



### **Taking Notes & Leaving the World a Better Place – Lynnea Davis**

Julie Foudy had a dream. Her dream was to start an academy that would include two of the things she is most enthusiastic about: sports and leadership. What they do at the academy is teach girls how to be leaders on the soccer field and in life. We learn from some of the greatest women's soccer players in the world and are given many leadership concepts we can use to help us throughout our entire life.

The sports part of Julie's dream is soccer. Julie and all of the staff at the Julie Foudy Sports Leadership Academy (JFSLA) have the same liveliness and excitement about the sport as Julie and that made me want to get up and start playing! The staff brings the tactical and technical training of soccer and entwines it with leadership principles and team-building skills. For the leadership part of Julie's dream, I was able to listen to great women role models; Billie Jean King and Dr. Colleen Hacker, be involved in hands-on activities, and contribute to team-building exercises.

At the JFSLA, I was also able to take part in a community service-learning project. Options were to go out in the community and either help at Habitat for Humanity, serve lunch in an assisted living home, play with little children at a daycare for lower income families, paint fences on trails, and weed gardens at a wildlife museum. I wasn't at JFSLA to just listen and see great things being done, but to actually DO great things.

While attending the JFSLA in Moraga, California, I definitely think I took in every single thing that Julie hoped I would. I learned plenty of new soccer skills and drills to practice with hope of becoming a great woman's player someday. I also learned that a leader doesn't have to be the loud, screaming, "get everybody pumped up" type like Julie Foudy. A leader can also be the quiet, "take you to the side to talk to alone" type like Mia Hamm.

During the leadership classes I would listen and take notes like crazy! I didn't want to miss a word of what these amazing women were saying! The most important thing that Billie Jean King said to us when she spoke was, "Leave the world in a better place." I intend to do that even if it only affects one person's life. That is one person's life that will be changed forever because of me. The other speaker I really enjoyed listening to was Dr. Colleen Hacker. She was the Women's U.S. National Team's Sport Psychology Consultant since 1996. She talked to us about how to be okay with the mistakes we make and to move on from them by "flushing" them.

For the community service day, I played a soccer game against part of the staff of an assisted living facility for the elderly to watch. Afterwards, we went to the home and served drinks and lunch to residents. It was great listening to all of them tell us stories and give us little tips. One lady told me that when I start to drink coffee to not add milk and sugar because it has fat in it. I met two men; one had been a professional boxer and the other an All-American swimmer! I loved helping out. When we returned from our visit, we went to our leadership class and started working on ways we could help our own communities at home. I had so many ideas on how to help. Some ideas I had were large projects that would take a while to develop. Others I could do within the next couple of weeks at the most. It



excites me to know that because of this camp, it has opened up the possibility of so many new doors to choose from.

Now, I have a dream.