I have played volleyball for 7 years of my life and I have fallen in love with the sport. I normally play year-round with a two to three-month school season followed by a six-month club season.

During my freshman year at Lakeside, I was pulled up to play with the varsity team after originally making JV. In my sophomore year, after I transferred to St. Pius X Catholic High School, I played an entire JV season. Due to the transfer from one high school to another, I was ineligible to play Varsity. The summer after my sophomore year, my school team attended a camp at The University of Florida. Both the JV and Varsity teams attended and during one of the sessions, I was pulled up to varsity.

When tryouts rolled around my junior year, I did my best to showcase my skills, but it wasn't enough and sadly I was cut from the team. I was beyond devastated, but I pivoted and joined the advanced theater company. For the rest of 2022, I had no intention of going out for the team again. At the beginning of 2023, I had thought about trying out again. I didn't want to be one of those kids who gave up on their sport just because of one small setback. So, I didn't. I went to the gym over the summer and did some private lessons and luckily for me, I made the team. I was told that I was "15 out of 15" and "(probably) wouldn't get playing time," but two weeks into the season, I was in the starting six.

I showed my dedication to the game and my true skill and played in every game . I am extremely proud of myself for my perseverance and for not giving up. The SPX varsity volleyball team benefitted from my skills and I'm glad I got the opportunity to do so. At the banquet and the end of the season, I received the Coach’s Award for my hard work and it was an amazing gift to receive.

This experience taught me a lot about myself and how strong I am. I learned that failure is not a dead end and that I can do anything I set my mind to. As a striving architect, perseverance is a necessary trait to have when needed to solve the problems of this growing world. Architecture is about designing and building functional assets for our communities, and that only comes with trial and error.

How remarkable is it that a player can go from not making the team junior year to getting the coaches award senior year? The story of my life!