

New Mexico Activities Association Activities Spotlight



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Lara Helps Knights Stay Healthy

By Lauren Roussel, NMAA Intern

Monica Lara's passion for athletic training came as a result of circumstance, which was sparked after several injuries during her athletic career at Oñate High School. "As an athlete I've been hurt multiple times from small scrapes and bruises, to sprained MCL's and concussions," she explained. "With every injury I was always interested in finding the quickest and most efficient way to get myself healthy again."

Lara's favorite aspect of athletic training is the environment. Her experiences working with cooperative and patient athletes help her to progress through the stages of serving as an athletic trainer. "They give me a calming effect in sometimes chaotic scenes," she spoke of the athletes.

One of her biggest inspirations is watching an athlete go through rehabilitation. Watching each individual make progress toward getting back to where they were before the injury is exciting to Lara. "Not knowing what injuries are to come is what keeps me coming back," she said. "I enjoy the fast pace of athletic training."

Lara plays softball and runs track for Oñate. She has played softball her entire life. "My love for softball stems from my parents and my sister," she explained. "I am working toward following in my family's footsteps and playing collegiate ball." Lara recently picked up track to maintain and utilize her speed. She has not yet competed with the Oñate track team but has been enjoying the workouts.

Juggling athletic training, softball and track has been hard but Lara's coaches have been able to work with her and understand the pressure that comes with being a student-athlete, who competes in multiple sports and activities. She is also an athletic training representative on the board of the Health Occupation Student Association (HOSA), which is another part of her busy schedule.

Participation in interscholastic athletics has had a positive influence on Lara's health and well-being. Athletic training has helped her realize the importance of staying hydrated, staying conditioned, eating healthy and taking the proper steps to prevent injury. Her involvement as a student-athlete and athletic trainer has been a great combination for her both as an athlete and as a young adult.

Lara understands the importance of maintaining good grades and she has learned how to achieve balance between her course load, practice and homework. She is looking into staying in the sports medicine field and has even thought of venturing into physical therapy or sports nutrition post high school.



This will be Lara's first year participating in the Athletic Training Challenge. She is very excited to compete. "It will be nice to go to a competition where I am surrounded by people who also enjoy the sports medicine field like I do," she stated.

Lara's sister, Koryanna, attends Clarendon College and studies Kinesiology. The similarity in their chosen passions of Kinesiology and athletic training allows the sisters to take each other through different challenges and phases in their studies. "She helps me with a lot of my medical studies," she said. "It's nice having her to talk to since we both want to go into similar fields." Lara would like to pass down her athletic knowledge to her two half-brothers, Enrique and Efrain.

Her mother, Patricia, works in finance and her father, Efrain, works as a Health Informant for the New Mexico Department of Health and is an assistant baseball coach for New Mexico State University. "My dad has been the one to help me improve in sports and push me when I'm ready to quit. He knows my limits but always pushes me to the point he knows I can handle," she explained.