

Coaches

2025 Coaching Staff



Head Coach, Kellie Tongson

Assistant Coach, Tara Benkowski

Assistant Coach, Stephanie Stoehr

Meet Kellie Tongson – Head Coach



Yuba College is proud to introduce Coach Kellie Tongson as the new head coach of the Women's Volleyball program. With over 15 years of coaching experience at the high school and club levels, including six seasons as the head varsity coach at River Valley High School, Coach Kellie is ready to lead the

program into a new era of competition, unity, and success.

A former multi-sport athlete, Coach Kellie went on to earn her degree in Kinesiology from California State University, Monterey Bay. Her background in physical education and athletic development has shaped her coaching philosophy—one that emphasizes discipline, resilience, and pushing beyond limits.

As the owner of Yuba Elite Sports & Volleyball Club, she has cultivated a competitive and high-energy training environment, preparing athletes for the next level. Now, she is eager to bring that same intensity and passion to the collegiate stage, helping her players develop into stronger athletes and leaders.

Stepping into this role at Yuba College, Coach Kellie is not just coaching a team—she is leading a movement. Under her leadership, the 2025 season will be defined by the program's motto: "Rise As One." It represents unity, growth, and the resurgence of Yuba College Volleyball. She is committed to building a team culture that thrives on heart, resilience, and an unrelenting pursuit of excellence.

"We are more than a team—we are a movement. We are here to rebuild, to compete, and to prove that this program is worth fighting for. Every practice, every match, every rep, we push forward with purpose. We honor the legacy of those who came before us and lay the foundation for those who will follow. This is not just a season; this is a new era. Together, we Rise As One."

With her experience, leadership, and dedication, Coach Kellie is ready to transform Yuba College Women's Volleyball and establish a legacy that will inspire future generations of players.

Coach Kellie Tongson

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Interested in playing at Yuba College?

[Fill out our recruitment form!](#)

Assistant Coach, Tara Benkowski

Coach Benkowski is entering her role as an assistant coach for the Yuba College Women's Volleyball team with a great deal of coaching and playing experience and a true love for the game. She has spent the past three years working with Yuba Elite Club Volleyball, coaching 8-17 year olds. Throughout her coaching career, Tara has contributed to player development and growth, focusing on enhancing individual skills and fostering a team first mentality.

Coach Tara has an impressive background as a player, having played for ten years and spent her last two years at Sacramento City College as a Defensive Specialist/Libero, also while holding a SCC record for aces. She was a starter both years and was honored to be named captain in her sophomore year. As a student-athlete, Tara maintained a high level of academic achievement, with her GPA consistently above 3.75. Her experience as a leader both on and off the court has shaped her approach to coaching and mentoring athletes.

Her coaching philosophy revolves around building discipline, resilience, and teamwork. She believes in fostering an environment where athletes can grow both as players and individuals. Tara is motivated by her passion for volleyball and the life lessons she has learned from the sport. She aims

to instill these same values in her athletes, nurturing not only their volleyball skills but also their character.

She is dedicated to helping Yuba College reach its full potential by building a strong, competitive volleyball program that emphasizes hard work, discipline, and personal growth. With a deep connection to her hometown and a passion for creating a positive and supportive environment for athletes, she is committed to rebuilding the program and helping players achieve their fullest potential on and off the court.

Her vision is to develop not only skilled volleyball players but also well rounded individuals who are prepared for success in athletics and life. She strives to foster a team culture where athletes feel motivated, supported, and accountable, creating an environment where they are excited to train, compete, and grow. Through her dedication, she hopes to leave a lasting impact on the program and its athletes.

Tara Benkowski is excited to contribute her experience, passion, and dedication to the Yuba College Women's Volleyball program and looks forward to guiding athletes towards success both on and off the court.

Assistant Coach, Stephanie Stoehr

Coach Steph joins the Yuba College Women's Volleyball coaching staff with a deep passion for the game and a lifelong commitment to athletic excellence. A Yuba City native, she attended Faith Christian High School, where she was a three-sport athlete in volleyball, basketball, and soccer, earning multiple athletic accolades, including induction into the school's Hall of Fame.

Her volleyball journey took her across the world when she was recruited to play in an indoor tournament in Australia, followed by a beach volleyball competition in Hawaii—an experience she considers one of the greatest of her career.

After high school, she continued her playing career at Yuba College as an all-around Outside Hitter under the guidance of Coach Greg Chapman (the famous Chappy!).

Following her time as a player, she transitioned into coaching, first assisting at her alma mater's varsity volleyball program. After stepping away to focus on family, she returned to coaching in 2023, working with young athletes in soccer camps and coaching at her son's school. In 2024, she joined Yuba Elite Volleyball Club, coaching athletes ages 8-12, and later took on the role of head coach for River Valley High School's Frosh volleyball team. Currently, she coaches two club teams at Yuba Elite Volleyball Club while stepping into her new role at Yuba College.

For Coach Steph, coaching is about more than just volleyball—it's about developing players into strong, confident individuals. She believes that success, in both sports and life, is built on a foundation of integrity and perseverance. Her coaching philosophy is centered on holding players to a higher standard, pushing them beyond the bare minimum, and helping them take ownership of their growth.

Her vision for the 2025 Yuba College Women's Volleyball season is to create a competitive and disciplined team environment where athletes build confidence, determination, and a lifelong love for the game. She often shares one of her favorite quotes from legendary coach John Wooden:

"Ability may take you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there."

Coach Steph is excited for this full-circle moment, returning to Yuba College—this time, as a coach—to help lead the next generation of athletes.