

# 2026

## AVCA Thirty Under 30 High School



### **Ariyonna Cousins**

North Central high school/ The Academy volleyball club  
Head varsity coach/ Head club coach

#### **Career Accomplishments to Date:**

One of my proudest accomplishments has been earning the opportunity to serve as a varsity head coach at North Central High School and help lead the growth of the program. Being trusted with that responsibility at a young stage in my career has been incredibly meaningful. I have also had the opportunity to coach at the club level, where I focus on developing athletes both on and off the court. I take pride in building strong team cultures and creating environments where athletes feel supported, challenged, and motivated to reach their full potential.

#### **Coaching Roles:**

North central High School: JV head coach 2025-2026 season, Varsity head coach upcoming 2026 season

Irvington High School: Varsity assistant 2024-2025 season

The Academy Volleyball Club head coach 2022- current

#### **What made you decide to get into coaching volleyball?**

Two coaches who have influenced me the most are my club directors, Jack and Travis at The Academy Volleyball Club. They have consistently pushed me to be my best self as both a coach and a person. Early in my coaching career, they helped build confidence in me that I did not always have. Their leadership and commitment to athlete development have greatly shaped how I approach coaching. Learning from them in the gym and observing how they connect with players has been a true joy and continues to inspire my growth as a coach.

#### **What are your career goals in the sport?**

My goal in volleyball is to continue inspiring and developing young women through the sport while helping push women's athletics forward. I want to create environments where athletes feel confident, supported, and motivated to reach their full potential. As I continue to grow as a coach, a personal goal of mine is to eventually break into the college coaching world, where I can continue mentoring athletes and contributing to the growth of the game at a higher level.



### **Which coaches have influenced you the most?**

Two coaches who have influenced me the most are my club directors, Jack Lesure and Travis Fuller at The Academy Volleyball Club. They have consistently pushed me to be my best self as both a coach and a person. Beyond teaching the game, they helped build confidence in me that I did not always have early in my coaching career. Their leadership, passion for volleyball, and commitment to athlete development have greatly shaped how I approach coaching. Learning from them in the gym and observing how they connect with players has been a true joy. They continue to challenge me to grow and keep athlete development at the center of everything I do.

### **What do you enjoy most about your coaching job?**

What I enjoy most about coaching is the opportunity to be the coach I once needed as a young athlete. Volleyball is the platform, but the true impact comes from helping players grow in confidence, resilience, and accountability. I strive to create an environment where athletes feel supported, challenged, and believed in while also holding them to high standards. The most rewarding part of coaching is watching players begin to see their own potential—whether that's gaining confidence after a tough moment or stepping into a leadership role. Being part of that growth and helping athletes become stronger on and off the court makes coaching incredibly meaningful to me.