

OPEN LETTER TO

UNION VOLLEYBALL CLUB

I am writing an Open Letter to the Union Volleyball Community to express how grateful and blessed I am to have been a part of this Club for the past 10 years. While playing at Union, I've been motivated and driven by phenomenal coaches, I have developed life-long friendships with my teammates, and I've been given the opportunity to compete in some of the most prestigious tournaments offered around the country. I hope that through throughout this letter I can shine a light on how impactful this club has been in my life.

To my coaches: Kelly Falcone, Scott Bostock, Kelly Hornung (Mom), Dottie Zipp, Walter Pauly, Terri Purichia, Brandy Denning, Eric Garvey, Emily Juhl, Matt Thomerson, Tim Hendrick, Katie Wright, Lauren Hyman, Jacob Hepp, Andy Cavins, Kayla Koerber, Meredith Ashy, and Ryan Neal. It is very heartwarming to know that I can look back at my time with many of these coaches and not only think of memories with them on the court, but also memories off court. From attending their marriage, driving in a police car, parent free weekends, attending their college matches, establishing relationships with their children, to having ice cream as a team after practice, these amazing coaches have selflessly served me in so many ways. However, if there is one gift that each of them has given me, it is their time. It has become more apparent to me over the years the devotion these club coaches have put into their teams. Thank you coaches, for the time you have spent trying to develop me while you could've been with your own families. Thank you for the thought and creativity you put into your practice plans so that I could grow and mature as a player. Thank you for the trips you made to out of town tournaments on important family holidays, paying for things we needed as players out of your own pocket, organizing team building activities, driving 2 hours just to attend a practice, and for helping me when I suffered injuries. It is clear that without you I would not have only been able to achieve my dreams of playing college volleyball, but I also would not have grown into the young woman I am today. Lastly, I do not want to forget to say thank you to those coaches who have always been very approachable even though I never played on their team. There are many of you who have given me constructive criticism or maybe just a friendly laugh that have helped me along the way.

To my teammates: As I stated above, I have developed various lifelong friendships with teammates who I have met while playing at Union. Sometimes these friendships have been made not only with people on my own team but with girls on different teams in the club as well. I truly believe that being surrounded by these amazing people has opened my eyes up to how impactful and necessary it is to be surrounded by teammates who care about you and want to make you better. Because of my teammates, I was motivated to attend practice because I knew that their talents and knowledge would help me see and learn the game of volleyball in a different way. But most importantly, I enjoyed coming to practice because they made every second

worthwhile through their humor, advice, stories, hard work, experiences, and so much more. So thank you to my teammates for the long hours of practice and tournaments you put in with me, for memories made at hotels and team dinners, for training at your full potential so I could reach mine, for supporting me during my college decision, for opening up your heart and your family to me, and for making my 10 years at Union the best they could've possibly been.

To all players at Union now and in the years to come: There is no telling where this club could take you if you choose to truly invest your time spent here. I challenge you to enjoy every second spent with your teammates and to always take the time to say thank you to your coaches for their dedication towards you as a player and a person. The relationships you create at Union could very well impact your future more than you know and I'm certain you won't regret it. Also, I know that everyone's experience at Union will be different than mine but underneath it all we are still the same because our love for the game of volleyball is what brought us to the same place.

Union has been and always will be my home. Despite all the locations changes, the many faces that have come and gone, and the different styles of jerseys throughout the years, I will forever cherish my time in green and black wearing #12. I look forward to coming back and visiting in the years to come and am excited to see where my potential will take me as a Boilermaker.

Boiler up!!

Sincerely,

Marissa Hornung