

Informational Interview-

Name: Becky Schmidt

Title: Head Women's Volleyball Coach & Asst. Professor of Kinesiology

Organization/ Company: Hope College

Location: Holland, MI

Email: schmidt@hope.edu

I had the pleasure to interview Becky Schmidt for a part of my final MBA Sports Management program. Becky is currently the Head Women's Volleyball Coach at Hope College, located in Holland, MI. Not only is Becky an incredible person, but she has a National Championship title under her belt, along with numerous team and individual accolades. I got to know Becky when she coached me in Italy during the summer of 2015, and look to her as a role model in this industry.

Not only does Becky manage a top-tier collegiate volleyball program, but she is also a faculty member who teaches two theory classes, an activity class, has academic committee responsibilities, aids in awarding faculty scholarships in campus, and presents at a number of academic and athletic clinics. On average, she works about eight hours a day. This is a varying number, however, with the strange COVID-19 year, and the varying of recruiting responsibilities. She now has an assistant coach to help her with the program, and Becky mentioned the new coach is a great addition to their program. She typically wears activewear attire into the workplace, with a focus on Hope gear/ Hope athletics attire.

"I want to live my mission every day, and be around young people," Becky mentioned. It is evident she loves what she does on a daily basis. Hope College offers her a cell phone, apparel allowance, access to fitness centers, health/ dental insurance, 401K, etc. She has a good standing within the Holland community, and is also involved in numerous community events. She recently participated in an "Innovation Management" course in the community and met with graphic designers, product engineers, etc. She then turned that information into a Senior Seminar course at Hope. Becky loves the ability D3 has given her to become more involved in campus with the mindset of "bigger than volleyball."

A graduate from Hope College herself, she focused on Physical Education with a minor in Business and Exercise Science. She pursued her Master's degree at the University of Miami where she was a Graduate Assistant and studied Sports Behavior and Performance. She began coaching high school and club while in college, and believe that is critical to fueling the coaching passion. The summer after she graduated college, she went on a "camp working spree" and assisted at seven camps during the summer to understand how to teach similar skills in different ways.

With the coaching profession, the salary range is wide, and depends on the institution itself, and the community the school is located in. A full-time coach can make anywhere between \$38,000-\$100,000. There is a high turnover rate within college coaching. This is a demanding career that does not run from a simple 9:00am to 5:00pm schedule each and every day. Becky mentioned that she feels the "one more thing" guilt at times. There is always one more thing you

can do, or one more recruit to watch on a weekend, or one more set to review from film. She also touched on a point that I believe cannot be overlooked by those who are not in the coaching profession. Coaches' livelihood is in the hands of college girls. There is a shifting of generations happening right now, so coaches also have to learn to work with this new generation of college athletes.

As far as Becky's career at Hope, she is at her highest position. Because she does not have a Ph.D., she does not qualify for a faculty promotion. She also mentioned that it can be difficult to go from a NCAA D3 program to D2, to D1. There is a silent 'climbing the coaching ladder' that exists, and can be hard to advance division level when someone's start is at D2. Each coach will find they have a preference as to what size of school they are working at, and Becky enjoys the smaller, more personal level of D3.

I love talking with Becky, and will continue to look to her as my mentor and someone who will give honest feedback. She has years of experience, and an incredible reputation in the coaching community. She gave me a lot of advice moving forward with my career, and I plan to use that advice soon. I am truly honored to know Becky and to have her as someone I can speak with not only on a coaching/professional level, but on a personal level as well.

Reference:

Parker, Sarah EM, and Becky Schmidt. "Informational Interviews." 11/17/2020.