

Finding Her Voice:

As a young person, Hillary never understood what it meant to be a part of a non-profit National Junior Tennis Learning (NJTL) chapter called Youth Tennis Advantage (YTA). It wasn't until the age of 12, when her mentor Wing-Yan So started a 12 and under Junior Team Tennis (JTT) team with just four kids. "Even though Hillary created many great memories growing up with my teams, she did not realize what it meant to her until the summer of 2017," So explained.



She credits being part of NJTL and JTT for teaching her a lot about herself and the importance of self-growth. She was on JTT team since 2012 and during the summer of 2015, she became more than just a player. Her coach asked her to lead matches while she was away. Leading a group of young teenage players "was not easy," as Hillary said, going from fellow player to leader of the group, but determined and focused, Hillary found her way. Benjamin Pham, her Future Business Leader of America (FBLA) advisor at Westmoor High School, describes her as "dedicated and vocal," a perfect combination for a leader.

Hillary relished her leadership role and what she learned and subsequently asked to volunteer at the Section Championships. There, she took on bigger responsibilities and learned many critical tasks such as managing a group of coaches from NorCal, to confirming play formats. Since taking on more responsibilities for all the JTT teams, she became a certified co-captain of JTT teams. She also credits her Asian-American heritage for giving her platform to use her voice for what she is passionate about. "Being an Asian American in the Bay Area makes me feel empowered because I am constantly being surrounded by positive role models who I look up to dearly," Hillary said grateful. "I have learned to use my own voice to have the confidence of being an Asian American tennis player and I strive to spread this message to the students I coach as well."

Hillary was also an active member of the Westmoor High School community. She was part of the Westmoor Service Commission, which aims to develop and maintain a green and welcoming atmosphere. This was another leadership role she relished in. Hillary is very passionate about tennis and what it has allowed her to do and learn. During the 2018 YTA Annual Dinner, she eloquently expressed her gratitude to the sport and NJTL saying: "I've made lifelong friends thanks to YTA and I've had experiences that would have not been possible without being a part of YTA."

She was awarded the 2018 USTA NorCal Michael Chang Champion of Character College scholarship and she started Skyline College in the fall of 2018. Looking ahead, Hillary “hopes to continue volunteering and attend amazing tennis-affiliated events as I transfer to a four-year university next year.”