



THE HISTORY OF WEST VIRGINIA

The First Women's Basketball Team at West Virginia University

Due to the implementation in 1972 of Title IX, a mandate by Congress for schools receiving federal monies to provide women with the same athletic opportunities as their male counterparts, West Virginia started the sport in 1973.

Then-athletic director Leland Byrd selected Kittie Blakemore to coach the first women's team, gave her the keys to one of the University vans, and provided the team with a 10-game regular-season schedule against local colleges.

For Blakemore, who had spent the prior 14 years as an instructor in the school's physical education department, starting the women's program was a great challenge.

"In the beginning," remembers Blakemore, "we weren't sure if we were going to be with the physical education department or the athletic department. We wanted to be with athletics because, financially, they were more stable. Once that was settled, we found out we had other problems."

What the former coach refers to was the lack of available talent from which to choose. Of the 37 players who tried out for the first women's team, only a handful actually knew how to play the game. One player was told by her high school coach that a good shot should not hit the backboard, so she thought she had blown every bank shot that went in. Another thought when the team went into a press, she was not allowed to move.

"Basketball had just started in West Virginia, so the girls really didn't know that much about the game," recalls Blakemore, a native of Manassas, Va. "I remember going to the first West Virginia high school state tournament and thinking to myself, 'Oh my, I've got to recruit these girls!'"

Blakemore did find 15 players good enough to play, and after one quit, Blakemore, her assistant Barbara Walker, trainer Diane Nolan and 14 players traveled to West Liberty to play the school's first women's game on January 16, 1974. Because team uniforms had yet to arrive, the Mountaineers played with "pinnies" -- a vest-like jersey that ties at the waist. Despite the slight inconvenience, the Mountaineers performed admirably.

Leading throughout, West Virginia captured a 59-55 decision over the NAIA school. Leslie Sergy paced the Mountaineers with 18 points, with Sara Roberts scoring 11 and Cindy "Sam" Booth and Celeste Knaus each adding eight points. Booth, described as the women's version of Ernie DiGregorio, was a team favorite. Though having just one year of organized basketball experience, she displayed uncanny skills in all facets of the game.

The Mountaineers lost their next seven games before besting West Liberty again, 42-38. In all, West Virginia lost 10 of 14 games that season, but it didn't take WVU long to have a winner.

1974-82: Working Up to the First 20-Win Season

The following season, with more time to practice and a little more money to spend, West Virginia won 13 of 17 games and followed with a sterling 19-7 record and a state title in 1977. The team's top player was Mary Hennen, whom Blakemore convinced to join the team as a sophomore.

Hennen, at 5-11, was one of the team's tallest players. A native of Wheeling, W.Va., the forward led the team in scoring each year she played and totaled 1,112 career points to become the first WVU player to pass 1,000 career points. She scored a then school-best 33 points against Salem in 1976, and averaged 13.2 points per game for her career.

After the 1977-78 season, during which West Virginia posted an 18-9 record and finished second in the state tournament, WVU and Marshall were forced to leave the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference because the schools were "too big" for the smaller colleges.

Subsequently, West Virginia competed as an independent and its record dipped to 9-16. The following year, WVU lost 19 of 29 games and, in 1981, the Mountaineers went 15-18.

There was, however, one significant event that took place during this period. Cathy Parson, a brilliant guard from Hagerstown, Md., was given a partial scholarship to attend WVU -- the first athletic grant given in women's basketball. It was bumped to a full scholarship a year later when



Kittie Blakemore

HEAD COACH 1973-92

The women's basketball program was started by Kittie Blakemore in 1973, and like a nurturing mother, she has kept a close eye on it ever since. As the school's head coach from 1973-92, she won 301 games and guided three postseason teams, two of which qualified for the NCAA tournament.

Four of her teams won 20 or more games in a season and she helped develop the University's first and only Kodak All-American in Rosemary Kosiorek. Her influence on women's athletics reached far beyond the Mountain State. Through her service on several prestigious national committees, Blakemore had an impact on the development of women's basketball and is recognized as one of the sport's true pioneers.

