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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ALISHA GLASS CHILDERESS
Leland, Michigan native Alisha Glass Childress is one of the most accomplished athletes to ever come out of not only northern Michigan, but the entire state of Michigan. Leland is a beach town located in northwest Michigan on the shores of Lake Michigan. To this day, Glass speaks glowingly about growing up in Leland and the positive impact it had in shaping her as a person.

At the age of 12, Alisha was accepted into USA Juniors. Getting the opportunity to train in Colorado Springs, Colorado as part of the USA Volleyball High Performance Program was a huge part of her development into a volleyball phenom. As the daughter to Leland native and legendary high school volleyball coach, Laurie Glass, didn’t hurt either. Laurie, a member of the 1978 Leland High School state championship volleyball team, would coach her daughter at Leland where Alisha would rewrite the history books as one of the top high school volleyball players in the country. Alisha would lead the Comets to a runner up finish in the 2005 Class D volleyball state championship in her junior year. The following season the daughter and mom/coach would reach the mountain top capturing the 2006 MHSAA Class D state title with a record-setting 48-kill performance, capping off a high school career in which Alisha currently ranks first all-time in career kills (3,584), career aces (937), and aces in a season (296); topping her record 252 aces in the 2005-06 season. She would be awarded Miss Volleyball and be named the Gatorade Player of the Year for the state of Michigan in 2006. What shouldn’t be lost is that Alisha was not only a volleyball star, she was also a first-team all-state basketball player as a junior. A 3.7 GPA and a member of the National Honor Society made her an all-star in the classroom as well.

College coaches from women’s volleyball powers across the country had their recruiting radar on Alisha for years. With her involvement in USA Volleyball’s High Performance as a youth and her dominance as a high school student-athlete, it was no secret that she was a generational talent. Penn State University and AVCA Hall of Fame coach Russ Rose would ultimately win out and Alisha would sign with the Nittany Lions as part of what would arguably be the most star-studded recruiting classes women’s college volleyball has ever seen. Also signing with Penn State in 2006 were Gatorade National Player of the Year Megan Hodge, Virginia Gatorade Player of the Year Blair Brown, and Illinois Gatorade Player of the Year Jessica Yanz.

Record setting as a hitter and a serving wiz in high school, Alisha was recognized as the Best Setter in the High Performance program in the summer of 2005. The versatility, the intelligence, the high volleyball IQ highlight the skill level to excel in the front and the back. These attributes positioned Alisha quite well as she transitioned to the college game to not only be transcendent athletically, but also provide leadership and a steadying presence for this stellar recruiting class and the accompanying high expectations.

Alisha would not only meet those expectations but exceed them in her time in State College. As a freshmen, she was named to the Big Ten All-Freshman team starting all 35 matches. The versatility and volleyball acumen was evident from the beginning as she spent most of the season as a 5-1 setter, but also saw time as a 6-2 setter/hitter, primarily on the right side. The team would finish the season at 28-3. Note: three losses. From 2007-2009, Alisha and the Penn State women’s volleyball program would totally dominate the women’s college volleyball universe. As an AVCA second-team All-American and first-team All-Big Ten selection in 2007, the Lions would win their volleyball championship trophy #1 in Alisha’s career topping Stanford in a five-setter ending the season at 34-2. Note: two losses. The program would go undefeated in Alisha’s final two seasons and would add two more NCAA women’s volleyball national championship trophies to trophy #1 for three in a row. In 2008 and 2009, Alisha would be named a first-team AVCA All-American in both seasons with the team going an amazing 76-0 completing a 142-5 win-loss record in four seasons. Alisha would close out her career with 398 kills, 5,800 assists, 926 digs, and 454 blocks.

From State College, Alisha would traverse the globe as a professional player in Brazil, Poland, Turkey, and Italy from 2010-2016. A veteran of the USA Volleyball youth and collegiate training programs, Glass would join the U.S. Women’s Senior National Team in 2010. Alisha would compete in numerous FIVB and internationally sanctioned competitions medaling at least 16 times and winning a number of individual awards including being named USA Volleyball’s Female Indoor Athlete of the Year for both 2013 and 2014 and being named Best Setter of the 2014 FIVB World Championship. Glass would top her a stellar international run by being named to the 2016 Olympic Team. Named Best Setter on the 2016 Olympic Dream Team, Alisha would help lead the team to a bronze-medal finish in a 3 sets to 1 win over the Netherlands on August 20, 2016 in Rio.

At the age of 20, Alisha would join the coaching ranks after retiring from playing volleyball in 2017. In 2019, she would join the Stanford women’s volleyball coaching staff before stepping away after one season to focus on family. She hopes to resume coaching volleyball sometime in the future.

Leland loves you, “Leash”! They are as proud of you as you are of Leland. You are proof that ‘you can make it from anywhere’!

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AVCA DDT HISTORY COMMISSION

DEITRE COLLINS/PARKER, CHAIR
ASSOCIATE HEAD COACH
COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
2008 AVCA HALL OF FAMER

RAY GOODEN
HEAD WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL COACH
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

MAGGIE COUTURE
HEAD WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL COACH
JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY

SARAH GRAVES
AVCA DDT HISTORY COMMISSION ADVISORS:
BRIAN GIMMILLARO, PAT KENDRICK, ROSE MAGERS POWELL, RUTH NELSON
NICKIE SANLIN, AVCA DIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM CHAIR
KENNEDY D. WELLS, AVCA STAFF LIAISON