

# *Brandy La Jeuness Votrian*

Brandy (La Jeuness) Votrian was raised by her parents Jim & Tina in Hoene Springs, Missouri. She has 2 half siblings, Lisa & Scott. Growing up in a neighborhood full of mostly boys, she loved playing sports with them until the sun went down.

At Cedar Springs Elementary, P.E. was Brandy's favorite class and she spent a lot of her recess time playing sports. Her softball career started at NWAAC at the age of seven. In 5th grade, Brandy added basketball to her extra-curricular activities playing in the Northwest Girls Basketball Association under Coach Rodger Wit-trock, and in her 8th grade year, Brandy was named to the leagues Top 5 All-Star Team. In middle school at House Springs Elementary, Brandy's love for sports grew even more. She was happy to have P.E., not just once a week, but everyday. Her P.E. coaches were Pamela Riff and Brad Snell. Throughout middle school, Brandy continued playing basketball for NGBA and softball, where both her parents coached her team full of Northwest female athletes for the next 6 years. In 7th grade, Brandy decided to add another sport to her list and played volleyball for a Northwest Little League program.

A 2002 graduate of NHS, Brandy was the only tri-athlete (male and female) in her senior class that played a sport every season, every year, while in high school. Brandy played 4 years of Softball. (Coach Messick, Coach Crocker, Coach Feucht & NHS Hall of Famer, Coach Kristi Lee.) She was a lefty, lead off hitter and played 1st base and outfield. She then continued in the winter with basketball for 4 years (Coach Strande, Coach Curtis, Coach Null & Coach Lee) as a guard, known for her aggressive defense and speed. Unsure of what to do during the spring of her freshman year, with some motivation from Varsity soccer coach Ron Wilhelm, he encouraged Brandy to try out for soccer. Not ever playing soccer before, she felt a little out of place, but she made the JV team (Coach Maloney) and ended up being a starter and voted one of the team captains her sophomore year. She played 2 years of soccer before she wanted to test her athletic abilities elsewhere. So, her junior year Brandy decided to run track. (Coach Brown, Coach Pearce, Coach Crocker & Coach Burkhart) She ran mostly sprints (individually & relay teams) and dabbled in some shot put. During her junior year, Brandy's 4x400 relay team broke a school record and during her junior year, she was the pentathlon winner (100m dash, 800m run, high jump, long jump & shot put) at the Lafayette Invitational.

At Northwest, Brandy's sports accomplishments included being voted team Captain of all 4 sports, she was nominated by the NHS coaches to attend a leadership conference hosted by the St. Louis Rams; she received the National Scholar/Athlete Award for academics and athletic excellence, the ROTC Army Reserve Scholar/Athlete Scholarship, and was voted "Most Athletic" by her peers. Her senior year, Brandy finished her high school softball career with 1st Team All Conference honors and had led the Suburban South Conference with the highest batting average of .500. With that batting average, she was 3rd in all of the Metro St. Louis area. Brandy was also named Jefferson County Suburban Journal Top 10 Female Athlete of the Year. Other accomplishments Brandy achieved in high school besides her athletics, was being a student council officer all 4 years. Her senior year, she was the Executive Vice President of NHS. She was voted by

teachers as Student of the Year; she received the Renaissance Certificate of Excellence for outstanding citizenship and positive influence on others and she was chosen by teachers to attend a school leadership conference.

After high school, Brandy went to Meramec Community College to study Communications & Sales, where she was recruited by Missouri Sports Hall of Fame Coach, Celeste Knierim for softball. Here, Brandy excelled even more in Softball thanks to Coach Knierim and St. Louis Softball HOF Coaches, Vicki Schnieder and Linda McQueen. She finished at Meramec in 2004. During her softball career there, she led the nation in the NJCAA for stolen bases(64),broke two school records, including most hits(101) and finished the season with a .453 batting average. Brandy helped lead her team to becoming 2nd in the Nation, was a part of her HOF coach, Celeste Knierim's, 1000th career win and was selected to the All Tournament Team at Nationals. Brandy's biggest honor was becoming an All-American.

After Meramec, several universities took interest in Brandy, and having the dream of playing softball in Florida, Brandy came very close to taking an offer from Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida. After a lot of thought, Brandy just knew she did not want to be far from her family, so she took a generous scholarship offer to Lindenwood University. There, Brandy realized that her priorities had shifted a bit and it was just the time in her life to hang up the cleats. So she stepped away from softball and continued to concentrate on her academics at Lindenwood. She graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Mass Communications with an emphasis in Sales & Marketing.

After college, Brandy attended cosmetology school and started her career as a cosmetologist at her mother's hair salon in Crestwood. She actively played competitive softball, basketball, and sand volleyball for several years after college. In 2011, Brandy became a step-mother to two beautiful little girls that she instantly fell in love with(Kenady & Breezy Cardwell). She then slowly started trading "her" competitive sports nights for "their" sports nights, by getting them involved in sports and coaching their softball and basketball teams for a few years. Brandy has enjoyed watching them grow in their athletics over the years and is very proud of them. They both currently play multiple sports at Northwest High School. In 2013, Brandy had her daughter, Capri, and she is also a multi-sport athlete.

Today, Brandy is happily married to her husband, Corey Votrian. She loves that they share a common interest with their sports history and competitive nature. She still works part time as a hairstylist, but spends most of her time volunteering as a PTO board member at House Springs Elementary where her daughter, Capri, attends. She has been coaching Capri's softball and basketball teams for the past 7 years and counting. Both of Brandy's teams are made up of Northwest District students and she takes pride in teaching these young Lady Lions the game. Brandy hopes to see many of their faces in the near future, on the court or on the field at NHS one day!