

CRISTINE SASANO (KALANI HIGH SCHOOL – CLASS OF 2010)



"C'mon girls, push! You gotta push yourselves!" This is the phrase that I always heard from Coach Clay, but wasn't only used in basketball terms, but also for our life lessons. Whether it was on the court, during a meeting, on the phone, or a text message, he always encouraged us to do our best. Overall, Ikaika Basketball has taught me many things from basketball skills to life lessons that was very helpful and I will definitely keep it in mind and take it with me throughout the rest of my life.

Ikaika Basketball has taught me many basketball skills. Everyday at practice we would do drills to strengthen our basketball skills and our body. We did things from dribbling, shooting, layups, offensive and defensive drills, and fun things like 7 in the pot, scrimmaging, 3 in the key, etc. When it wasn't basketball drills, we did things to strengthen our bodies. We did jump ropes and pushups, things we as girls hated. We ran miles and sprints until we almost puked. We did this so often that we would always get so mad and angry and wonder what we did to deserve this. There was no reason. We realized it was just to prepare us to become better basketball players as a team and as individuals.

Each day at practice, you could see the improvement in ourselves and as a team. We meshed better together, and each person brought a different asset to the team that made us "one player." During games, we made a better improvement that showed because the outcome always came out positive with a win. He would always tell us to come to practice, and if we didn't, we would run because when we didn't come to practice, we didn't realize that we were not only hurting ourselves, but the team also because practice was for us as a team getting better together. When one person did not show up, that was one person that fell behind in a new play, etc. Coach Clay always told us that he could only teach us so much, but we as the players have to do the work, play hard, and perform what we learned on the court. I also learned that we need to have a good and positive attitude in order to be a good player. We learned that if you work hard and play hard in practice and games, you will succeed.

Ikaika Basketball has taught me about attitude and life skills. At first I wondered why I would always have to write journals and responses on everything. I felt like I had a second english class. But it was to teach us about how to write, not to half ass things, and to reflect on games, etc for us to see later on if we need to look back at what we did and how we did. If we did not do our duties, we were punished because Coach Clay told us to do these things for a reason. It was to teach us life skills and lessons, and it did. Ikaika Basketball taught us to be adults and to learn to do things on our own and not depend on our parents or anyone else for help. This brings me to Ikaika trips. Every time we went on trips, we would do chores around the house because we needed to learn how to do things around the house so that when we went back home, we would help our parents do things in our house too.

We also did fundraising. But this type of fundraising taught us that money doesn't come easy and that we have to work for our money. We as players had to actually stand for hours and ask people "hi would you like to help support our basketball team?" Over and over again we asked hundreds of people, some said no, some said yes. We had to learn how to take the answer no. When we asked people, we got rejected but we had to learn not to let it get to us, and have a positive attitude for the next customer until we get a yes. This also taught us about having a job. This fundraiser was also like a job. It taught us how to smile and have good customer service. I am currently working at Genki Sushi Aina Haina and I feel like Ikaika Basketball had a lot to do with me getting hired for this job. I know that this will also help me for jobs in the future. I will take everything I learned, remember it, and use it towards my next job.



Being a player on Ikaika basketball has taught me not only basketball skills and how to be a better player, but most importantly life skills that I will always have and take with me and definitely take and remember throughout the rest of my life. Coach Clay had a huge part in making me into the individual and basketball player that I am today. I am glad and thankful for everything that I went through and that I joined the Ikaika Basketball Club because I learned a lot of lessons (basketball and life), met new people/friends and had a lot of fun, tears, laughs, and memories that I will never forget. Going into college, it is definitely another world now and I am on my own. The lessons that I have learned in Ikaika Basketball and from Coach Clay, I will take with me and will succeed in everything I do. Most importantly, NEVER GIVE UP and FOLLOW MY DREAMS. I won't let what I have learned from Ikaika Basketball go to waste and I will not let Coach Clay down and make him proud in everything I do.