

Commissioner Singleton Welcomes the Lady Lakers Back Home After Capturing the NCAA Division II Basketball Title

The Saturday, March 26, "Welcome Home" for the national champion, Clayton State University women's basketball team saw Clayton County Board of Commissioner Sonna Singleton (District 1), a couple hundred students, faculty, staff, alumni (including several former Laker basketball stars), friends and supporters gather at the Athletics & Fitness Center to cheer on the Lakers and Coach Dennis Cox's after their Friday night NCAA victory.

Speaking to the crowd after the tumultuous arrival, Cox, the Russell Athletic/WBCA (Women's Basketball Coaches' Association) Division II National Coach of the Year, noted that the 35-1 Lakers' championship in NCAA Division II season was a product, not just of the 12 individuals who made up the 2010/2011 team, but also of all the young women who had played for him in his seven seasons at Clayton State. It is the first NCAA Title Championship for Clayton State University's female basketball team.

Also speaking at the welcome home was Clayton State Athletic Director Mason Barfield, who sounded a theme similar to Cox'. The Lakers' first and only athletic director, Barfield created the Clayton State athletic program from scratch in 1990, and has watched it grow into one of the best overall Division II programs in the nation. Barfield recalled the days when, as the coach of Clayton State's only team, men's basketball, he hoped to just win a game. He then built on that thought, to describe the progression that athletic programs take... a .500 season, a league championship, making the national tournament, winning the regional playoffs and, finally, the ultimate, a national title.

After 20 plus years at Clayton State, Barfield, and all of "his" Lakers, now have the ultimate.

A unit of the University System of Georgia, Clayton State University is an outstanding comprehensive metropolitan university located 15 miles southeast of downtown Atlanta.

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