

THIS IS ONEIDA TRANSFORMATIONS

One of the most rewarding parts of serving at Oneida is seeing a young person begin to make changes for the better. Sometimes this transformation involves better grades, better decision-making, a better attitude, better behavior in our dorm, or, most importantly, coming to a saving knowledge of Christ. It should come as no surprise to any of us that often the salvation decision is what leads to many other improvements as well.

This transformation I speak of typically only involves one individual making changes. When new students enroll, I usually tell them their Oneida experience will be whatever they choose for it to be and that the best way to have a good experience is to get involved. If they want to have a good experience they will, but if they don't then they will not.

In the past couple of years, we have watched our volleyball team make an amazing transformation. In the 2015 season, the team's record was 0 wins and 17 losses. In 2016 their record was 3 wins and 17 losses. So far in the 2017 season, their record is 16 wins and 3 losses. The team finished as Class A Regional Runner-Up and has twice defeated arch rival Clay County High School in straight sets (3-0).

This group of young ladies and their coaches has worked very hard the past couple of years. They've had long practices, attended camps, and sacrificed in many ways. This is a very young team that features several key players who are still in middle school. The starting lineup of six girls includes two eighth graders, two freshmen, one sophomore, and one junior. Both the present and future for this team looks great.

One of our ongoing challenges within our athletic program is building continuity. Often our students are only here for a year or two and then leave us, but our hope is that this particular team will stay together for several years to come. As students make changes for the better, their parents sometimes decide to bring them back home. I hate when students leave us, but I also know the ultimate goal is for families to be together. If one of my children were away at boarding school, I would also want them back home when possible.

Volleyball is only one of many, many programs Oneida offers to reach and minister to our young people. Through our co-curricular programs, our students learn things they might not learn in the classroom. They make friends, find identities, build character, mature, etc. Perhaps this volleyball team will stay together for years to come, but even if they do not, they are making OBI proud. Go Mountaineers!



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