Upon retiring from the Mountaineer bench in 1992, she maintained close contact with the women's basketball program as WVU's senior women's administrator, a position in which she served until her retirement in 1997.

Because of her dedication and interest, the athletic programs at West Virginia University will benefit for many years to come.

Blakemore was selected to the West Virginia University Sports Hall of Fame in 2003.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

J.D. Drummonds and Patricia Ryan were offered full rides. Parson scored 2,115 points during an outstanding career that culminated with a third team All-America citation in 1983. One of the school's all-time great players, her retired jersey and a plaque rest in a trophy case located in the WVU basketball practice facility. Parson was elected to the WVU Sports Hall of Fame in 1996, making her the first female ever to be bestowed with that honor.

Following the 1981 season, Blakemore hired Bill Fiske as an assistant coach to help with the growing burdens of recruiting and strategy. Fiske had coached high school basketball in Florida for several years and was known as a basketball strategist.

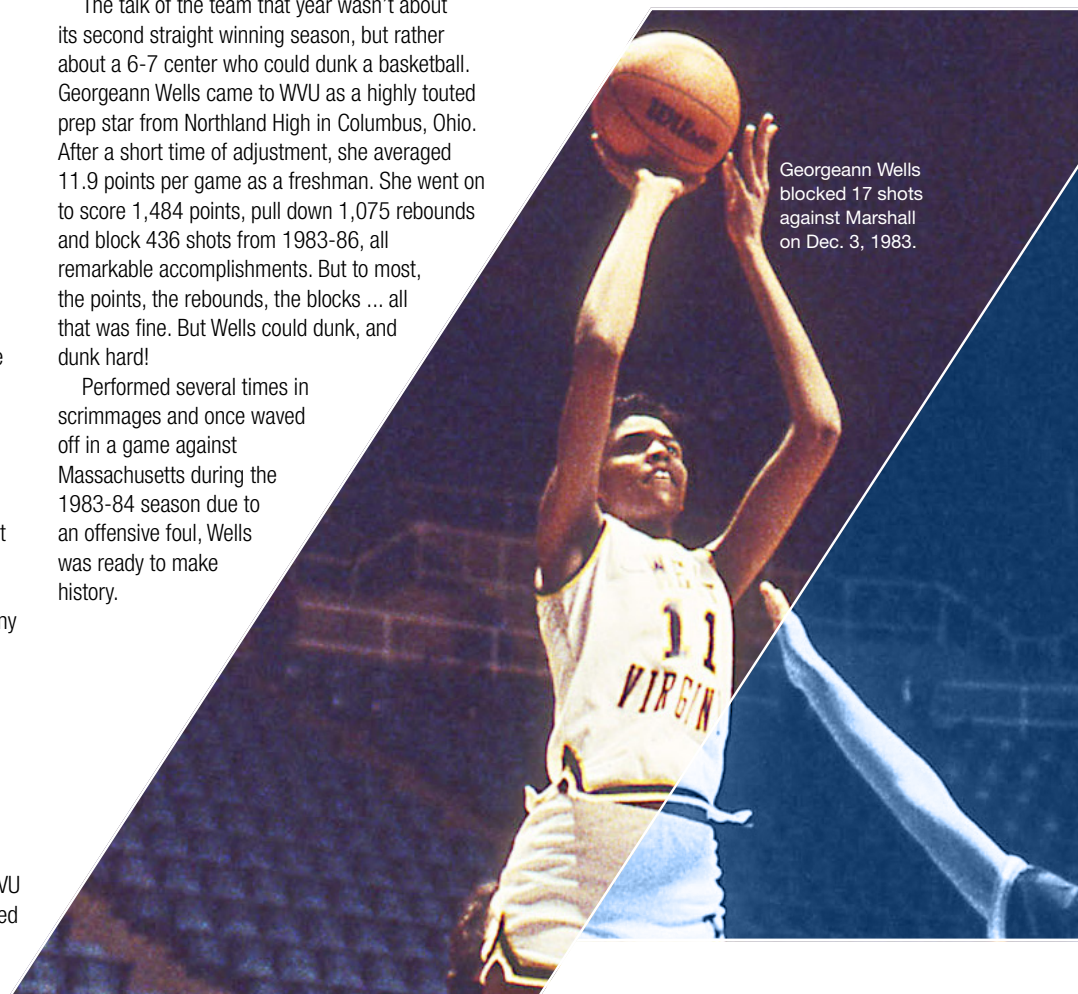
The Blakemore-Fiske combination steered West Virginia to an outstanding 20-11 record in 1982, the school's first 20-win season. The most memorable win during that landmark campaign was an 81-79 upset over Penn State at the Coliseum, the school's first victory over the Nittany Lions.

