



House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
Chairman Austen Schauer
March 9, 2023
SCR 4003

Chairman Schauer and members of the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee,

My name is Jon Hegerle and I am the Head Women's Volleyball Coach at the University of Jamestown where I have served in this capacity since 2009. I want to start by thanking Senators Terry Wanzek, and Cole Conley as well as Representatives Mitch Ostlie, Craig Headland, Don Vigesaa, and Bernie Satrom for sponsoring this resolution. It is a great honor and I am humbled to be standing in front of this assembly today.

On December 6, 2022, the Jimmie Women's Volleyball Team won the University's first National Championship in its 139 years of service. That evening I received a text from a former Colleague at the University that simply said "Congratulations coach! Your program is so much more than this National Championship and that is what makes it so special." In the following days and weeks I started to understand a bit about how much more.

As stated in this resolution, 9 of our varsity players are from ND. The majority of the rest are from MN with a sprinkling from SD and MT and a pinch of MI. In my 14 seasons at Jamestown, I have had the pleasure of coaching 65 players from ND. 23 times a ND player has been named an NAIA All-American. Most recently, this past season Lexi Olson, from Langdon was named honorable mention All-American, Ellie Holen, from Lamoure was named the NAIA Defender of the National Tournament, was selected as a 2nd Team All-American and was named NAIA National Defender of the Year. Ellie's sister, Anna Holen, was the MVP of the National Tournament, and was selected as a 1st Team All-American for the third straight year. And, Kalli Hegerle, from West Fargo, was honored as a 1st Team All-American and named the NAIA National Player of the Year.

These players, along with the 62 others NDakotans, grew up as multi-sport athletes in ND and were able to attend the University of Jamestown due much in part to the ND scholarships available. I want to thank you for your efforts in providing essential financial support for ND students attending ND universities. What an exceptional experience these players have been provided. Thank you!

When teaching HS government in MN 20 years ago, an army recruiter that visited our class shared that the army's number one area of recruitment out of HS is the Midwest, primarily rural MN and North and South Dakota for three reasons:

1. They know how to work
2. They often come from big family's and small communities and understand that the world doesn't revolve around them, and
3. They know how to problem solve and have common sense which allows them to MacGyver on the fly.

In 2009, God led me to leave my teaching position in MN to become the Women's VB coach at then Jamestown College. I will be honest, one of my reservations was that I was moving to ND... One of my MN coaching mentors wrote "I am concerned that you will find yourself in a state of morass and never be able to return." What I have found is, ND, maybe more than any state of the Union, works tirelessly in striking the delicate balance between order and rights that provide its citizens the greatest affordability of individual freedoms as is possible, thus encompassing the spirit of our country's fore founders in protecting and supporting our rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is no surprise that a large number of our NON-ND student-athletes choose to stay in ND after they are finished with their education at UJ in order to live "The Good Life."

It is why I love living in ND and working at UJ and now proudly call myself a North Dakotan!

Thank you for not only your support of our volleyball team and the University of Jamestown, but your efforts in providing tremendous learning opportunities and living opportunities for our student-athletes prior to and after graduating. You are a big part of the "so much more" that my former colleague was referring to. Thank you!

Jon Hegerle

Head Women's Volleyball Coach
University of Jamestown