

New Mexico Activities Association Student-Athlete Spotlight

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Navajo Pine's Louis gives back to her Community

By Tyler Dunkel, NMAA Sports Information Director

Koqua Louis, a senior at Navajo Pine High School takes great pride in her community. In fact, she hopes to one day come back to Navajo, N.M., following college and become a prominent figure in the small western border town.

"I like living in Navajo. It is small and everyone knows each other. We have a great sense of community and community support."

Her involvement and impact with the youth of her community have already started, as Louis has been involved in Big Brothers/Big Sisters for over two years.

"I've been involved with Big Brothers/Big Sisters over at the Elementary School for two years now. It has been really good and fulfilling. It is nice to see that we are making an impact on the lives of younger students and giving back to the community of Navajo, N.M."

"Last year they had a sign up to be a part of the program and I thought it was just a great way to give back and help others. Coming from the reservation, where we don't have a lot of opportunities, this gives them the knowledge to know they can make opportunities for themselves."

Louis says giving back is something she enjoys, "I feel it is extremely important to give back to the youth of our community because of all the crazy events going on in the world right now. To give them good direction and help set them on the right path and set a good example for their lives is very important to me."

When she is not helping the younger generation in Navajo, Louis spends most of her time on the court, playing volleyball and basketball for the Warriors. She explains that being a Warrior is also extremely important to her.

"To be a Warrior means a lot because I know people are looking up to me. It also means that every night I need to go out and do my very best and never give up. I always remember that I representing Navajo Pine and the town of Navajo."

Louis is a middle hitter for the Warriors, who are currently 5-7 on the season and 3-3 in district play. As a captain of the team, Louis says it's been a great responsibility but it has taught her to a better leader.

"I've been playing volleyball since I was little. I didn't play my sixth-grade year because I found out I had asthma but started back up as a seventh grader after I got it under control. I've played all four years on the team and it has been a great experience. Being a captain or co-captain all four years has been a



big responsibility but it has taught me to be a leader.”

The Warriors made the first round of the state basketball tournament last year and Louis says it was a great experience. She also said that basketball means so much to the town of Navajo that hopefully they can make it further this season.

“Last year we made the first round of state, something we hadn’t done in a few years. It was a great experience for the team, the school and the community. Basketball means so much to the town.”

Louis seems to have it all. A leader in the community, at school, the volleyball and basketball teams, not to mention she carries a 3.8 GPA and is currently taking dual credit courses. But all that was in jeopardy a few years back when a trip to Colorado revealed she had asthma.

“I found out my fifth-grade year on a trip to Colorado. I just couldn’t breathe and at first, we thought it was just a cold. So my mom took me to the doctor and I was diagnosed with asthma. It really is more seasonal than anything but it is something I have to manage.”

And manage it, she has. Louis explains, “I always have my inhaler with me but I take it before, at halftime and after the games to make sure I can get enough air. If I can’t breathe, I always take myself out.”

Louis plans to attend college next Fall and hopes to join the medical field in some capacity.

“Going to college and getting a degree is extremely important to me. To have that college degree will open up some many doors to my future. I’m looking at BYU or the University of Chicago. I want to go into physical therapy or become a midwife.”

She hopes that her example will inspire others to give their very best in whatever they do in life.

“I want people to look at me as an example that you can do anything you want to do as long as you put in the hard work and dedicate yourself to the goals. Hopefully, people can see that you can graduate, you can go to college and you can get a good job and be successful regardless if you are from a small town or a big city.”