

New Mexico Activities Association Student-Athlete Spotlight



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Angadi Thrives in the Face of Adversity

By Tyler Dunkel, NMAA Sports Information Director

Rohan Angadi, a senior at Clovis High School sees things much differently than most, in fact, at the age of 11, he thought he may never be able to see at all. Diagnosed with macular degeneration, an eye disease that causes eye sight loss, Angadi was determined not to let it stop him from achieving his dreams and goals.

"I was diagnosed when I was 11 and, of course, my first worry was that I wasn't going to be able to play sports anymore. It's a progressive disease, so as I get older it gets worse and worse. I was really scared and thought that all my dreams weren't going to come true. But, over time I have come to realize that it is simply an obstacle. Anything that I could have done before, I can still do now. It might just take a little more work than it used to."

He continued by saying, "Even with glasses my vision is only corrected to 20/80. I will never have 20/20 vision but like I said it is just something I have to overcome and so far I have."

To say he has overcome this life-changing obstacle is an understatement. Angadi has played four years of high school varsity soccer and is preparing for his fourth year of varsity tennis this spring. He says he loves the team and individual aspects, which gives his athletic career a good balance.

"I've played soccer since I was really young and was a member of the Clovis High School varsity soccer team since I was a freshman. My favorite part about soccer is the team camaraderie and the fact that it is all about the team and you are out there for them. I enjoy that part the most. I also like the individuality of tennis as well."

"Playing both tennis and soccer you get a season of both team-based sports and individual-based sports. While both sports are very different, it turns into a well-rounded year on the sports side of my life. I've always loved sports in general and has been an interest of mine since an early age. My high school experience on the field and the court have been great."

Angadi is also the student body president at Clovis High School, a position he was elected to in a schoolwide election. He says he just wants to help school morale and make Clovis High School a place in which students can take pride.

"The biggest responsibility of being student body president is school pride and school morale. Our goal this year for student council has been to boost student spirit and morale for our school. Being part of student council all four years has been an honor and has helped me develop into a better leader and have more confidence, while also inspiring others."

Carrying a 4.3 GPA, Angadi is also a member of the National Honor Society and the Spanish Club, while also taking time out of his busy schedule to tutor his peers twice a week in



math, his favorite subject.

“I’m actually two years ahead in Math and when I got the opportunity to help others who struggle with math, I jumped at the opportunity. Similar to coaching, it’s great to see the students I tutor grow and make strides over the course of a semester.”

He also finds time to volunteer as a youth basketball coach for fifth and sixth graders and says that coaching has really helped him look at sports differently and the impact it has on the youth in his community.

“It’s great to be on the other side. I have always been a player and now I get to feel the pain of a coach. The best part about coaching for me is to see the improvement of the kids throughout the year.”

Earlier this fall, Angadi applied for the Wendy’s High School Scholarship Award and was one of 10 high school students from across the country as a national finalist. As a finalist, Angadi received a \$5,000 scholarship, a \$100 Wendy’s gift certificate and a trip to New York City for the Heisman presentation, where they will announce this year’s winner of the scholarship.

“Our counselor put the scholarship opportunity in the school newsletter so I decided to apply. I never thought I would make it this far but it feels really great. Not only do I get a \$5,000 scholarship with a chance to win the big scholarship, I also get to sit in the 12th row of the Heisman Trophy presentation, which for a lifelong college football fan is a great honor.”

He continued by saying, “The monetary amount of the scholarship is a great part of all this but the experiences this journey has given me far outweighs anything else. I was very reluctant to apply at first but of course, now I’m glad I did. This has been a great experience and one I’ll never forget.”

After graduation in the spring, Angadi plans to attend college and study electrical engineering.

“I’ve had straight A’s my entire life and really my work ethic has been instilled in me by my parents. I love learning and because I have a love for math I want to major in electrical engineering. Because of my eye-disorder I’ve had to work a little hard at it but it has been worth the work and struggle.”

Angadi is the perfect example of someone who took an obstacle in his way and didn’t give up and, despite not having the best vision, he can see his future is brighter than ever.