



**FELLOWSHIP OF  
CHRISTIAN ATHLETES  
BASEBALL**

### Story of Impact – Matt Carlson, FCA Varsity Coach

Over the past ten years, I have coached baseball in various organizations, from little guys to high school. Five years ago, I began coaching FCA baseball because there is more to life than baseball. The fact is that God did not put us on this earth to win baseball games. That's an odd thing for a baseball coach to say, isn't it? Don't get me wrong -- I am a competitive person. Just like any other coach, I hate losing, I hate seeing players waste talent and I want to win every single game. I'd love to be able to tell every opponent about Jesus after we beat them by fifteen runs. However, as much as I like competing and winning and seeing my players develop, those things are going to be of little importance when this life is through. When this life is through, God is not going to ask me how many games my team won or how many of my players played in college. God is not going to ask my players their batting average or their ERA. Rather, when this life is through, God is just going to ask each of us whether we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. I want my players to have the right answer to that question and that's why I coach FCA Baseball. With Christ, you'll know where you're going.

### Story of Impact – Erick Rozelle, Loudoun 14u Coach

As a Coach, FCA Baseball has had a profound positive impact on me. I have been encouraged in many ways through FCA baseball, but none more than through the players. I know players will often say they have learned so much from the coaches but in my case I think I have benefited more than the players. I have been blessed to be part of an amazing team of young men for the past 2 ½ years. My players will tell you that my favorite part of practice is Devos and Spotlight. I have seen our kids grow from shy boys to young men that consistently interact with each other during devos and now, often lead devos themselves for the team. I often hear stories from players on how our devo time made a difference to them at school in a situation that played out later that week. My heart just soars when I see these young men kneel and pray at the end of practice or a game and they all volunteer to lead prayer. They have strengthened my walk with the Lord because I see the impact it is having on their lives play out before me. The players all know my favorite part of coaching is the practices, not the games. Practices are where we learn to battle on the field as well as prepare for battle off the field. These boys are ready for battle because they are engaged during practice both on the field and during devos. I get so much encouragement from watching them battle and apply what they have learned. A coach's dream.

### Story of Impact – Vince Sanfilippo, Loudoun 14u Coach

The definition of a keystone according to Websters is; *the wedge-shaped stone piece at the apex of a masonry vault or arch, which is the final piece placed during construction and locks all the stones into position, allowing the arch to bear weight.* A masonry arch or vault cannot be self-supporting until the keystone is placed.

Our ball club and FCA baseball as a whole is part of the arch making up what these kids consist of and I see myself as one of the central supporting elements in these young men's lives. On average, I spend 9 hours a week with these kids, I don't carry any of the stress that they have to carry, I don't have to make the double play or hit the ball. I'm not standing beside them when they are asked to participate in activities that are not looked upon favorably by us as parents or when they are tempted and possibly stray from the path God desires them to take. Like the arch, they can't stand and support themselves alone; they need guidance, support and direction both on and off the field.

I feel the Lord has given me the opportunity to be the one of those keystones that is necessary to connect these young men's hearts and minds, physically and spiritually.

Baseball is about talent, hard work and strategy. But at the deepest level, it's about love integrity and respect. Nothing pleases more than to have a college kid call me "Coach" when he's back for the summer break. I pray for each and every one of them every day of my life.

### NOVA/DC Fellowship of Christian Athletes Baseball

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### Story of Impact – Frank Nava, Fairfax 13u and Fairfax JV Coach

I had been coaching baseball for 10 years, many times coaching anywhere from 2-4 teams a season, spending hours on the fields practicing, managing games, prepping fields and at Little League Board meetings. In the Fall of 2013 while preparing for semifinal game in a tournament, I came across a non FCA team with what appeared to be a rather odd logo. I saw the logo throughout the tournament and was curious what it meant. I finally asked the head coach about their team's logo. He said a bit awkwardly that the "T" that stood on the front of their jerseys was actually a cross and that it was a Christian team. I was immediately embarrassed that me, a lifelong Christian, did not pick up on it right away. I had to ask myself whether I was on the field too much and not enough representing myself as a Christian. At the same time I thought how cool it was to play on a team with a Christian focus that taught players baseball and had Christ as the true Head Coach, not just playing baseball but learning the Word of God. When I came across FCA a year later I happily told my wife that we found the organization that I would be proud to have our boys play for. What FCA has allowed me to do is understand that you don't leave your Faith in the parking lot, you must bring it to the Field of Play and keep it with you if you are to be truly the best that you can be. This view has only been reinforced by my experience with fellow FCA coaches, FCA Board, players, their families, and 3 of my sons who all play for FCA. Their generosity is inspiring and their work ethic and dedication to the mission is truly motivating and challenging to bring my best every time.

### Story of Impact – Chris Warren, FCA Braves Coach

In my role as the coach of the FCA Braves Collegiate team, it is easy to focus on roster selection, skill development, lineups, game day preparations and then the grinding 40 plus game schedule. Too often, every day realities make me lose sight of the bigger picture of helping young men in their life and faith journey. In the heat of the moment, it is also easy to lapse into arguing calls that go against you or lament plays which result in negative outcomes for your team. Whenever that happens, I try to come back and refocus on the more important message that our FCA environment offers to our players.

Having a chaplain and a general manager who support our young men every day is really crucial to the whole FCA experience we offer to these impressionable college players. A few years ago, we added a young man to our roster who had great talent on the ball field but was plagued by anger and self-control issues. In his first year, his anger often got the better of him, but after his third year in our summer program, I was amazed to see how much progress he had made in taking on a more Christ-centered approach to baseball and life in general. In his three years with us, he made the All Star team each year, but I will always remember that in his third year, he opened up and became a team leader in our pre-game chapels, offering his testimony to the younger players who looked up to him as a leader.

One of my fondest coaching memories came at the end of our last season together, after we lost a heart-breaking semifinal playoff game which eliminated us from the playoffs and ended his college summer baseball playing days. As we hugged and said our goodbyes, he told me how much playing for FCA had meant to him and how he felt it had changed his life forever. I will always treasure that memory and take great comfort in knowing the greater good we serve as ambassadors of Christ and FCA.



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### Story of Impact – Mark Adams, FCA Varsity Coach

Sports has been a part of my life as long as I can remember in the earliest days of my childhood. As a three sport athlete in High School I never realized the long term impact on my life playing in team sports would have on my future. Having a son who was an athlete was such a blessing for me because it gave me an opportunity to continue in following my passion for the game(s). What I did not realize until my son went away to college was how much I would miss being involved in Sports. Another lesson was how little I understood the long-term impact and effect coaches have on young men, both positive and negative. As I began to reflect on the many years of coaching, I realized that for too long I had separated my sporting world from my spiritual world. I was an elder and leadership team member in churches over the years at the same time I was coaching sports. However, I never was in a situation where I felt comfortable to bring my commitment to God's kingdom in the church together with my coaching. As God brought to me the opportunity to work with FCA Baseball he made it clear that he was providing a way to apply my love for him and his word to assist young men in their development, just as I was privileged to do with my son when he was home. I am so blessed to have two young adult children who love God and continue to follow him, and I really want to use my opportunity to coach for FCA to continue to develop future leaders who will carry on our faith into the next generation. Thank You Todd Burger and all of you that support FCA Baseball in Northern Virginia for allowing me to have such an awesome blessing to coach baseball for these great young men.