

2025

AVCA Thirty Under 30 Club



Annika Stephens

Black Hills Juniors
Club Director

Career Accomplishments to Date:

I have grown the Black Hills Juniors from one city with 13 teams in 2020 to four cities with 39 teams the 2025 season. We have led an exponential impact in Western South Dakota that brings players in from three states to play with us. Our high school programs have been affected by players choosing to play club, and overall increasing the talent and skill in Western SD. In 2023 my 17-1 team earned the first USAV GJNC bid that our program has received since 2012.

Coaching Roles:

- Black Hills Juniors
 - 2018 - Present: Head Coach
 - 2020 - Present: Club Director
- South Dakota Mines
 - 2020-2021 Volunteer Assistant
 - 2022 - Present Assistant Coach

What made you decide to get into coaching volleyball?

My college coaches led a small club in Madison, South Dakota when I was playing at Dakota State University, and approached me about coaching my freshman year. After coaching 12's that first year, I was hooked! When I moved back to Rapid City, my old coach and club director approached me to join the coaching staff for BHJ. After a couple years of coaching, the previous director asked if I would be interested in taking the club program over. It's been an honor to run the program that I was able to play in during 7th-12th grade!



What are your career goals in the sport?

My goal for the Black Hills Juniors program is to continue to impact players lives and our community, all while growing our volleyball skills and knowledge. I want to continue to lead players into college programs that are the right fit for them, and be able to instill the confidence and life lessons that will help them through life!

Which coaches have influenced you the most?

Amber (Lashbrook) Stiglets was my coach during club and high school during a very pivotal point in my teenage years. After receiving guidance, positivity and her kindheartedness, I knew that I wanted to be able to impact younger players some day the way that she impacted me during that time.

Lauren (Torvi) Prochazka has been a great leader to work side by side with as well. She has shown me that coaching with honesty, compassion and vision is the ultimate way to lead players.

What do you enjoy most about your coaching job?

Being able to see and feel the impact that you have in a players life outside of volleyball is one of the most enjoyable things that I have experienced in

coaching. Success is always easy and fun, but learning harder life lessons and seeing players shine during hard situations is very rewarding to me.

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