

Is that the Girl who went to Harvard?

By Lila Qualteri

Photos Courtesy of Solidea Ficco

Last year one of Golden's best and brightest, moved on to bigger things. Our own Solidea (Soli) Ficco was accepted into Harvard on March 30th which came as a major surprise to her.



"I thought it was a scam. I was shocked. I go into my account and there's confetti raining down from the screen and they're like, 'Congratulations, you did it'. They're lying and hacking my email and I'm doing a bunch of things. I just started crying."

Ficco had been rejected from her dream college, Vanderbilt, and decided to apply to Harvard on a whim. Ficco may have had her doubts but we all knew she could do it. Ficco says that she opened the email right before a lacrosse game thinking that she would use her rejection to fuel her fire. Turns out she was instead among the 4.5% who were able to successfully walk through the halls of Harvard, and she instead used *that* to win her game.

Ficco was undoubtedly one of the most active participants in our community. From being a major player on Golden's lacrosse team to leading the school

as student body president, Ficco was always busy doing what she could to succeed. Ficco stated many different ways lacrosse shaped and changed her along her journey saying, "Lacrosse and being on a team teaches you a ton about teamwork and how different people react in different situations and how to, you know, be sort of a social-minded person in that way. Whether you guys have a win or whether you have a loss, you as a person have your own reaction to it. But the whole team as a whole also has its own reaction to that as well. So you learn how different personalities work in different sports for each person's talents." Ficco said that it helped her understand different people and how to work with them, as well as instituting mental toughness into her.

Ficco has demonstrated multiple examples of mental toughness in her life. During the interview, Ficco informed us how she is deaf in both ears and how she has learned to not only adapt but find success from it. When on her Harvard application, Ficco was asked to write about "Anything" she chose to write about her hearing impairment. "I have my own personal experiences with that. And by defining my own hearing, I can make a name for myself and I can make a name

for myself regardless of my condition of being deaf, because I define what that means to me. And I put power to myself and I put power to my name through that.”

After her acceptance to Harvard, Ficco has continued pursuing the astrophysics path. She has taken many interesting classes such as Calculus II, astronomy classes, and chemistry classes, taught by some of the brightest minds. Ficco described the professors, saying “It's incredible. It's fascinating to meet these professors and you're like, oh, my God. You're in. And they've done crazy things. They've written books, they've spoken in TED Talks. It's fascinating.” Ficco has focused on her classes during her first year at Harvard trying to balance the workload.

Ficco felt that part of her ability to express herself so beautifully was because of Golden. It was “a beautiful place with passionate people.” When asked if she missed Golden, both as a school and a community, Ficco had nothing but courteous words to say.

“I felt like I became a really strong part of the community and the support of peers, adults, teachers, mentors, students around me not only made me feel like I was welcome in Golden's community, but also that whatever I gave, I can give back and we can all contribute to something beyond ourselves.” Golden has become a beautiful place for those who have been lucky enough to be around it.

We as the Golden Community are incredibly proud of Ficco and were lucky enough to get the inside scoop about her. We are sure that Ficco is onto amazing things, (Yes apparently it gets more amazing than Harvard). Ficco plans to go to grad school after graduating and hopes to begin a career in astrophysics. Truly one of Golden's best, we know you'll do amazing things Soli. Good luck!

