



## College Soccer Players Jenika Davis of UC Irvine and Jennah Loggins of San Jose State Recognized with CalHOPE Courage Award for September

**SACRAMENTO – SEPTEMBER 21, 2023** — Two California college student-athletes — **Jenika Davis**, a sophomore midfield/forward for the **UC Irvine** women’s soccer team, and **Jennah Loggins**, a senior forward for the **San Jose State** women’s soccer team – have been selected as the September recipients of the **CalHOPE Courage Award**.

Jennah will be recognized during an on-field ceremony at the San Jose Earthquakes MLS game on September 23 at PayPal Park while Jenika will be honored at the Los Angeles Galaxy MLS game on September 30 at Dignity Health Sports Park.

The award, presented monthly since February 2022, honors student-athletes at California colleges and universities who have overcome the stress, anxiety, and mental trauma associated with personal hardships and adversity. In addition to being recognized by CalHOPE, \$1,000 will be donated in each of their names to support on-campus mental health services at their schools.

Here’s a closer look at the inspiring personal stories of these two student-athletes recognized with the CalHOPE Courage Award for September.

### **Jenika Davis**

Just five games into her freshman soccer season at UC Irvine, Jenika was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML). The rare form of cancer would require a blood stem cell transplant for the 19-year-old Encinitas native.

In the weeks before her diagnosis, Jenika’s new friends and coaches expressed concern about Jenika’s atypical behavior. Her teammates and coaches knew something was wrong when the effervescent jokester became unusually lethargic and languid. Her roommates grew concerned when she spent more time in bed and suffered a loss of appetite. When the team trainers noticed unexplained bruising, they gave her a blood test that revealed AML.

Upon hearing the diagnosis, the UC Irvine women’s soccer team sprang to action, partnering with [Be The Match](#) to help pair their teammate with a donor. During a UC Irvine basketball game, they screened attendees with a simple cheek swab and found 97 potential donors.

Their work paid off; a donor with a matching blood type was found last spring. Jenna underwent four rounds of chemotherapy: three rounds before finding the donor and one round after finding the donor.

While Jenika's diagnosis prevented her from playing soccer, she was the inspiration for the Anteaters claiming their second consecutive Big West Conference championship. The team hung her #39 jersey on their bench and wrote "JD39" on the tape around their wrists.

Just six months after her blood stem cell transplant, Jenika is exercising, running, and, most importantly for her, spending time with her teammates. "I never would have been able to get through what I did without the amazing support systems I had," said Jenika. "My doctors, teammates, and family all provided such overwhelming support that I had no doubt I would bounce back. It is great to be back with the team, but my journey will truly be complete once I am able to get back on the field."

### **Jannah Loggins**

Jannah Loggins, a senior psychology major with a minor in kinesiology and forward for the San Jose State Spartan women's soccer team, has overcome tremendous challenges in her young life. Just a year after Jannah was born, she lost her mother to an asthma attack. Soon after her mother's death, Jannah's father left, forcing Jannah and her three siblings to live with relatives. During her childhood, resources were scarce: there were times when Jannah and her siblings went without food or running water.

Being one of the few minorities at South Hills High School in Covina, she often dealt with racism and had a difficult time making friends. Sports proved an invaluable outlet for Jannah, providing an opportunity for her to distinguish herself. Over the course of four years, she scored an impressive 12 goals on behalf of the soccer team and broke the school record for both the 100m and 4x100m relays on the track team.

Just weeks before leaving for San Jose State, Jannah tore her ACL in a pick-up soccer game that would require surgery and force her to redshirt her freshman year. Then, just four games into her sophomore season, she tore the ACL in her other leg and missed the remainder of that season. After an infection from her first surgery forced her to undergo a third surgery, her junior season was limited to just 10 games. In recognition of her resilience, Jannah was presented last year with the Spartan's Sammy Award for "Most Inspirational Player".

This year, fully healthy for the first time, she appeared in seven games, helping the Spartans start the season with a 2-3-3 record.

"No matter how hard it's gotten, I've always looked to God and the people in my life who have always been there to support me in some of my darkest times," explained Jannah. "I've always kept a positive mindset and never given up, no matter the challenges or adversity in front of me."

### **About the CalHOPE Courage Award**

The monthly CalHOPE Courage Award is presented by the College Sports Communicators (formerly CoSIDA), in association with The Associated Press; [CalHOPE](#), DHCS' crisis counseling and support resource; and the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being.

"CalHOPE is honored to continue recognizing student-athletes statewide who have overcome their challenges to perform their best as both scholars and athletes," said Autumn Boylan, Deputy Director of the Office of Strategic Partnerships for the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), which oversees CalHOPE. "CalHOPE's purpose is to build community resilience and help people recover from disasters and public health emergencies through free

outreach, crisis counseling, and support services. We hope that by sharing these stories of courage, all will be inspired.”

At the end of the school year, two of the student-athletes will be selected as the CalHOPE Courage Award winners. The previous winners were: **2023 - Anysa and Amaya Gray** (soccer, U.C. Berkeley) and **Nigel Wilson** (basketball, Pasadena City College); **2022 - Julia Schwayder** (lacrosse, Occidental College) and **Breyon Jackson** (basketball, San Francisco State).

Stories about all CalHOPE Courage Award honorees are available at [CalHOPECourageAward.org](https://www.calhopecourageaward.org) and via social media at [@CalHOPE\\_Courage](https://twitter.com/CalHOPE_Courage).

Sports information directors at all colleges and universities in California are encouraged to nominate deserving intercollegiate student-athletes through March 2024 at [CalHOPECourageAward.org](https://www.calhopecourageaward.org). The honorees will be selected by a panel of writers, editors, The Associated Press, and the College Sports Communicators.

### **ABOUT CalHOPE**

CalHOPE is a multi-level campaign run by DHCS to connect people with vital mental health and wellness resources and information to help them find their way during difficult times. CalHOPE offers critical behavioral health crisis counseling programs and uses a public health approach that is focused on strength-based strategies of building resiliency and connecting people to the support they need. CalHOPE partners with the California Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being to promote the CalHOPE Courage Award. CalHOPE resources may be accessed by calling the program’s warm line at (833) 317-HOPE (4673), accessing the [live chat](#) feature, or visiting [www.calhope.org](https://www.calhope.org).

**College Sports Communicators:** The College Sports Communicators is a 3,600-plus member national organization, comprised of the athletic communications, media relations, digital, and creative professionals throughout all levels of collegiate athletics in the United States and Canada. Founded in 1957, the organization is the second oldest management association in intercollegiate athletics. The organization's signature program is the Academic All-America program, honoring thousands of outstanding scholar-athletes annually. To learn more, visit [collegesportscommunicators.com](https://collegesportscommunicators.com).

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