The AVCA History Commission was formed as a subgroup to the AVCA Diversity Development Team on December 1, 2020. The History Commission's purpose is to recognize, amplify, and celebrate the rich and diverse history of the sport of volleyball. The first phase of the Commission's work will explore the contributions of Black Americans to the sport of volleyball. Phase 1 is timed to coincide with the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the American Volleyball Coaches Association.

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CHIAKA OGBOGU
Chiaka Sylvia Ogbogu was born in the Newark, New Jersey before her family relocated to Coppell, Texas, a suburban community in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolis.

Despite a hint of shyness as a youth, Chiaka was personable in a way that allowed her to make friends quite easily. Many of her elementary school classmates played basketball and volleyball. She grew to enjoy those sports as well while participating with her friends. Chiaka stood out because she was ‘tall and carried herself with an athletic frame’. Once she arrived in middle school her ‘coaches forced her to go to club volleyball tryouts. They told her they saw potential’. It was somewhat challenging as she worked through the team dynamics associated with forming new relationships and raising the level of participation as a developing athlete with a new team. Ogbogu’s inherent ability to make friends made it easy to enjoy the sport and grow as a volleyball player and competitor.

In 2008, Chiaka began competing with club powerhouse Texas Advantage Volleyball (TAV) as she began to embark on her high school career at Coppell High School. At Coppell, the potential was taking shape as she would elevate her game and become one of the top high school players in the nation. In 2011, the Cowgirls led by coach Julie Green would finish the season at 42-8 to capture the 5A State Championship. Everything is big in Texas and that includes high school volleyball. One 5A state championship is quite a feat, but two in a row is extremely impressive. After leading the program in 2011 as a junior, Chiaka came back with one of the state of Texas’ most dominant high school volleyball seasons in scholastic sports history. She finished her senior season with 486 kills and 144 blocks, while posting an amazing .555 hitting percentage to capture back-to-back UIL 5A state volleyball state championships. In the final match, Ogbogu recorded 24 kills and six blocks while hitting .365 against New Braunfels completing a 49-3 season. Coppell would finish the season as the #1 ranked team nationally according MaxPreps.

Chiaka would earn a spot on the AVCA High School All-America first team along with being named the 2012 Gatorade Texas Volleyball Player of the Year as well as the 2012-13 Texas Girls Coaches Association 4A-5A Player of the Year. In addition to her success at Coppell, Chiaka also powered TAV to 18 USA Volleyball Open championship in 2013 before heading to college later that year.

That college would be the University of Texas! ‘The college level is a whole different experience’...and Chiaka was well-positioned to make the transition. ‘The one thing she knew she could control was how she related to her teammates on and off the court’. With the program coming off a national championship season, she made six starts in 24 matches her freshman year helping the Longhorns make it back to the national semifinals in Seattle where they would lose in four to Wisconsin to finish the season at 27-3. Ogbogu would be named a second team AVCA All-America. In her second season in Austin, Ogbogu would lead the team in hitting percentage at .420 and be named first-team AVCA All-America while leading the ‘Horns to another national semifinal appearance this time losing to BYU in four despite 14 kills and eight blocks from Ogbogu. Chiaka would be named to the NCAA All-Tournament Team for her performance. Another season, another national semifinal appearance for Coach Jerritt Elliott and Texas women’s volleyball. Facing the Golden Gophers of Minnesota in the semifinals, they were finally able to break through after back-to-back semifinal losses in 2013 and 2014. Waiting for them in the finals match was Nebraska, who would sweep the Longhorns leaving them as the national runner-up and 30-3 record. Chiaka again was named AVCA first team All-America along with All-Big 12 first team. Chiaka would wrap up her time at Texas by being named first team AVCA All-America for a third time. She would also be named the 2017 Big 12 Player of the Year and leave Texas women’s volleyball program as the all-time blocks leader passing Errica Hibben’s record set in 1992.

Since leaving Texas, Chiaka joined the U.S. Women’s National Team in 2018 and has played professionally in Italy, Poland, and Turkey. In 2019, her Italian Imoco Volley Conegliano club won the FIVB Volleyball Women’s Club World Championship. In three FIVB Volleyball Nations League appearances – 2018, 2019, and 2021 – with the U.S. Chiaka has brought home three gold medals. On June 7, 2021, Ogbogu was selected to the 12-player roster for the 2020 Summer Olympic team in Tokyo, Japan. The team would collect USA’s first gold medal in women’s volleyball competition.

Chiaka’s hobbies include playing piano and painting. Need help redecorating...Call Chiaka, who does some work as an interior designer. Looking for a friend and great teammate...Call Chiaka!
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