2009-2010 COACHES & STAFF

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Leadership. Charisma. Passion. Energy. Expertise. These are just a few words to describe Cynthia Cooper-Dyke, who for the last 5 years has dedicated herself to the sport of bas
Cynthia Cooper-Dyke, former head coach of the WNBA's Phoenix Mercury and two-time WNBA Most Valuable Player, was named the head women's basketball coach at Prairie View A&M University on Friday, July 1, 2005.

A native of Los Angeles, Calif., Cooper-Dyke is a proven winner at every level of basketball. She attended the University of Southern California and was a four-year letter winner at the guard position from 1982-86. She led the Lady Trojans to back-to-back NCAA tournament titles in 1982 and 1983 and closed out her collegiate career with an NCAA tournament title in 1983. Cooper-Dyke ranks eighth on USC's all-time scoring list with 1,559 points, fifth in assists (381) and third in steals (256).

Cooper-Dyke began her professional career overseas in Europe in 1986. From 1986-97, she played for Segovia in Spain and Parma and Alcamo in Italy. She captured her league's scoring title eight times in 10 seasons and earned MVP honors in the 1987 European All-Star Game. In 1996, Cooper-Dyke averaged 37.5 points per game and helped lead her team to the 1996 European Cup. For her efforts on the court, she was selected to the Italian League All-Star Team during the 1996-97 season.


After an illustrious career overseas, Cooper-Dyke returned to the United States in 1997 with the Houston Comets of the newly formed WNBA. She made an instant impact for the Comets by leading them to four consecutive WNBA titles and was named the WNBA Finals MVP during each championship run. She was selected to the WNBA first-team from 1997-2000 and was voted the league's most valuable player in 1997 and 1998.

In 2000, Cooper-Dyke retired from the WNBA and was named the head coach of the Phoenix Mercury in 2001, compiling a 19-23 overall record. After spending two seasons on the sidelines, she returned to the court as a member of the Comets in 2003 but only played in four games due to injury. She retired prior to the start of the 2004 season and finished her career as Houston's all-time leader in scoring (2,601), free throw percentage (.871) and assists (602). She was voted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame.

Cooper-Dyke's accomplishments off the court match her achievements on the court. An advocate for breast cancer research, she founded the Mary Cobbs “Building Dreams” Foundation in honor of her mother and has worked with General Motors Team Concept: Cure program. An accomplished writer, Cooper-Dyke wrote an autobiography, She Got Game, in 1999, and published a book project with elementary school children, Modern Fairy Tales. In addition, she has also released a personal collection of poems called Reflections.

One of the most popular women to ever play the game of basketball, Cooper-Dyke has left her mark on the court with her own Nike shoe called the “Air C14”. She’s also had an outdoor sports facility, “The Coop”, dedicated in her name at the Nike World Headquarters in Beaverton, Ore. and was selected as one of 38 Houston sports legends honored at the opening ceremonies for Super Bowl XXXVIII: a Houston Salute on Jan. 26, 2004. In June 2009, Coach Cooper was elected to the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame.
Toyelle Wilson enters her fourth season as an assistant women's basketball coach at Prairie View A&M University, and her seventh year overall coaching college basketball. Wilson is involved in all aspects of the program with special emphasis on recruiting. In addition to recruiting she works primarily with the development of the perimeter players, scouting opponents, film breakdown, game strategy and oversees the daily operations of the program.

Wilson has played an integral part in the establishment of a winning tradition at Prairie View. During her tenure at PV, the Lady Panthers have participated in the NCAA Tournament two times (2007, 2009) and participated in the Women's National Invitational Tournament (2008). She has also been part of many of PV women's basketballs firsts, celebrating the first winning season in program history, first 20 win season, and first post season appearance.

“It would be difficult to describe how wonderful my experience has been here at PVAMU,” Wilson says. “I love our staff and we really enjoy each other, both on and off the court. Recruiting to a school you care about as much as I do about Prairie View is pretty easy -- I absolutely bleed Panther purple and gold.”

Prior to arriving at Prairie View, Wilson coached three seasons at Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh, PA. She was also an important part of turning that program around. In her 2nd season, the first recruiting class, RMU finished 20-10, tying for third in the nation in largest turnarounds in one season and marked just the third time that the program had tallied a 20-win season.

Before starting her college coaching career, Wilson played and graduated from Manhattan College in New York. As a freshman she started 18 of 29 games for the Lady Jaspers. She averaged 5.6 points and 2.4 rebounds per game during the 1999-2000 campaign. In 2002-03, she helped Manhattan finish the season with a 20-10 overall record, including a 15-3 record in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference. The Jaspers won the MAAC tournament and earned a berth into the NCAA Division I Tournament. Wilson, a team captain, was named Defensive Player of the Year.

Wilson earned her bachelor's degree in Business Management from Manhattan College in 2003. She is single and currently resides in Houston, TX.
Ashley McGruder
Assistant Coach
First Season/Second Season Overall
Texas State ('06)

After one year of being the Graduate Assistant Coach Ashley McGruder begins her first season as the Strength and Conditioning Coach for the Prairie View A&M women's basketball program. Her duties include overseeing the team workout regime, assists in recruiting, scouting, film exchange, and on court coaching.

Prior to Prairie View, McGruder spent two years as a co-head coach for Christian Life Center Men’s Prep basketball team. Her duties included recruiting, developing and coaching some of the top ranked players in the nation. Christian Life Center went 42-8 in the 2006-2007 season and in the 2007-2008 season became the only team in the history of Texas high school basketball to have five Division 1 signees while finishing 32-10.

Before starting her training and coaching career, McGruder graduated from Texas State University in 2006 with a bachelor’s of Exercise and Sport Science degree and a minor in Health after playing four years of basketball. In the 2003 season, McGruder helped led the Bobcats to a Southland Conference championship and an appearance in the NCAA tournament.

Before heading to Texas State, McGruder attended Palestine High School in Palestine, Texas. McGruder was named to the All-State Team her junior and senior years. McGruder was the second leading scorer in the state of Texas her junior year, averaging 22 points per game and led her team to three distinct 16-4 A titles while never losing a district game in three consecutive years.

Ortega McDavid
Graduate Assistant
Second Season
Texas College

Ortega McDavid begins her second season as the Graduate Assistant for the Prairie View women’s basketball program. Some of her duties include overseeing the equipment, assist in scouting, and film exchange in addition to administrative duties. During the 2006-2007 season, she served as the manager which her responsibilities were handling the equipment and office tasks.

McDavid, a native of Marlin, Texas, closed out a two-year playing career at Texas College in 2003-2005. While attending Texas College she received awards such as Athletic Academic Award for 3.4 and higher. She then pursued her education career at Prairie View A&M University where she made the Dean’s list in 2005-2008 academic years. When she wasn’t playing basketball, McDavid served as a coach for Central Texas Basketball League.

She earned her bachelor’s degree in Human Performance and a minor in Health in May 2008 and is currently pursuing her master’s degree in Education Administration at Prairie View. Ortega McDavid is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and Jack and Jill of America.
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