1983: Joining the NCAA & Gaining National Attention

Joining the NCAA in 1983 after seven years in the AIAW, the Mountaineers also spent their first season in the Atlantic 10 Conference, which was created in 1976 for men's basketball and known as the Eastern Eight up until that time. WVU recorded a 17-12 mark that season and advanced to the semifinals of the conference tournament.

The talk of the team that year wasn't about its second straight winning season, but rather about a 6-7 center who could dunk a basketball. Georgeann Wells came to WVU as a highly touted prep star from Northland High in Columbus, Ohio. After a short time of adjustment, she averaged 11.9 points per game as a freshman. She went on to score 1,484 points, pull down 1,075 rebounds and block 436 shots from 1983-86, all remarkable accomplishments. But to most, the points, the rebounds, the blocks ... all that was fine. But Wells could dunk, and dunk hard!

Performed several times in scrimmages and once waved off in a game against Massachusetts during the 1983-84 season due to an offensive foul, Wells was ready to make history.



Georgeann Wells blocked 17 shots against Marshall on Dec. 3, 1983.



WVU defeated Clemson 73-72 in the 1992 NCAA East Regional game held at the WVU Coliseum to advance to the Sweet 16.



In 1990, Rosemary Kosiorek averaged more than 20 points per game and earned mention on the Kodak All-East team.

The opportunity came against Charleston on December 21, 1984 at Elkins' Randolph County Armory during the Mountaineer Christmas Classic. With 11:18 remaining in the game and West Virginia comfortably ahead, Wells took a full-court pass from Lisa Ribble and soared to the basket for a one-handed stuff. The dunk instantly made her a national celebrity. Network television, *Sports Illustrated*, an NCAA luncheon in New York, a display in the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame and induction into Houston's Phi Slama Jama dunking fraternity were just a few of the highlights of one of the school's most memorable moments. Unmatched until 1994, the feat is still one of the sport's most talked about accomplishments.

Lost in all of the dunking hoopla was Wells' teammate Olivia Bradley. A 6-1 rebounding warrior from Bradenton, Fla., it was Bradley who made it possible for the 6-7 center to get out on the wing for the historical dunk. Bradley snared an amazing 1,484 career rebounds for a 12.7 per game average, the eighth-best mark in NCAA history.

After another 17-12 mark in 1984, West Virginia, with Fiske now promoted to co-head coach, boasted the strongest team in its 10-year existence. WVU returned all five starters, including Wells and Bradley. The duo led WVU to its second 20-win season and, more importantly, steered the Mountaineers to the Women's NIT in Amarillo, Texas. Though losing two of three games, the inclusion in the eight-team tournament was a major stepping stone for the growing program.

Then in 1986, it all came crashing down for Fiske. Entering the season with an inexperienced team, the late coach, suffering from diabetes, spent his extra time teaching the young team, rather than caring for his physical ailment. Flying back from the Orange Bowl Classic in Miami, he went into diabetic shock and nearly died on the plane. He subsequently lost his sight and was unable to continue to coach. Volunteer assistant Scott Harrelson and Blakemore finished the season with a 12-17 record, impressive considering the circumstances.

1989: WVU's First Atlantic 10 Title & NCAA Tournament Berth

Promoted to assistant head coach the following season, Harrelson and Blakemore steered the Mountaineers to a 28-29 record the next two years, before guiding WVU to a brilliant 24-8 mark in 1989.

