

# Student Ambassador Spotlight: Avery Vacca of West Milford

There aren't many spare moments in the life of Avery Vacca, a West Milford junior who, when not studying, keeps busy playing field hockey, basketball and golf.

"Being a three-sport athlete comes with a lot of dedication year-round," she said. "I love having the opportunity to stay active and play with a variety of girls in all different grades at my school and learn from them as well as my coaches."

The enjoyment also comes with challenges.

"While I love participating in sports all year round, some challenges I face are looking for time to practice the upcoming sport as well as making time for family and friends," she said.

It's a routine that Avery has followed for most of her life.

"At five years old, I started playing soccer," she said. "I played on rec and club teams until seventh grade. Within that time, I was introduced to basketball by my siblings, which I still continue to play at the high school level. After taking a step back from soccer, my seventh-grade history teacher was the varsity field hockey coach at my school. She told me all about the program and convinced me the following year to join the eighth-grade team, where I instantly fell in love with the sport. Then following that, I joined golf

my freshman year after a few of my teammates from field hockey were already on the team."

Having such a passion for sports made Avery an ideal candidate to become a NJSIAA Student Ambassador. When offered a chance to apply for the position last year, she jumped at the opportunity.

Sure enough, she was one of 19 student athletes from throughout the state who were chosen to serve as a voice for New Jersey's nearly 283,000 high school athletes, through meetings and discussions with each other and NJSIAA administration.

"I was interested in becoming a Student Ambassador because of how passionate I am about sports and all of the opportunities I have received from participating in them," she said. "I knew that if I were accepted, I would be involved in changing and bettering all the NJSIAA programs to create an even greater experience for my peers and all the student-athletes in the years to follow."



*Photos provided by Avery Vacca*



Avery has enjoyed her first year as an ambassador.

“What I have found the most interesting in the meetings so far is learning the process which the association needs to take to make changes, and also how every school’s programs have different traditions for the their athletic programs. I am hopeful that with this group, we can create safer rules and guidelines for all the players, fans, coaches and officials.”

## **Getting to know Student Ambassador Avery Vacca:**

***Favorite subject:*** U.S. History.

***Favorite athlete:*** Erin Matson, who was a part of four national championship field hockey teams at University of North Carolina and is now the program’s head coach at age 23.

***Favorite team:*** University of North Carolina field hockey.



***Photo credit: John Jones/NJ Advance Media***

### ***Do you have any superstitions or pre-game rituals?***

“My pre-game ritual involves eating pixie sticks, blasting music, and having a dance party with my team. I am very superstitious. I make sure to wear my game day hocsocx and have a routine warmup every game.”

### ***How do you spend the time on the bus on the way to an away game?***

“On the way to an away game, I spend my time singing at the top of my lungs and getting hyped with my team.”



***Photo provided by Avery Vacca***

***Favorite food:*** Sushi.

***Favorite lunch at school:*** “When I get lunch from school, my go-to order is a chicken Caesar wrap.”

***The best thing about my school is...*** “The best thing about my school is that I get to see my friends every day.”

***What’s the best thing about being a high school athlete?*** “I would say being able to still play with my teammates all the way back from my youth travel teams. I think that had created such good chemistry and a sense of family for the teams that I am on.”

***What’s the best quality in a teammate?*** “The best quality in a teammate would be someone who is very supportive.”

***What’s your proudest accomplishment so far as a student?*** “My proudest accomplishment so far as a student is how hard I work to get and maintain good grades, which has allowed me to be accepted to the National Honors Society.”

***Favorite sports memory:*** “My favorite sports memory is scoring the winning goal in overtime



during a state quarterfinal game and running over to my team.”

***Is there a sport you don’t play, but would some day like to try?*** “I would love to try lacrosse some day.”

***Have you ever met anyone famous?*** “I have never met anyone famous, but I would love to meet some music artists like Adele or Luke Combs.”

***If you could have a super power, what would it be?*** “I would love for it to be the ability to teleport, because I have always wanted to get to places fast.”

***If there were 25 hours in a day, what would you do with the extra hour?*** “I would use it to sleep or hang out with friends.”

***What’s the best place you’ve ever traveled to?*** “The best place was Saint Martin on a cruise!”

***Do you have any pets?*** “I have a mini chocolate labradoodle named Sully!”

***Do you have any career ambitions yet?*** “I would love to continue my involvement with sports and either go into business/sports management or become an athletic trainer for college or professional teams.”



***Photo credit: John Jones/NJ Advance Media***