

The saying "Honor the Game" was something which was first introduced to me when I joined the Chargers Lacrosse program my 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. During that season I learned how to honor the game of lacrosse but also learned how to apply it to my everyday life. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade the world is still a very small place and there are no real worries in our lives. I can speak for myself and my friends in saying that we weren't sitting there obsessing over what colleges we will go to and what we would do four years from now. All we wanted to do was go out and have fun playing lacrosse. But time flies by and looking back now four years later those events were a huge influence on the person I have become.

When you start high school it becomes a huge stepping stone to becoming an adult. People always say that they changed in high school or they grew into a better person through the different events. I can say that high school has helped me grow into the person I am today, but without having my close friends and the values which were instilled in me by my parents and the lacrosse community things may have not turned out this way. To me "honor the game" is something which can't just be explained by only being a good person. In order to "honor the game" you have to be true to yourself and to the people around you. It's a collaboration of values and morals which a person has about everything they do in life. This definition may seem so incredibly impossible to achieve but I learned that it's not. All it takes is for the person to truly mean that things they do and not to drift from their true goals.

For myself the four years at Del Val have been adventuresome and a learning experience. I can say that I've done my best to "honor the game" and to keep it in mind when things come up and challenge me. The biggest way I believe I have kept this alive is through lacrosse at the high school and helping it grow with the younger children. Last year it really hit me on the influence that all the players have on the younger children in the community. All of the kids coming for the fun run and the first game of the season really showed that everyone on the lacrosse team is a role model in these children's lives. Being able to know that your own behavior and decisions you make can help foster growth in hundreds of children is amazing. Being able to know that not arguing with the referee on a bad call or going after someone for a cheap shot will show them that is how they should play the game. Hopefully they can then take that off the field and use it in school or even at home with their parents.

In high school I have also been involved in Key Club and Environmental Club. Both of these clubs gave me a chance to give back to the school and community. Key Club has so many different volunteer and service events to do during the year that there is no way to go wrong. Environmental Club helps out the school in keeping up with the recycling and helping to keep Del Val a beautiful place. Being involved in these clubs and lacrosse has taught me that honoring the game becomes a part of you. Sure it may sound corny but after all these years it is still something I remember and can think back on. When the coaches told us to honor the game in 8<sup>th</sup> grade they weren't just saying it for the sport but to help us become better people. Looking back and seeing this I thank all of them for helping me become the person I am today.