

Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2013

Allison Smith

St. Jude

Believing

The best feeling in the world is seeing someone smile because of what you did. This happened to me about a year and a half ago when my mom coached my sister's volleyball team. My mom made me come to practice with her to help coach. At first I was upset and didn't want to, but towards the end of the season I actually looked forward to going.

At the first few practices I could tell this little girl just couldn't quite get her serve over. I could also see that her knowing that everyone else could just made it worse. I could sense that she was scared so I made up my mind to help her. I remembered that a few years ago I was this little girl. I was terrified and never thought that I could. Everyone else told me I couldn't also. I wanted so badly not to believe them, but I did. Then my mom helped me. She made me believe that I could. And soon enough I did.

All I wanted is for her to feel the accomplishment that I did and that someone wants to help her because she is not alone. So that practice I went up to her and asked her if she needed help. Every practice from there on I helped her. And soon enough she started believing and she started doing. Because what I have learned is if you start believing you can, you do. Even after three practices I could see she was improving, not only in her actions, but in her attitude. Before she was terrified to actually even get on the court and try. But now she was participating and trying.

We worked on many different drills but it didn't really seem like work, it was fun. I could tell she actually started having fun too, and enjoying it. That is what sports are, enjoyment.

Soon a game was coming up. The whole team was so excited because it was their first game. When it was the little girl's turn to serve, I held my breath and crossed my fingers. I prayed that the girl would make it over because, with God, all things are possible. I knew how much she wanted this. I also knew how much she worked for this. And when she got the serve over, I knew she felt accomplished and proud, but I did too. It made me want to help everyone! The whole team was so excited! I could see the little girl's burning red cheeks as everyone cheered her on. So even though I got nothing in exchange, all I needed was her smile when she served her first, but not her last ace.

Because taking that small step may not seem that big at the time, but it led to something beautiful. People are not perfect, but they can only get better. Everyone starts at the bottom, you just have to find the courage to work your way up.