



New Mexico Activities Association Student Spotlight

Gomez's Passion for Hondo Extends Beyond School

By Tyler Dunkel, NMAA Sports Information Director

Drive into Hondo Valley Schools and, right away, you can tell it's a special place. The arching Hondo Valley sign is the first thing to welcome all students, teachers and visitors and the beautiful mountain backdrop behind the K-12 school is simply magnificent. But these are just a few reasons why senior Alyssa Gomez loves the school and community she has lived in her entire life.

Gomez commented on why she thinks Hondo is so special, "Hondo is surrounded by bigger cities but I think the culture and traditions we have here are special. Everyone is willing to help each other at any time. It is like a family."

She continued by saying, "To wear the name 'Hondo Valley' across my jersey means a lot to me. You are representing not only yourself but your team, coaches, family and the community. It is not just about you. It is a big responsibility and a privilege."

Gomez has been a member of the girls' volleyball and basketball teams since her freshman year. In volleyball, she was the team captain for three years, earning all-District in 2014 and 2015, while being named the team's most valuable player in 2014.

"I like volleyball the best because it really takes a team effort all the way around. You can't just have one player scoring all your points; everybody has a job to do and if they don't you won't succeed. This past year we made the quarterfinals at state. It was a great experience for our team."

As a member of the basketball team, Gomez had one goal for her senior season, "This year our goals for basketball are to win the district, make the state tournament and play in The Pit. This year we are a lot better than last year and are really coming together as a team. To make it to The Pit would be very special for this community and the girls' basketball team. I think it would bring a lot of pride to the school."

This year, the Eagles tied for first in District 3-A with an overall record of 14-13 and 6-2 in district play. Hondo was selected as the 13th seed in this year's state tournament.

"The Hondo community really takes pride in our school and the athletics program," Gomez said. "The support we receive from the administration, staff, students and fans is incredible and is a reflection of this great community."

While achieving much success as an athlete, Gomez is also heavily involved in other extracurricular activities both in and out of school. She has been involved in 4-H since 2006 and FFA since 2010, earning a Greenhand Degree. FFA members can earn degrees as they progress through the phases of their leadership, academic and career skills development. Gomez also held officer positions, including FFA Chapter Report, Chapter Secretary and is currently the Student Council President.

Gomez is also involved in the yearly Hondo Fiesta as a member of Folklorico Dance group and was named Hondo Fiesta Princess in 2012 and Hondo Fiesta Queen in 2014. She also finds time to tutor fellow students in math, volunteer at the local hospital and work on the weekends with her parents



for their bread delivery company. She is also involved in Natural Helper, an organization that coordinates donations to make food baskets to hand out to families in need.

"I've volunteered at the local hospital here in town for the last two years," Gomez said. "I've wanted to get into nursing and I figured helping out at the hospital would be a great way to get in the door. It is challenging at times but also very fulfilling. To give back to the community that my family has lived for many years is just a little something I can do to give back."

She also commented on helping out the family business, "A few years back my parents acquired a bread delivery company. I help them out on the weekends, delivering bread to stores like Wal-Mart and Sonic in the Ruidoso area."

Being involved in many activities, Gomez still finds the time for her studies. She has been a member of the Superintendent's Honor Roll since 2010 and will graduate from Hondo Valley this spring as Valedictorian. Gomez will graduate with 24 hours of college credit from Eastern New Mexico University as well.

"I really enjoy coming to school. You need an education to succeed in life. I try to set the example for the younger students here at Hondo Valley. When I was younger, I watched a lot of the older kids and how they studied and behaved and I wanted to be like them. My sister was also a big influence. I have niece here at school and I notice that she watches me, so I have to set a good example."

Gomez will attend New Mexico State in the fall of 2016 and looks to go into Journalism or Nursing.