

December Athlete of the Month: Aleah Schlechter

BY MATT NIEDERBAUMER, CFP® Vantage Financial, Partner, Senior Wealth Advisor

From a young age, Aleah Schlechter, a senior at Miller High School, demonstrated exceptional talent and drive in athletics. Her volleyball career began in fourth grade, nurtured by a youth program and the camaraderie of playing alongside her sisters. She has become a standout player and captain of the Miller High School volleyball team, contributing significantly to their success over her four-year tenure on the varsity team. Aleah's accolades include being named to the AVCA Academic Team, Big Dakota Conference, and Central SD Conference All-Tournament Teams in 2023. These honors, along with multiple Player of the Game recognitions, highlight her skills on the court. Her coach, Linda DeBoer, praises Aleah for transforming her natural athletic talent into excellence through "diligence, commitment, perseverance, and determination." Beyond her volleyball achievements, Aleah shines as a versatile and committed athlete in basketball as well. A varsity team member throughout her high school career, she served as team captain last season and earned recognition as a four-time SoDak 16 Team Qualifier and an honorable mention on the Big Dakota All-Conference Team. Aleah's athletic range extends to track and field, where she competes as a sprinter, mid-distance runner, javelin thrower, and long jumper. Aleah's commitment to multiple sports highlights her exceptional skills and her ability to excel in a variety of competitive arenas.



Pictures taken by Chelsea Pugh Photography

Amidst a busy schedule, Aleah demonstrates a remarkable ability to successfully balance her schoolwork with a range of extracurricular activities. She is actively involved in both band and chorus, volunteers at the Beau Keeter Memorial Give Back Day, and serves as a student leader for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Her coach describes her as "perfect for this group," noting that Aleah's character, passion, and purpose inspire both her personal growth and the improvement of those around her. Aleah also enjoys coaching and refereeing in the volleyball program, aspiring to become a coach herself someday. She believes that "a team's success isn't always a personal success," stressing the importance of being a good person, team player, and leader. Looking ahead, she hopes to apply the lessons from athletics to her future career in coaching, where she can guide and inspire other athletes. While she has not chosen a specific school yet, Aleah plans to pursue a degree in physical education with a minor in coaching, aiming to turn her passion for athletics into a lifelong career.



To obtain an application for the Athlete of the Month Scholarship program email bfast@vfpanning.com, visit Vantage Financial Partners website at www.vfplanning.com, or ask your high school guidance counselor. If you are a high school senior who plays sports, attends a SD high school, you are eligible to apply for a \$1,500 scholarship.

Getting to know Aleah:

FAVORITE QUOTE: "With God there is no limit to what you can do, no obstacle you cannot overcome. Through Him, all things are possible." Matthew 19:26

FAVORITE FOOD: All pasta, mainly chicken alfredo

FAVORITE LATE-NIGHT SNACK: Oreos

SPORT HIGHLIGHT: Qualifying for the state volleyball tournament last year. We played as underdogs most of the season, which was even more special because we overcame the challenges of losing a big group of leaders the previous year and made significant lineup changes.

FAVORITE HS CLASS: Weightlifting and Conditioning

FUN FACT: I enjoy baking and reading in my free time. My favorite author is Colleen Hoover.

BUCKET LIST: Watch the Olympics in person, visit Nashville, go to The Inn at Entrada (Lava Springs Resort from High School Musical)

FICTIONAL PLACE YOU WOULD VISIT: Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory



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