

Katie Wood's Story
Brown '10
Track & Field (Javelin)

Going to church and being involved in different Christian organizations has always been a part of my life. Back when I was in Sunday School, I was the girl who could find the bible verse the fastest and somehow, everyone thought I was Mother Teresa because of my amazing skills. At that point in my life, I thought that by the way you lived, you earn your salvation and favor in the eyes of God. After coming to Brown, I realized I need to pursue God more in order to draw closer to him (James 4:8). Through reading The Prodigal God by Tim Keller, I have learned that we cannot expect to do things and be rewarded for what we have done. Ephesians 4:8-10 says it best, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (NIV) I cannot earn the favor of God, it is free. My spot in Heaven is the same as any other Christians: "But many who are first will be last, and the last first." (Mark 10:31)

While at Brown, I have been able to feed off of the people around me. When I first got here my freshman year, I was searching for a group that shared the same views as me, and I found that with *Athletes In Action* (AIA). It took me a while to figure out that I wanted more than a simple meeting on Thursday nights, so I attended *Ultimate Training Camp*. I grew so much through this experience. Leading into the experience, I found myself keeping God out of certain areas of my life. After finishing the SPECIAL (Spiritual Principles + Exhaustion = Confidence in Almighty Lord), I realized that God was with me every step of the way and that through his strength, I was able to complete it. How could I keep him out of certain areas of my life?

Sophomore year was a struggle, as our attendance at AIA was around only five people in the fall semester. By the time the spring hit, the leadership team was frustrated and wanted other people to care about AIA and the growth in our lives it had provided. More people started to come and we felt a lot of momentum heading into the fall. For the five of us who were at the meetings when we struggled, the 08-09 year could not have been better. More people came to our bible studies, dinner discussions, and activities outside of our weekly meetings. New faces came once, and returned. God has truly begun his work in the athletic community on campus, and we hope that we can impact our teammates with a listening ear and Christ's love.

The other people in AIA help me in my spiritual growth because they are striving to get closer to God, just like me. We are all more confident in sharing our lives with others and know that prayer is an important part of our ministry because God is the only one that has the power to change lives.