Among those teams West Virginia defeated in 1989 were Alabama, Oklahoma, Rice, Arizona State, Western Kentucky, Penn State and St. Joseph's. Beating Penn State in the first round of the Atlantic 10 tournament, the Mountaineers then upset St. Joseph's in the semifinals and defeated Temple, 63-54, in the championship to secure their first-ever Atlantic 10 title and NCAA tournament berth. Defeating Western Kentucky 66-57 in the first round, the Mountaineers lost to Virginia in the second round to end an improbable season.

Senior Jenny Hillen paced West Virginia at 15.8 points per game, followed by Judy Eaton at 13.8. Other standouts on that team included Dionne Morris, Tracey Slogik and an outstanding group of freshmen in Rosemary Kosiorek, Donna Abbott, Lori Wilson and the late Jocelyn Branham. Three years hence, that group evolved into the finest senior class in school history.

1990-92: WVU's First NCAA Sweet 16 Appearance & Coach Blakemore's Retirement

After a 19-10 record in 1990 and a 17-12 mark in 1991, West Virginia was prepared for an outstanding 1992 season, as was Rosemary Kosiorek. The Baltimore native averaged more than 20 points per game as a junior and earned mention on the Kodak all-East team.

There was nothing the diminutive point guard couldn't do. She could shoot, she could pass, she could dribble past anyone and she could score. Averaging more than 24 points, Kosiorek also averaged more than seven assists to rank among the nation's leaders in both categories.

While she was scoring, Donna Abbott was rebounding. A prolific scorer early in her career, Abbott threatened Cathy Parson's school scoring record until a nagging knee injury slowed her. Playing with considerable pain most of her career, Abbott still managed more than 1,500 points and 1,000 rebounds.

After defeating Florida in the season opener, West Virginia lost to only Virginia and Western



In only his third season as head coach, Mike Carey was named Big East Coach of the Year after guiding WVU to a 21-11 overall record.

Kentucky the rest of the way to finish the regular season at 25-2. Ranked as high as No. 10 in the nation, West Virginia cracked the nation's Top 25 for the first time in school history after an 81-60 home win against Arkansas.

Losing to Duquesne in a dramatic upset in the first round of the conference tournament cost West Virginia a possible No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament. Still seeded fourth, the Mountaineers defeated Clemson 73-72 in front of more than 8,000 fans at the Coliseum in one of the finest moments in school history. Backup Jodie Runner nailed a short jumper with seconds remaining to capture the decision. The storybook season ended a week later with a loss at powerful Virginia, 103-83.

Kosiorek secured Kodak All-America honors and also was named the Frances Pomeroy Naismith national player of the year. She finished her career scoring more than 2,000 career points and is considered by most to be the school's finest all-around player ever. Like Cathy Parson, her jersey and a plaque reside in the WVU Coliseum.

At 26-4, West Virginia finished ranked No. 14 in the nation by *USA Today* and No. 11 by AP. After the season, Kittie Blakemore retired, ending an outstanding reign during which she accumulated 301 career wins and three postseason berths during 19 seasons.

1993-2000: Coaching Changes

The program struggled for three seasons under Scott Harrelson, posting three straight

losing marks. Harrelson then gave way to Susan Walvius in 1995. Walvius directed West Virginia to 12-15 and 19-12 records before leaving for South Carolina.

In 1997, former player Alexis Basil took over the program. The Mountaineer star from 1984-87 had senior Talisha Hargis to lead the way in her first year. Hargis would finish her career as the third leading scorer in WVU history with 1,751 points. Hargis, who led the Mountaineers in scoring three straight years, also holds the school records for free throws made (530) and attempted (750) and recorded 20 or more points in a game 33 times.

Basil boasted four seniors on the 1998-99 squad, all of whom reached the coveted 1,000-point plateau. Maria Tchobanova finished her career with 1,426 points, ninth best on WVU's all-time list, while Christie Lambert scored 1,282 points to place her 11th, Rebecca Burbridge, named the 1999 BIG EAST Scholar-Athlete of the Year, scored 1,179 points placing her 13th all-time and Ilse Opstaele is ranked 17th all-time with 1,079 career points. It marked the first time in school history that such a prolific scoring corps was assembled on one team.

