

Mental Health and Athletics-Victoria Garrick

OPRF Student Services: <https://www.oprfhs.org/student-services>

Entrance Question: If your arms were spaghetti would you want them to be uncooked or cooked?

[Victoria Garrick](#) is a former Division I and semi-pro volleyball player, TED Talk speaker, mental health and body-image advocate, podcast host, and self-love enthusiast deeply passionate about inspiring, supporting, and motivating people from all walks of life.

Despite walking-on to #1 ranked volleyball team in the nation at the University of Southern California, Victoria became a four-year starter. She won a Pac-12 championship, made two Elite Eight appearances, served two seasons as captain, and earned Pac-12 defensive player of the week honors. In 2018 as a senior, Victoria finished 1st in total digs for the entire Pac-12 conference, ending her career with the top 5 most digs in USC program history.

Victoria didn't just leave a mark in the record books, during her sophomore year she began publicly advocating for student-athlete mental health. She delivered a TED Talk on mental health and body-image issues faced by student-athletes, which has since garnered over 180,000 views. Through her work advocating for mental health and body-image, Victoria has been featured in The Players' Tribune, USA Today College, Popsugar magazine, and has amassed over 200,000 followers combined on her social media platforms where she's known for her positive media campaign, #RealPost.

Victoria's infectious energy and passion for authenticity inspires, motivates, and [empowers those around her](#) to become their best selves.

Exit Question-Tell me about any important activities or projects that you've been involved with recently. How much enjoyment do you get from these?

Additional Information on Victoria Garrick

[Ted Talk Information....](#)

The issue of mental health in college students, specifically college student-athletes, is stigmatized and neglected. According to a 2011 study by the National College Athletic Association, 30% of about 200,000 student-athletes reported feeling depressed. 50% also claimed to have experienced overwhelming anxiety, and this information is six years out of date. Student-athletes are typically praised as celebrities on campus, considered strong and brave. When we walk by and people cheer, "Great win last night," they can't see that we are struggling with issues incurable by their praise and affirmation. We minimize the effects of our depression, anxiety, or eating disorder, because society does not encourage us to come forward. Student-athletes endure five hours of team commitment daily, 18 hours of class weekly, and the pressure to physically perform no matter what the circumstance. You can't see mental health issues like you can see an ankle sprain.

From Atherton, California, Victoria Garrick is a rising Junior libero for the USC Women's Indoor Volleyball team. Both freshman and sophomore year, Victoria started and played in every match for the Women of Troy, who won the Pac-12 Championship in 2015. During a difficult freshman year, learning how to be a Division I athlete as well as a Dean's List student, she dealt with situational depression, anxiety, and a binge-eating disorder. By seeing a sports psychologist at USC every week, Victoria was able to learn how to manage her mental health issues, as well as regain normal eating habits. However, she is very concerned about other athletes like her who do not have the confidence to seek help, or learn how to manage their chaotic lives. One of Victoria's missions in her final two years of college is to help others by sharing her experience.