

Team Builder: Erica Jimenez, New Volleyball Coach



In the search for a new volleyball coach, Lee College has found a "match" with Erica Jimenez. The San Antonio native joined the athletics department July 31, which gave her less than two weeks to rebuild her player roster before their first scrimmage.

"I brought in the best I could given the time that I had," she explained. "It involved speaking to a lot of people around me, watching videos of potential players and searching through the web — all hoping to find people who weren't already recruited this late in the game."

Their hard work and persistence in such a short time is already paying off for the Lady Navigators. They've won the first Region XIV Conference game of the 2023 season against Victoria College and continue to serve up more wins along the way.

"Erica is someone who is just as hungry as I am in wanting the best for Lee College," said Nicholas Wade, athletics director and Navigators basketball head coach. "She is someone who has what it takes to bring the community together — on and off campus. We are confident her energy and buzz will help propel our athletics department to the next level."

When she is not busy running a volleyball program and coaching the players, Jimenez focuses on being a wife and mom to a baby boy.

How did you get into volleyball?

I grew up in a family that loves to watch and play sports. I started dancing when I was four doing ballet, tap, jazz, flamenco, you name it. Then, when I was 12, I decided to try volleyball because I really loved the challenge of the sport. In middle school I played for the San Antonio Warriors – winning multiple tournaments and awards, including MVP. After high school, I attended Prairie View A&M University to pursue my bachelor's degree because I wanted to be an anesthesiologist. While there, I played Division 1 volleyball. I continued at PVAMU for my master's degree in chemistry and became an assistant coach for the volleyball team. I spent two years in that position.

What is the most important thing you look for in a player?

Someone who is a hard-working athlete. I am very big on work ethic. When I was growing up, my motto was "Hard work pays off." I look for someone with a lot of energy who is going to get in there and grind.

You are still getting to know the players. What is your coaching style?

I am very hands on. I will give the women enough time to work it out when they are in their own little rut, but I am there 100 percent of the way with them, communicating with them every second I can. At times, I've played with the women and showed them certain movements to illustrate what I am talking about.

What are your expectations for the 2023 season?

I am really looking to build a different community with the volleyball program and how we are seen. I want to get the ladies out there talking to people and get them very involved with the community. As far as the playing volleyball aspect, I am looking to win. Not saying we are going to take it all, but I think having a better season, going a little bit further and reaching a good momentum is going to put us above and beyond where we were last year.