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## **College, High School Coaching Veteran to Lead MSCC's Women's Team, Teach Information Systems Courses**

Chris Parker, a successful coach and teacher on the high school and college levels, has joined the staff at Mid-South Community College as head women's basketball coach and Information Systems instructor.



"We're very excited to have Chris involved in what we're doing with collegiate sports, and we are equally excited about what he can bring to our information technology classrooms," said Dr. Glen Fenter, MSCC President.

"One of our major goals is to make certain we give maximum opportunities to our students by providing world-class education and access to a world-class coaching staff. Chris will certainly help us attain that goal."

Parker, who served as an assistant under new MSCC men's coach Andy Stoglin at Jackson State University from 1993 to 1995, said the situation at MSCC is an exciting one.

"The main appeal for me is the chance to start something new that I can build from scratch," he said. "The opportunity to get this program off the ground is something I couldn't pass up. I'm ready to hit the ground running."

Parker coached senior boys basketball at Beebe High School last year after five exceptional seasons at Central Arkansas Christian (CAC) where he earned conference Coach of the Year honors three times.

At CAC, he inherited a team that had not recorded a winning season in five years and had not won a conference championship in a decade. He guided the Mustangs to a

record of 96-56, and while that is impressive enough, his success rate with a full roster (when two-sport athletes joined the team after football season), was 82-24. Parker led CAC to three conference titles and two runner-up finishes.

Parker has also coached at Arkansas Tech University, Houston Baptist University, Texas Southern University, Jackson State University, and Lubbock Christian University. He has taught at HBU, TSU, and Texas Tech University.

While at CAC, Parker taught Web Design, Digital Video, and Keyboarding. He earned a bachelor's degree in Corporate Video (with a minor in Business) at Abilene Christian University and a master's degree in Physical Education (with an emphasis in Sports Administration) at Texas Tech.

MSCC will be Parker's first coaching assignment focused on women's sports. He has helped with girls' softball at the high school level, and his experience in that venue led him to consider coaching women at the college level. Parker's wife, also a coach, encouraged him to give it a try.

"She'd seen me coach guys in college and high school, but when I helped her with the girls softball team, she said, 'You really have a gift. You may even be a better women's coach than a men's coach.' I started thinking about it, and when this opportunity became available, I jumped at it."

He said his previous association with Coach Stoglin and Jason Carmichael, MSCC Coordinator of Physical Education and Sports Programs, also entered into his decision.

"I learned more in two years from Coach Stoglin at Jackson State than I learned in all of my other coaching jobs combined," Parker pointed out. "He's the one who really took me under his wing and showed me it isn't about what you know, it's about the people that you were able to affect."

"Knowing Jason as I do and having the opportunity to reunite with Coach Stoglin definitely influenced my decision."

MSCC's women's and men's teams will compete in the National Junior College Athletic Association and will play more than 20 games each beginning in the fall. The Greyhound men are tentatively scheduled to open on Oct. 28 at Crowley's Ridge College,

and the Greyhound women are scheduled to open Nov. 1 at Dyersburg Community College.

Dr. Fenter said MSCC's athletic program will be different from most. The College is offering no scholarships or housing, and its recruiting consists of explaining the benefits of a quality college education.

"I think most people recognize that the priorities of many college athletic programs have become badly misaligned," he said. "The focus of our athletic effort is to demonstrate that you can still do these things in the right way with the right motives and produce great results in the lives of our students."

"As an institution, we believe a large number of young men and women in the region will benefit from an opportunity to refine their academic and athletic skills in a structured, supportive and value-driven environment. Our ultimate goal is to put our student-athletes in a position to transfer to a four-year institution, and in some cases, to do so with an athletic scholarship. The bottom line is the number of kids' futures we can enhance through our sports program."

A 10-year, \$250,000 grant from Southland Park Gaming and Racing and its parent company Delaware North Companies, Inc., helped the expanded athletic program become a reality. Southland had already fulfilled a million-dollar pledge earlier in the year, but President and General Manager Troy L. Keeping said support for the sports program fits well with the company's involvement in the community.



“As a business in this community and from a workforce standpoint, this college helps provide a lot of our employees,” Keeping pointed out. “And one of the skills that is really needed is teamwork.”

“Businesses are run by teams, not by individuals. It’s a collaborative effort, especially when you try to accomplish major projects. So our support of the sports program at MSCC is a logical continuation of the relationship we have built.”

For information about intercollegiate sports at MSCC, contact Carmichael at (870) 733-6776 (office), (870) 514-9388 (cell), or [jdcarmichael@midsouthcc.edu](mailto:jdcarmichael@midsouthcc.edu) (email).