to come to your church! Can you help connect us with your pastor or church leaders? Just tell them why you love ISC, make an intro, and we will continue the conversation from there! Please shoot me an email if you'd like to discuss this idea further ([kurt@inspiresportscamps.com](mailto:kurt@inspiresportscamps.com)). Thank you for being on this exciting journey with us!

## Counselor's CORNER



### Isabella Maffei

Bergen Community College

Biology Major

Being a part of ISC has not only made me grow as a Christian but helped me understand the value and importance of sharing the gospel. Watching God work in my campers' lives over the week showed me just how powerful and almighty He is. I saw my campers transform from skeptical about the Bible and God's truth to fully engaged and involved in learning more about Him. Being involved in the renewal and salvation of these kids was an incredibly gratifying and humbling experience.

Galatians 2:20 says, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." To work at ISC is to be completely immersed in God's love and goodness and to live for his purpose.

## 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.



*All sponsors receive a handwritten thank you note and a baseball card picture of the campers that they sponsor.*

Donations can be made with the enclosed envelope or by visiting [www.inspiresportscamps.com/give](http://www.inspiresportscamps.com/give)

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