

## **“ What Youth Soccer Has Meant To Me”**

**by Sara Fransen**

Playing soccer has been one of the most rewarding ways in which I've spent my time. To me, soccer is not just a sport, but a positive influence, affecting many areas of my life. Through soccer, I have built confidence and respect for myself and others. Some of my strongest friendships have stemmed from the soccer field. The value of teamwork has also been an important lesson I have learned through soccer. Because of youth soccer, I am encouraged to set high goals and expectations for myself and to achieve these goals through hard work and perseverance. Being involved in something like soccer makes me feel like I am part of something special and significant. Soccer has been a place where I belong and feel welcomed. Although soccer has its serious and life-shaping aspects, it is one of the things that has brought great amounts of fun to my life. I will always remember the joy of winning games, going to tournaments, joking with my coaches, attending soccer camp, and times spent with my team, on and off the field. The sport of soccer has been a major force in determining the person I am today. Without soccer, I would lack the self-confidence, knowledge of my own abilities as well as others', and the positive experiences and lessons I have acquired. Youth soccer has been a powerful, enjoyable, and beneficial part of my life, and I am so grateful that I was given the opportunity to be a part of such a wonderful program.