Coach Allen is a man who can say so much without saying anything at all and if I could gain the amount of expertise, knowledge, and talent about wrestling that he holds in just his pinky finger, then I would be able to wrestle with my eyes closed, my hands behind my back, and still be able to win the Olympics. I’ll miss you coach.” Jacque Davis ’11 (left)

Coach Allen has supported our dreams in both our Academic and Athletic careers, which we cannot thank him enough for. I will miss him and his words of wisdom greatly. Jerk Smash!” Rebecca Medeiros ’10 (right)

Coach Allen is an amazing man, father, and most of all coach. Over the past four years, he has influenced, encouraged and helped shape me into the woman that I am today. Through the sweat, blood and tears, Coach Allen has been there for me with wrestling, school and especially my life. I am so grateful that I was able to be a part in his coaching career let alone his life.” Monique Cabrera ’09

Eddie Robinson said, ‘Coaching is a profession of Love. You can’t coach people unless you love them.’ Anyone who had the pleasure to be coached under Coach Lee Allen knows this to be true!” Becky Tavera ’06
A Quiet Presence

Lee Allen started setting trends on wrestling mats as a teenager, and to the benefit of a horde of wrestlers, has never stopped. While Allen will never walk away from wrestling, the man at the forefront of the women’s wrestling movement has chosen to retire as the Oaks head coach. He hands the reins of the program he built to 2008 Olympian Marcie VanDusen, the country’s first female college wrestling head coach.

“Women’s wrestling is a sport that is slowly but steadily growing. This would not be the case if it were not for people like Lee Allen,” Menlo College women’s wrestling alumna Carla O’Connell said. “Coach Allen is one of the pioneers of women’s wrestling. He took a program from nothing to a full squad that is recognized and respected by its counterparts.”

“I’ve known Lee for 21 years and he is an inspiration to many young coaches. He was a pioneer in the sport of women’s wrestling and his tenure is unmatched. He has done so much for us, and I wish him the very best.”

–Keith Spataro, Athletic Director

Stepping into the position vacated by Allen will be anything but easy to do considering his career accomplishments. Allen is a wrestling legend who was a two-time Olympian himself before spending nearly 50 years as a coach and leading the movement to legitimize women’s wrestling as a recognized sport. As the leader of the Oaks women’s wrestling program since its inception in 2001, Allen coached four national champions and 26 national place-winners. He was also named 2009 Women’s College Wrestling Association Coach of the Year.

“Coach Allen was not only about making successful athletes, but successful people,” said O’Connell. He always made our academics a priority. He was like a father to all of us and we couldn’t have asked for a better coach.”

In his days as a wrestler, Allen competed for the U.S. National Team at the 1956 Melbourne Games and again at the 1960 Rome Games. He again represented the U.S. at the 1961 FILA World Championships in Yokohama, Japan. Prior to his stint as a member of the national team, Allen was the second four-time state champion (1949-52) in the history of Oregon prep wrestling—never losing a match—and a star at the University of Oregon.

It’s hard to define what it’s like to have a coach who also happens to be our dad because Dad has coached us since we were 9 years old (Sara) and 6 years old (Katherine). Unlike other players, for us it is hard to separate family and sport because we have an emotional connection to him,” Sara and Katherine Fulp-Allen said about their father Coach Lee Allen. Lee coached both of his daughters on the Menlo College Women’s Wrestling Team. Katherine, a 2010 grad, will join Sara on the National Women’s Wrestling Team in Colorado Springs, CO.

Sara: I’ve been in Colorado Springs, CO for 3 years now, training for the Olympics in 2012. Dad comes to the tournaments and we talk regularly. Dad’s the type of coach who is laid-back and isn’t forceful. He lets you establish your own goals for the sport. Some athletes can’t find the want or need to go on with their sport. If you don’t have the desire within yourself, you don’t succeed with your sport. Dad can’t give a wrestler desire because that has to come from within you, but he works through it with you.

Katherine: A quiet presence is what Dad has. He has empowered us to be independent athletes. He has trained us to feel free to seek advice from others and to move on with our plans. Dad follows up on his students to find out what they are doing beyond their years at Menlo. We’ve had so many athletes live with us. My parents have opened their home to the athletes they’ve mentored. What I like the most about Dad is that he never gives up on people.

Sara and Katherine started attending wrestling practices as children wearing water shoes stuck to their feet with duct tape. They remember their makeshift shoes were always falling off as they played at practices. The fun of swinging ropes and playing are their first memories of the sport they love. Although their dad may be retiring from full-time coaching, the Fulp-Allen daughters don’t think it is the end of Coach Allen’s involvement in wrestling. “He’ll stay connected with wrestling,” they stated with confidence.

Lee Allen’s daughters, Sara Fulp-Allen ’07 and Katherine Fulp-Allen ’10, are both on the National Women’s Wrestling Team.