

2026

AVCA Thirty Under 30 High School



Zoe Leonard

Kamehameha Schools Hawaii
Head of Program

Career Accomplishments to Date:

- Big Island Interscholastic Federation Division I Champion (2025)
- Big Island Interscholastic Federation Coach of the Year (2025)
- Led varsity to an undefeated season in conference (18-0) and a 5th place finish at the Hawai'i State Division I Tournament (HHSAA) in inaugural season as head coach (2025)
- Coached 6 All-BIIF conference awardees, including Player of the Year (2025)
- Inaugural Ka Maka Ihe Tournament champion (2025)
- Coached 7 All-PacWest and numerous All-Academic awardees (UH Hilo)
- 2020 AVCA Diversity Award recipient (Ivy League Nominee)

Coaching Roles:

(2025-Present) Kamehameha Schools Hawai'i - Head of Program
(2021-2025) University of Hawai'i at Hilo - Assistant Coach
(2020-2021) Dartmouth College - Assistant Coach
(2019-2020) University of Hawai'i at Hilo - Assistant Coach

What made you decide to get into coaching volleyball?

I've been around volleyball since I could walk, chasing balls at my dad's practices, playing through my youth, and competing in college. The game has always been a major part of who I am. Coaching felt like a natural next step. It allows me to give back to the sport that shaped me, stay connected to the game I love, and mentor young athletes, especially those from my small rural hometown of Hilo, Hawai'i, helping them build character, pursue post-secondary pathways with confidence, and grow into disciplined, compassionate, and resilient individuals.

What are your career goals in the sport?

In my first season as head coach at my alma mater, I feel deeply grateful and fulfilled to lead a program that shaped me. I've never chased a single pinnacle or title; instead, I've trusted each opportunity that aligns with my values and allows me to grow. My career goal is not defined by a level, but by impact. I want to continue giving back to my community and lāhui here in Hawai'i through sport, using volleyball as a vehicle to develop strong young men and women to strengthen our program's legacy and to serve the place that raised me.



Which coaches have influenced you the most?

The coach who influenced me most is my dad, Chris Leonard, who guided me through club, high school, and beyond. He spent countless hours giving extra reps in our backyard, even mounting a net to our house, teaching me discipline and ball control. More importantly, he showed me how to communicate, lead, and be a great teammate. I'm also shaped by coaches like Tino Reyes, Erin Lindsey, and Gilad Doron. Each played an integral role in my growth as both a player and person, both on and off the court.

What do you enjoy most about your coaching job?

What I enjoy most about coaching is the opportunity to impact the next generation. It allows me to create a safe space where young athletes can grow physically, mentally, and emotionally, while building meaningful memories and lasting relationships. Sports are powerful in shaping responsible, high-character young adults, and coaching lets me contribute to that growth for the betterment of our community. Volleyball opened doors I never imagined, including a college experience I'll always cherish. I want my players to pursue opportunities beyond our small hometown should they choose to, and one day return home to give back.