

## Center Ice Spotlight: Jada Burke | Nepean, Ontario Canada



My name is Jada Burke. I am 20 years old and from Nepean, Ontario in Canada. I have been playing hockey since I was 3 years old. I grew up in a big hockey family with two older brothers; both of them playing and coaching hockey all over Canada. Along with that, I have 2 amazing parents who have spent 25+ years in the rinks watching all three of us play the sport we love. I finished my minor hockey career playing in the PWHL for the Nepean Jr. Wildcats and now I currently play Division I at Lindenwood University where I am a junior and studying athletic training. Growing up in a predominately white neighborhood and playing a predominately white sport, there were not a lot of people who looked like me for me to look up to. Most of the time, being the only minority on my team, it was easy to feel like I didn't belong. So I wanted to become an HPOC Movement Brand Ambassador to be a role model for younger, female, black hockey players. I am very passionate about change and making an impact, so this role seemed perfect.

I am really looking forward to making new connections and meeting the other members of this movement. Especially in the world today, having a community of passionate people of colour all moving towards the same goal is something I am excited to be a part of. It is easy to say you support a cause, but becoming an ambassador feels like I am putting my words to action and I love that.

Not really a secret but I love to dance and sing; ALL of my teammates can attest to that during game day warm ups. I really enjoy listening and writing poetry. A

hidden talent would be that I can make a really loud “clicking” sound with my tongue and I am double jointed in my left ring finger.

I think I have to go with Sarah Nurse. She is an amazing player and I would love to hear more about her journey though life and how she got to where she is. I feel like we have some parallels; I would also love to talk about what it was like growing up with such an athletic family and with 2 brothers as well!

The best advice I have been given is “don’t get too high on your highs or too low on your lows.” This has stuck with me for many aspects in life and hockey. It is so important to recognize your successes, but also not to let them get to your head. I try to be proud of my accomplishments, while also knowing that that is not the end goal. I still need to continue to work twice as hard to stay where I am and continue to progress. I am also my own worst critic so I know I can be hard on myself sometimes. But I can’t get “too low on my lows” either or else I will never bounce back. After a bad shift on the ice or a bad mark on a test, I have to rise and be better the next time around. My dream for women’s hockey is for it to continue to gain respect within the hockey world. Also to grow in diversity of every race starting at a young age. I’d love if eventually the phrase “I am the only black girl on the team” is no longer be used. This goes for every minority in the world of hockey; I want the community to grow and for everyone to feel like they belong.