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OPSU Volleyball Receives Standard of Excellence

Goodwell, Okla.-With three consecutive AVCA awards already on the wall, the Oklahoma Panhandle State University volleyball team gets the hammer and nails ready to display yet another plaque recognizing the team's strong commitment to academic success.

The American Volleyball Coaches Association announced a record-breaking number of teams that earned the AVCA Team Academic Award for the 2012-2013 season. OPSU was among a list of 77 Division II programs receiving the award this year; that surpassed last year's record of 69 teams for the D-II level.

The award honors collegiate and high school volleyball teams that display excellence in the classroom by maintaining at least a 3.30 cumulative team grade-point average on a 4.0 scale throughout the academic year. "Excellence doesn't happen by accident, either on the court or in the classroom," said AVCA Executive Director Kathy DeBoer. "It takes consistent preparation, relentless effort, and determined leadership. A full year of academic achievement, by an entire team of individual students, is a remarkable achievement."

Leadership is certainly an integral key to success and OPSU's head volleyball coach Mike Stephens is certainly no stranger to that concept. The fifth-year head coach shares, "I am very proud of last year's team to have accomplished one of our primary goals. As a program we focus as much on academics as we do the athletics; our academic success is a great recruiting tool. We will continue using the same philosophy as we attempt to achieve our 5th year to be named to the AVCA All-Academic Team." Coach Stephens believes that it is his job "to help prepare players to be successful after college" and that high academic marks is big part of that process.

Congratulations to Coach Stephens and the 2012-2013 Aggie Volleyball Team for earning their fourth consecutive AVCA Team Academic Award!

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Justine Gaskamp

OPSU