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Gymnastics - More than Flying Through the Air

Submitted by Candace Morton



Cameron Morton (photo provided)

Melanie Jorgenson, 17, pauses, takes a deep breath, runs, leaps into the air, twisting her body, head over heels and lands amazingly unharmed with a big grin. She is just one of several Lamorinda gymnasts who call Concord's Golden Gate Gymnastics their home gym. Melanie discovered the sport when she was 2 1/2 at a friend's birthday party. "I like the challenges and learning new tricks," says Melanie, a Level 9 gymnast and junior at Acalanes High School .

Her younger counterparts concur, "I like flipping through the air, it feels like I'm flying," says Sawyer Morton, 13, a 7th grader at Stanley Middle School.

Her younger sister, Cameron, a 5th grader at Lafayette Elementary says, "I kind of feel like a superhero when I'm flipping around."

Besides being fun what can gymnastics do for your child? Mike Lynch, Owner/ Coach of Golden Gate Gymnastics says, "It helps increase strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination; however, the self-confidence and lessons learned such as perseverance and dedication transfer to every other area of their life."

He isn't the only ones singing gymnastics' praises. A study completed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) showed that graduation rates for gymnasts exceed 90 percent in college, much higher than the national average. Women gymnasts received more NCAA academic awards than any other sport at a rate of two to three times that of other sports. Gymnasts also received more NCAA post-graduate scholarships.

When looking for a gym, make sure to look for a USAG (United States Association of Gymnastics) certified gym with USAG certified instructors who have the knowledge to coach and spot your child appropriately.

Sabba Jweinat, 11, a 5th grader at Springhill Elementary says it best, "Once you start gymnastics you can't stop and life without it is boring and lazy."

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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