

Since I started playing tennis since my freshman year, I constantly pushed myself to be better than who I was before by practicing my form, learning strategies to gain the upper hand, and strengthening my mindset by pushing myself to get the next point. I've learned to listen to other people's advice and to absorb their criticisms in order to improve myself. Tennis also taught me how to acknowledge myself. I became my own cheerleader, even singing songs to myself to boost my energy and relieve the tensions I'm feeling. I realized that the only way to get past my emotional struggles is to break through my own self-created barriers, personal dilemmas, and envy toward players better than me. Being a singles player taught me how to work by myself. In a tennis match, I'm the only one on the court; I become my own teammate. Before receiving or serving a ball, I tell myself, "Come on... you can do this..." These four years tested my determination and rewarded me with friendships beyond my dreams. I've created a special bond with my teammates and created goals for myself that deemed impossible to others. Being captain my senior year helped build my leadership skills, and my strengthened mindset helped me through life in general, and it will help me in college and the future to come. There were other choices I could've made instead of tennis, but this sport took my weak freshman self and turned me into the fearless and risk-taking girl I am today. I should receive this tennis scholarship because I have dedicated a lot to this sport and achieved great things, especially in senior year being able to get second place in BVALs and playing in the quarterfinals at CCS.

I remember starting high school as a timid freshman. The first time I stepped on the courts, I was terrified; there were so many unfamiliar faces, everyone playing tennis so skillfully. To my surprise, I made the varsity team, and though I didn't know anyone; everyone was welcoming. Even so, I would constantly apologize for any minor mistakes but my team refused to let me keep that mindset. When rallying against hard hitters, they'd reassure me of my reflexes and encouraged me to stand my ground. If I worried over errors, my partner and coach would remind me to play my game. Instead of fretting over one shot, use the rest of the game to do better. Over the years, I've learned to hit my shots with deliberation and play each game with confidence. As the team likes to say, the most important point is the next one.

Tennis has helped me become more social in high school, showed me the value of hard work, and made me more adaptable and observant. I've become more confident and learned to put things in perspective. There's always room for improvement, so no reason to be stuck in the moment; this is true for any task. I will continue to carry this with me in my future endeavors.

I have been a part of the Varsity team through four years of high school. I started my freshman year on the Doubles Three team and finished my fourth season on the Doubles One team. A tennis scholarship would be a great honor that would help me continue my education. I plan to study computer science at Santa Clara University or UC San Diego. I'll also be bringing my tennis racquets with me when I go to college and make new friends along the way!

In and off the court, I have seen tennis as a not just a sport, but as a way of learning. Throughout my life, I have always looked for ways to learn -- through others, through my environment, through academics, and through sports. Playing tennis at Silver Creek taught me more unique skills that simply could have never been learned in a classroom.

When I first stepped onto the court in freshman year, I had no clue whether I was going to make the team. I really hadn't played tennis in over 2 years. After grueling conditioning and tryouts, I was placed on D2 for the rest of the season, where I was very happy to play. I was warming up, once again, to the sport of tennis.

Though our second season was quite difficult due to the departure of great players and the addition of a new coach, it was one of my most unique seasons. For this year, I had moved up to singles 4. It was a new style of play for me -- there was no more second chance. It was just me -- solely me who could be blamed, and this mentality also allowed me to grow outside of the game.

As a prospective business/econ/neuroscience major, I've realized that to make it in this competitive world, you have to *put yourself out there*. It may be a cliché term, but it's the truth. We really have nobody to depend on; it's our skills and perseverance that allow us to shine. Tennis is a prime example of this.

Fast forward to senior year. I suddenly find myself reflecting back on high school, my life, and looking forward to my future. I'm the captain of the tennis team, and I'm here to improve on my experience. More practice. More dedication. More conditioning. More leadership. And I'm proud to say that despite a road that at times got bumpy, that we made it. And not only did we make it, we grew in the process -- allowing us to thrive after graduation.

## **Jason Diaz.....Villages Scholarship Essay...2019**

**Through the duration of my time spent playing tennis for the Silver Creek Raiders, I not only gained many friendships with fellow teammates but also learned many different life skills I can utilize in the future. I joined SilverCreeks tennis team with little to no experience expecting not to get far in my freshman year of high school, but through hard work and determination by constantly showing up and giving my all at practices, I worked my way through the rankings. Tennis taught me the importance of teamwork and cooperation by playing with many different doubles partners. In doubles, communication and cooperation are needed to win the match, without it, both partners will be lost as to who will receive the ball. Being a student that wants to go into computer science, these tiny life skills will help me greatly in the future where cooperation is very important to get tasks done efficiently and correctly.**

**Continuing on, Tennis further developed my leadership skills. Being a team where we do not do cuts, there were many times where some fellow teammates were unsure how to do certain things, and the coach was too busy to help them. I found myself teaching other teammates correct form and some tips when no one else stepped up to help them. Through this, I found the importance of leadership, if no one else is going to step up, someone has to. This is also a beneficial skill for my future career as there are team leaders assigned to groups of workers when completing a task. I strongly feel I deserve this scholarship due to the amount of effort and time I put into the team, ranging from promoting it to friends when we were low on members, to making it a fun environment for everyone to play in and enjoy.**