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ALERT

Dig it, Highlanders: MCC installs coach for inaugural volleyball program

Brice Cherry

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Kyle Anema, formerly an assistant at Navy and North Alabama, has been hired as MCC's first volleyball coach.
MCC athletics

Brice Cherry

Mclennan Community College is getting ready to roll with volleyball, and now it has a head coach to lead the way.

MCC has hired Navy assistant coach Kyle Anema to lead its inaugural volleyball program, which starts play in the fall of 2025. The college approved the hiring at a board meeting Monday night.

Anema spent one season with the Midshipmen after joining the program last spring. Before that he worked the 2023 season as an assistant with North Alabama, helping the Lions to a 17-12 overall record and the program's first appearance in the Atlantic Sun Tournament.

MCC will mark his first college head coaching job.

“I am extremely excited to be given this opportunity to start the volleyball program at McLennan Community College, and I want to thank athletic director (Shawn) Trochim and President (Johnette) McKown for this opportunity,” Anema said in a statement. “I’m excited to continue to the championship culture already set at McLennan and look forward to bringing MCC volleyball to the Waco community.”

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McLennan announced the addition of volleyball as the junior college's eighth varsity sport in September and first new sport in nearly 25 years. It also fields teams in men's and women's basketball, baseball, softball, men's and women's golf, and includes its national championship-winning dance team under its athletic scholarship umbrella.

In Anema, MCC feels like it has found the right person to build a successful program in volleyball, which features more than 20 JUCO programs in the state of Texas alone.

"We are extremely excited to have Coach Anema join the McLennan athletic department," said Trochim, MCC's athletic director since 2004. "He brings experience and knowledge that we are counting on to help us grow this new program."

Trochim added that there was a "tremendous amount" of interest in the MCC job, and she praised the college's search committee for its work.

Anema grew up in the volleyball hotbed of California. He is a 2017 graduate of Valley Christian High School in La Mirada, Calif. He was a standout volleyball player in high school and initially signed with Long Beach City College, so he is not unfamiliar with the JUCO volleyball scene. After redshirting his first year, Anema helped the Vikings to a 19-3 record in 2019, leading his team in kills (259) and aces (41).

Anema then transferred to Vanguard University in Costa Mesa, California. He helped the Lions to a 59-24 record in his four seasons there, capped by an NAIA national championship in 2023. He was named the MVP of that tournament.

Stories of Significance - Kyle Anema (2020) // via **Vanguard Lions** on YouTube

Anema was a two-time conference player of the year and left as Vanguard's all-time leader in kills with 1,241.

Like a lot of Californians, he also knows his way around the beach, and played on the 2021 U.S. Collegiate Beach Volleyball Team.

Anema actually started his coaching career while he was still a college player, working with six different club teams (four boys, two girls) from 2019-2023. He has a bachelor's degree in kinesiology, and is working on a master's in leadership studies.

By Brice Cherry

Sports editor