The next two seasons were tougher as the squad was on the road for the entire 1999-2000 season due to asbestos abatement at the Coliseum and suffered through injuries in 2000-01. The squad finished with a 11-44 overall record, 4-28 in the BIG EAST in those two years. Basil's final record stood at 33-77 during her four seasons.

2001-16: The Carey Years

Former Salem College men's basketball coach and Clarksburg native Mike Carey was named the program's sixth coach in the spring of 2001, and it didn't take him long to work his magic. In his third season, Carey put together the third-most wins in school history with a 21-11 campaign in 2003-04. More importantly WVU returned to the NCAA Tournament after a 12-year hiatus. For his efforts, he was named BIG EAST Coach of the Year.

In his first season, Carey guided the Mountaineers to a 14-14 record, a return trip to the BIG EAST Tournament after a one-year absence and the school's first winning regular season in five years.

In his second season at the helm, Carey led WVU to a 10-0 start en route to a 15-13 mark and the first winning season since 1996-97. The Mountaineers were also 11-0 in non-conference competition for the first time in school history.

In 2004-05, Carey guided WVU to its second-consecutive 20-win season with a 21-13 mark and a berth in the postseason WNIT championship game. It marked the first time in school history that WVU posted back-to-back 20-win seasons and back-to-back post-season berths. The Mountaineers won a school record four postseason games while senior Yolanda Paige set the WVU career record with assists at 902 while sophomore guard Meg Bulger captured the BIG EAST scoring crown and became the first player in school history to be named to the league's first team.



The 2009-10 squad advanced to the Big East Conference Tournament Championship game.

Paige and Bulger were named honorable mention All-Americans by the *AP* and *WBCA/Kodak*, respectively.

Despite his first losing record at WVU (15-16), Carey guided the 2005-06 Mountaineers to uncharted territory with a remarkable run to the BIG EAST tournament championship game, marking the first time in school history West Virginia had made it to the title game.

As the No. 12 seed in the tournament WVU knocked off No. 5 Louisville, No. 4 St. John's and No. 1 Rutgers and trailed No. 2 Connecticut by just one point with 30 seconds left in the championship game.

The run was unprecedented. No previous 12-seed had even won a tournament game in the 23-year history of the BIG EAST women's championship. The Huskies won the title by a 50-44 count but the Mountaineers captivated the national ESPN2 audience with one of the most remarkable runs in conference tournament history.

Sophomore Chakhia Cole and junior Britney Davis-White were named to the all-BIG EAST tournament, while Bulger garnered all-BIG EAST second team accolades and more importantly, *Associated Press*, honorable mention All-America honors.

All five starters from that remarkable run returned for the 2006-07 campaign and the Mountaineers didn't disappoint. WVU posted an 11-5 record in BIG EAST play earning its first-ever tournament first round bye as the No. 4 seed en route to a 21-11 overall mark. The league record

also marked the second-best turnaround from one regular season to the next in the BIG EAST.

WVU also was 13-1 at the WVU Coliseum, the second-best single season home mark in school history and eventually picked up its first NCAA tournament win since 1992 with a convincing 65-52 win over Xavier in Austin, Texas.

The core of that team once again returned in 2007-08 ready to re-write the record books. WVU posted a 25-8 record which were the second-most wins in school history. The Mountaineers also boasted a 12-4 BIG EAST mark good for a third-place finish in the highly touted league, WVU's highest finish in school history. Along the way, West Virginia upset No. 4 Rutgers, 63-54, the highest-ranked team the program has ever defeated. All told, WVU beat three ranked opponents including No. 14 Notre Dame and No. 18 Pitt.

The Mountaineers were ranked in the nation's Top 20 in the *Associated Press* and *ESPN/USA Today Coaches'* polls all season long, marking a school first. WVU was also ranked for the first time since 1992.

