

Tracing His Steps

APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER

WHEATON COLLEGE IN CANTON, MISSISSIPPI

In March, two missions groups affiliated with Wheaton College came to serve with In His Steps in Canton, Mississippi. The first group was a team of recent high school graduates enrolled in a gap year program with HoneyRock camp in Three Lakes, Wisconsin. HoneyRock is directed by Wheaton alumni and friends of Jasper and Carolyn Bacon, Rob Ribbe. Rob came to serve in Canton with the Bacons while he was a student at Wheaton College. The second mission team was a group of football players with the Wheaton College football team in Wheaton, Illinois. The assistant coach and trip coordinator of the Wheaton team, Jeff Peltz, is also a friend of the Bacons and played football with Rev. Bacon when they were both at Wheaton. We are so grateful for the two missions teams who came and served alongside us and for the relationships that were rekindled, and for the forming of new relationships.

LIVE THE GOSPEL!

Thirty-two athletes from the Wheaton College football team arrived in Canton on March 5, 2022 and served for seven days. The Wheaton group assisted with IHS Agape campsite development, local athletic training, garden preparation, and S.P.A.S.E. program tutoring. Rev. Bacon stated, "Although, this is the first time the Wheaton football team came

"The recent visit of 32 members of the Wheaton College football team was an exciting event at IHS. In addition to some physical labor, Coach Jeff Peltz and his players daily spent quality time connecting, sharing and praying with student athletes at Canton High School. As a member of the IHS board and a Wheaton College football alum, I am personally excited to see God working through these young men and pray that He will raise up leaders among them that will continue the mission that God is accomplishing through IHS."

Michael Engelbrecht

Managing Director, Wells Fargo Securities
IHS Board Member
Wheaton College Class of '86



*Wheaton College Football Team
serving at the IHS Agape Campsite*



*Jeff Peltz ('81), Jasper Bacon ('82),
and Michael Engelbrecht ('86)*

to serve in over 20 years. Having them come in Canton was an answer to prayer." When asked what goal they set for their week in Canton, Coach Peltz said, "In whatever we're asked to do, the goal is that the community and ministry are being drawn closer together even after we leave.... I want the team to have missions as a priority in their lives. Have compassion for people and love people." Their passion and heart for ministry were evident through their actions.

GIVE THE GOSPEL!

Some of their work at the campsite included dismantling an un-needed storage shed, cutting trees, pruning large limbs and splitting logs. They certainly got their workout! We are grateful for their help because it allowed us to get preliminary work accomplished. They also worked hard filling 16 raised beds with dirt in the teaching garden, as well as, digging and relocating heavy landscape stones. In addition, they helped with preparation of the sports fields.

Christin Howard, IHS Sports Ministry Director, said that the team represented Jesus well in their attitude and actions. Their attitudes were exemplary of the theme for the week, "Live the Gospel and Give the Gospel." The football team went to the local high school with Christin to help with student-athletes. The Wheaton team also presented several Bible devotionals, encouraging the athletes to strengthen their relationship with the Lord.

Moving forward, we are excited to continue our partnership with the Wheaton football and HoneyRock students. Each group was unique in the sense the individuals on each team had different skills and gifts to share. Both groups came with humility and a servant attitude.

"It has been a blessing to reconnect with Jasper and In His Steps after a 35 year gap. I was on a spring break mission team with Wheaton College in 1987. Last spring we were connected because I was able to visit Canton last summer and see what God is doing. This spring we were able to send a team of 10 of our Gap Year and graduate students to Canton to learn from Jasper, Carolyn and the team. It was an incredible learning experience for them. We look forward to working with the Bacons and In His Steps staff."

Rob Ribbe, Ph.D.

