

New Mexico Activities Association Student-Athlete Spotlight



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Chase Dreams Big for the Future

By Tyler Dunkel, NMAA Sports Information Director

Maracea Chase, a senior at Miyamura High School has become one of the top volleyball players for the Patriots over the last few seasons, But, playing volleyball in an area where basketball is the community's passion is tough, especially when you stand close to 6-feet tall.

For Chase, basketball was the sport she grew up playing, as she attempted to live up to expectations of others around her.

"I started playing volleyball as a sophomore. Before then, I was more into basketball but since I made the transition from basketball to volleyball, I would say I enjoy volleyball much more. My mom played college basketball at Central Arizona and Northern Arizona. For me growing up, it was all about basketball and my parents were pushing me to go in that direction but, as time went on, my interests changed and I discovered volleyball."

She continued by saying, "My mom was very supportive of my change in sports. I think she was little sad at first. As a parent, I think she wanted to pass down that basketball tradition to me but, in the end, she wanted me to enjoy my high school experience and has supported me the entire time."

Unlike basketball, though, Chase had to put in the hard work to become the type of player she wanted to be and that transition was tough at times.

"It was hard to step into a sport that I had never played and struggle for a while. I was a pretty basketball player and my natural talent had carried me through those early years. When I started to play volleyball, I was lost and it was hard to fight through the tough times. I was not able to just go out there and be a top-notch player; I had to work at it. I had a lot of support from my family and they just encouraged me to continue to play hard. Coach Scott really helped my development with extra drills and getting me involved in club volleyball and for that I'm very grateful."

Chase is also involved in several different activities at Miyamura, including National Honor Society, as she currently holds the office of Vice-President.

"My two older brothers, who also attended Miyamura, encouraged me to join National Honor Society because it was a great experience for them and I have enjoyed the same experience during my time as well. Students in NHS are very driven and those are the type of people I wanted to surround myself with."

At one point during her high school career, Chase was involved in the school's DJ Club as well, which was another opportunity to learn some very valuable life lessons. She explained, "The



school started DJ Club a few years ago so we wouldn't have to pay for DJs for school dances. It was very interesting at first and I look back on it now and laugh but our first dance was just horrible. We got booed by the other students but it was a good experience, showing me how to overcome adversity during crunch time."

Being so busy with school, sports and other activities in her life, Chase has been able to manage her time and prioritize tasks.

"After practice each day I try and prioritize my school work. My education has always been important and I think that is why I'm in the top-10 of my class right now. It was a learning process for sure. Family is No. 2 in my life. When it comes to family time, sitting down to eat dinner each night is our time together and it is a time I enjoy the most."

She continued by saying, "My family has been so amazing in supporting my goals and dreams. I feel very fortunate to have that support because I see it sometimes with classmates or teammates that don't have that type of support and it is hard for them."

Following graduation in May, Chase plans to further her education, although she is not sure yet what her major will be.

"A college degree is my next big step and I hope to attend the University of New Mexico. I think UNM would be a good place for me to be. After my undergrad, I want to get a Master's degree from a school out of state. I'm really looking forward to the college experience."