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American International College Announces Addition of Men’s Volleyball to Athletic Program Offerings for 2021-2022 Academic Year

SPRINGFIELD, MA – American International College (AIC) Interim Director of Athletics Jessica Chapin has announced the addition of men’s volleyball to the College’s athletic program with competition starting in the 2021-22 academic year. Additionally, newly promoted Director of Volleyball Matthew Cribbin has named Hector Jose Reyes as the program’s inaugural head coach.

Chapin and Cribbin worked with First Point Volleyball to help jumpstart the program. The First Point Volleyball Foundation exists to provide opportunities for young people to mature and develop through volleyball and is specifically focused on growing boys’ and men’s volleyball in the United States. To help spur development of the sport, the Foundation will gift \$10,000 to help the College with start-up costs.

“We are excited to continue to expand our athletic opportunities at AIC,” said Chapin. “We feel the addition of men’s volleyball is a natural fit for the AIC community given the strength of our women’s program. Men’s volleyball is a sport that has experienced tremendous growth, especially at the high school and collegiate levels. We look forward to contributing to that expansion and becoming a competitive volleyball program in New England.”

With the addition of men’s volleyball to the Yellow Jackets athletic programs, Cribbin, who successfully coached AIC women’s volleyball for eight years, has been promoted to director of volleyball and will oversee both programs. According to Chapin, “Matt has done an amazing job establishing our women’s program as one of the premiere programs in New England and has gained a great deal of personal and program accolades since coming to AIC in 2012. We are excited to see Matt foster the growth of our men’s program into another well-known, competitive program.”

Hector Jose Reyes will be joining the Yellow Jackets as the inaugural men’s volleyball coach. Reyes joins the College after spending the past four seasons at Iowa State University as the technical coordinator for player development. In this role, he assisted the Cyclones with opposition scouting and in-game analytics. Prior to his time at Iowa State, the Puerto Rico native spent two seasons at University of Evansville as an assistant coach. According to Cribbins, he is a welcome addition to the Yellow Jackets, “I am thrilled to announce Hector Jose Reyes as AIC’s first-ever men’s volleyball coach. His experience with professional, national teams and NCAA volleyball make him the ideal candidate to fulfill the vision we have for AIC volleyball.”

In addition to his higher education experience, Reyes worked with six different clubs including the men’s national team, the U18 women’s team, and the U21 men’s team. He has also worked with Olympians Destinee Hooker, Kim Glass, Ogonna Nnamani, Kristie Porter, and the 2002 men’s FIVB World Grand Prix MVP Marcos Milinkovic. Reyes graduated with a bachelor’s degree from the School of Fine Arts in San Jan, Puerto Rico, in 2002, and earned his associate’s degree in business administration from the University of Puerto Rico in 1995.

More information about American International College’s academic and athletic programs is available at aic.edu.

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About American International College

Founded in 1885, American International College (AIC) is a private, co-educational, doctoral granting institution located in Springfield, Massachusetts comprising the School of Business, Arts and Sciences, the School of Health Service, and the School of Education. AIC supports and advances education, diversity, and opportunity for its students and the community.

About First Point Volleyball Foundation

Founded in 2016 by John Speraw, head coach of the USA Men's National Team and UCLA men's volleyball, and long-time nonprofit executive Wade Garard, First Point Volleyball Foundation exists to provide opportunities for young people to mature and develop through volleyball. Specifically focused on growing boys' and men's volleyball in the United States, First Point Volleyball Foundation initiates and celebrates FIRST POINTS, whether that is a first point of a new college team, or a new high school team, or a first point of competitive volleyball for a twelve-year-old. First Point Volleyball has raised \$3 million in under three years and has helped start seventeen new collegiate men's volleyball programs. The Foundation has three strategic initiatives: (1) Growing collegiate opportunities; (2) Growing high school boys' opportunities; and (3) Extending the organization's Reach Diversity Initiative – expanding volleyball opportunities to boys and men of color.

About Boys' and Men's Volleyball in the United States

Boys' volleyball is exploding. Volleyball is the fastest growing team sport in the United States for high school boys, growing at a rate of 21 percent over the last five years. The second fastest-growing sport grew by only 11.4 percent, and football decreased nine percent over the same five-year period. With 63,000 boys currently playing high school volleyball, it is projected that 100,000 boys will be playing by 2028. New men's volleyball programs have been initiated in 80 universities in the last five years alone – mostly at the DII, DIII, and NAIA levels.

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