Executive Director, HoneyRock
Wheaton College Class of '87

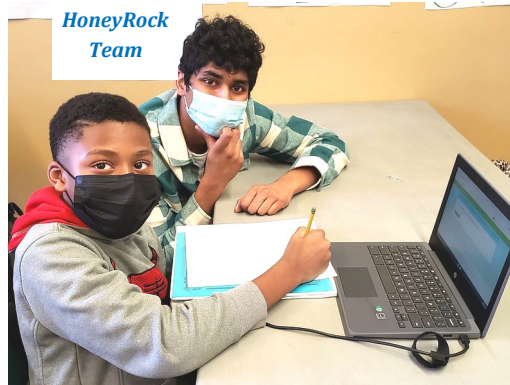
HONEYROCK TEAM

The missions team from HoneyRock was such a blessing to us because of their passion and willingness to serve. The group of 11 students and their leader Rachel Nichwitz, arrived with a desire to learn and build relationships. The HoneyRock group primarily worked with the students in the IHS S.P.A.S.E. afterschool program tutoring them and helping with homework. Ariana, from the HoneyRock group, said "I loved being able to work with the students...and pour into them with whatever time we had". Garret, also from HoneyRock expressed that "working with the after school students was my favorite part."

Carolyn Bacon shared that the S.P.A.S.E. students were able to spend individual time with the HoneyRock group each day. At the end of the week, they were all friends. She said "This was good for our S.P.A.S.E. kids because they were able to build impactful friendships. I saw one of our girls who's usually shy open up and gain confidence."

Along with serving the S.P.A.S.E. students, the HoneyRock group participated in a series of workshops and a panel discussion at IHS considering the topics of cultural sensitivity and being a bridge in a social, political, and racially divided society. Prior to their trip, the HoneyRock group studied a few chapters of "Be The Bridge Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation" by Latasha Morrison. This prepared the group to arrive with an open mind and willingness to contextualize cultural and racial issues while serving children and families in Canton. Rachel said the trip impacted her because experiencing the "history of the area versus reading added more emotional depth." She said she was impacted by "this idea of how do we acknowledge and confess to collective sin perpetuated by white people in America." The group visited the Museum of Civil Rights and Museum of Mississippi History in Jackson. Garret, who is from Chicago, expressed that being in the South made the "Historical piece more alive, its presence was felt more prevalent. Being there [Mississippi] and the museums were a lot more powerful."

The HoneyRock group also spent time working in the IHS organic teaching garden. They helped with preparing the soil, weeding, and cultivating the beds for spring planting. The teaching garden is a very important part of IHS and supplies



*HoneyRock GAP Students
serving with the IHS S.P.A.S.E.
Afterschool Program*

fresh vegetables for local families and it is a source of income for summer youth workers. It also serves as a teaching tool on healthy eating.

Rev. Bacon stated, "Our desire is for students to come, learn, and experience Christ love in a cultural diverse community in order to better represent Jesus as His followers." Serving in cross-cultural settings like the IHS S.P.A.S.E. program helps build meaningful relationships. The HoneyRock group was very engaging with the students on their level despite the age difference. For many of the S.P.A.S.E. students, they don't get many opportunities to interact with people who are from different places or of different cultures. This opportunity introduced them to new people and also taught them about cross-cultural relationships and sensitivity. Mutual respect and sensitivity was a goal of this trip.

PRAY FOR US

Heavenly Father, for over 26 years we have looked to you and put In His Steps in your hands. Let all our efforts be aligned with your purposes. **We ask you to use us to lead many to Christ and provide adequate follow-up and discipleship.** We pray this prayer specifically for our S.P.A.S.E. Program, Sports Ministry, Young Adult Men Ministry, Compassionate Services, Camping and Training Center Ministry, ministries to community youth, incarcerated youth, parents, and married couples.

Lord, we ask for growth and development of all IHS ministries. We pray especially for the ongoing development of the Agape Christian Camp and Training Center. We ask that you provide the needed staff and financial resources to fully develop these.

Lord give the IHS board and staff the strength (Eph. 6:10) to fight this spiritual battle on a daily basis. We look to you for wisdom and guidance as we seek to carry out the work of IHS.

Lord, the devil is using people to divide and separate believers, but Lord open the eyes of your children to see the schemes of the evil one. Bring the church together in Canton, Mississippi and through-out our country to powerfully and successfully to fulfill the Great Command (Mat. 22:37-39) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

Dear God, we thank you that no situation is too hard for or out of your control. For you are Jehovah-Jireh, the God who provides for us (Phil. 4:19). We thank you for your provisions to IHS for over 26 years. Thank you for your recent unbelievable financial gift toward our camp development. Also Lord, we thank you for surrounding IHS with believers who love you and give so generously to the ministries of IHS. We especially thank you for the souls you have saved and impacted through IHS. In Jesus name Amen.