

STUDENT SHOWCASE: Kayla Wyckoff

Kayla is a Liberal Arts student here at SUNY Broome, with plans to transfer to Binghamton University next Fall, and she is 19 years old. On top of her academic journey she has been an athlete playing goalkeeper for the SUNY Broome lady's soccer team, an experience that she has been spending time evolving and growing in since the 7th grade. Kayla says that she "Loves soccer because it's fun for her, and keeps her busy." As to how she came to find soccer in her life Kayla says "When I was younger, probably around 5, I started playing softball and I felt like I wasn't getting any better. So I tried a new sport in soccer and I actually felt like I could succeed in it, and I obviously did seeing as how I'm playing at the college level." This just goes to show what it takes to get good at something, it takes a lot of time and patience and practice. Being the goalkeeper, her entire team relies on her as the last line of defense. When asked how does she react to that pressure internally Kayla says "It is stressful, I won't lie about that, but it all depends on the situation, my defensive line really helps me they are very strong. So if they can't stop the offense I know wow this player is really good, and I know that I have to do my best and see if I can stop them. I give it my all always even if I think the ball was shot to high, I still jump for it and try to stop it."

When asked about her school/sports life balance Kayla says "It has been really hard because I am constantly on the go, but what I find helps is I have a little calendar that I carry around with me where I write everything. Games, practice, homework, projects, everything and then I color code them so it keeps me more focused and I always have confidence in knowing what I need to do." These are great tips that every student could use to their advantage!



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When asked about what challenges she faces in her life Kayla said "I have anxiety disorder so I get very anxious during games and during tests. I usually carry around something to fidget with because without it I would be constantly picking at my nails or picking at my skin and be distracted from what I'm trying to focus on. It's definitely hard because I get worried about what if I don't do well, even though I know the material, and it will all crumble apart if I don't use those resources." She added "I know when to take breaks and that helps too, for instance if I am working on an essay and it's 4 pages required and I get one page done and I get stuck."



I'll take a break, maybe play candy crush on my phone, something to relax me, because if I try to keep going I'm just going to get more stressed." When asked how her anxiety manifests while playing soccer Kayla says "It's usually at strange moments, like during warmups before anything has really happened. And that is a tough moment because I don't have anything to fidget with to distract me from those thoughts. But that's when I just breathe and think about happy things like how it is going to feel when I stop the ball, to get my mind off of what if I miss the ball?"

Kayla has career goals of becoming an Elementary school teacher, which is what she plans to start studying in the fall at Binghamton University. When asked if she plans to continue to play soccer at BU Kayla says "It's going to be hard because at SUNY Broome we are a D3 school, where as Binghamton University is a D1 school, and they are just soccer 24/7. So I thought I would maybe join a local soccer club, or last year I coached a youth soccer program and I loved that!" When asked how she might continue soccer after school Kayla said "I really do love coaching, and as a teacher it would be easy to connect as a girls soccer coach for a local school. If not I could always join a local club like 434, or one at the Binghamton sports complex."

When asked if she had any advice for any aspiring sports players Kayla said "If they are already in the sport I would say talk to the coaches, ask them questions like what do you see, or what can I do to improve, I did a lot of that and it help greatly. If they are not in the sport yet I would just say search your local area for a league, it doesn't have to be college or school, there are plenty of local leagues where you can go to hone your skills. And most importantly do it because it's fun, don't do it for competition!"