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.

PHASE 1 | VOL. 1.39

DEITRE COLLINS-PARKER
Sometimes it takes a 100-mile roundtrip drive to rise. For Deitre, her family and others it was worth the sacrifice to rise. From Lancaster, California to the South Bay was 100 miles, but it was worth it to play club ball and not only develop elite skills, but also her love of the game of volleyball. At Antelope Valley High School, her “true love” was basketball. Her athletic ability was unquestioned as she also was a sprinter and long jumper on the track & field team at AV. That superior athletic ability made her a capable volleyball player, but she would admit that when she first started playing, she wasn’t all that good. While still at Antelope Valley, Collins was selected to participate in an Olympic training development program in Los Angeles. Sometimes it takes a 100-mile roundtrip drive to rise. The training and practices were grueling not to mention the commute from Lancaster to LA, but the hard work paid off.

Legendary University of Hawaii coach and AVCA Hall of Famer Dave Shoji saw a videotape of Deitre and after some conversations with her high school coaches, he offered her a scholarship even though he had never recruited her. What Shoji saw was a young woman full of potential, an athlete on the rise who had all the potential to reach unlimited heights. She signed to go to Hawaii without even visiting and her rise was meteoric. The volleyball court became her domain and the rise of the Rainbow Wahine that was early in its trajectory would take off like a comet.

Sometimes you have to travel the globe to rise. After her otherworldly college career, Collins would begin an international and professional career that would take her around the globe. As a member of the U.S. National Team, Deitre would compete in numerous international competitions helping the U.S. earn bronze medals at the 1986 Goodwill Games and the 1987 Pan Am Games. In 1988, all of the hard work and skill development would result in being named the starting middle blocker on the U.S Women’s Volleyball Olympic Team that would play in the 1988 Seoul Games. Deitre would serve as an alternate for the 1992 Olympic team that would compete in the Barcelona Games. She played professionally in the Italian League (1988-89) and the French League (1989-91), capturing the French League Championship twice and the European Cup of Champions in 1990.

Nagging injuries and multiple knee surgeries began to add up leading Collins to retire from competition but sparking a coaching career starting at the University of Houston as a restricted earnings coach. Sometimes it takes a change in plans to rise. Her journey as an assistant coach led to stints at Northern Arizona University and the University of South Alabama. Deitre would get her first college head coaching job at UNLV in 1996. She would be named Western Athletic Conference Coach of the Year honors in 1998 after taking a dormant volleyball program and leading the Lady Rebels to a 23-8 record and a WAC tournament semifinals appearance. In 2004, Collins would become the head coach at Cornell University. In five seasons as the head coach at Cornell, she led the Big Red to three Ivy League titles and two NCAA tournament appearances. Heading back to California, Deitre would become the head coach at San Diego State University where in 11 seasons, she would win 171 matches highlighted by a conference co-championship in 2012. For the 2021 season, she served as associate head coach at Coastal Carolina University.

Deitre Collins-Parker
AVCA Hall of Famer, 2008
Broderick Cup Recipient, 1983
2-Time WVB Broderick Award Honoree
1983 & ’84
Volleyball Coach

A 2008 AVCA Hall of Fame inductee and 2009 NCAA Silver Anniversary Award honoree, Deitre Collins-Parker remains a true champion and advocate for volleyball. She is dedicated to the betterment of the sport and her coaching colleagues having mentored athletes and coaches all over the world. A former AVCA board member and chair of the AVCA Minority Coaches Committee, Deitre currently serves as the chair of the AVCA Diversity Development Team History Commission.
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

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