With the largest senior class in school history, West Virginia boasted four career 1,000-point scorers, marking the second West Virginia team and 12th overall in NCAA history to have four on one team.

WVU advanced to its second-straight NCAA Tournament as a five-seed and faced host No. 12 New Mexico in Albuquerque, N.M., in first round action. Thanks to Cole's 22 points and 11

rebounds, the Mountaineers squeaked out a 61-60 victory in front of 9,633 partisan fans in one of the nation's most hostile venues. The win gave West Virginia its second-straight NCAA second-round appearance.

In 2008-09, and under arguably Carey's best coaching job, the Mountaineers posted 18 wins with just seven healthy players as a rash of early season injuries depleted WVU's reserves. Senior Takisha Granberry set a new single-season record with 94 3-pointers made while the duo of Granberry and sophomore Liz Repella became just the second set of teammates to each score 500 points in the same season. Repella became just the fourth Mountaineer in school history to record 500 points and 250 rebounds in the same season while classmate Sarah Miles earned BIG EAST Most Improved Player accolades. WVU also won at No. 5 and national runner-up Louisville, marking the highest-ranked road victory in school history.

Without any seniors, the 2009-10 team exceeded all expectations as the squad was predicted to finish ninth in the preseason BIG EAST Coaches' Poll, but the Mountaineers won a school record 29 games, a program-best 13 BIG EAST contests, finished second in the regular-season league standings and in the tournament, reeled off 16 consecutive wins during the season, the longest since 1992, and had a program-best eight BIG EAST award winners. WVU reached as high as No. 7 in both major polls, and advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament for the third time in four years. WVU posted a



Liz Repella earned first team all-conference honors in back-to-back seasons under coach Carey.

West Virginia won a share of its first Big 12 regular season title with a 67-60 win over Kansas on March 4, 2014.

perfect 17-0 mark at the Coliseum, marking the most home wins in school history and the second undefeated season. Sarah Miles garnered the BIG EAST's Defensive Player of the Year award and earned all-league second team and all-tournament team honors. Liz Repella became the program's second first team Academic All-American and garnered all-BIG EAST first team, all-league tournament and Preseason WNIT all-tournament team honors. Freshman center Asya Bussie garnered unanimous all-BIG EAST freshman team honors, junior transfer Korinne Campbell earned all-league honorable mention honors and Carey earned Co-Coach of the Year accolades.

The Mountaineers experienced success from the start of the 2010-11 season as WVU earned its highest-ever preseason ranking in the *Associated Press* poll at No. 11 with seniors Repella and Miles earning BIG EAST preseason honors.

The season opened on a 19-0 win streak, the best start to a season in program history, and the Mountaineers moved up to the highest-ever ranking in program history at No. 6 in the polls, staying there for four-straight weeks. Within its undefeated start, WVU defeated No. 21 TCU, Virginia and No. 19 Iowa State on the way to becoming Paradise Jam Island Division Champions. Senior co-captains Repella and Madina Ali were named to the all-tournament team, while Repella also earned MVP honors.

Driven by Carey's motivation for defensive play, the Mountaineers' scoring defense ranked No.

1 nationally for five-straight weeks and stayed within the top-10 nationwide for the entire season. WVU was led by five seniors, who amassed the most wins in two seasons in program history with a 53-15 mark. Carey recorded his 200th win as head coach at WVU on Feb. 19, 2011 as the Mountaineers tallied their highest point total of the season with a 90-79 win at Pitt.

WVU recorded its sixth 20-win season in the last eight years, made its fifth NCAA appearance in eight seasons and its fourth NCAA Second Round appearance in the last five seasons.

Ali was named to the All-BIG EAST second team, while Repella earned first team honors for the second consecutive season. Repella was named a Capital One Academic All-America first team member in back-to-back seasons and was named to the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award All-America second team as a finalist for the award.

With 50 percent of its games on television and nine games nationally-televised, including ESPN2's Big Monday, WVU experienced some of its greatest crowds in program history. Six crowds ranked in the top 20 all-time largest crowds at the WVU Coliseum, helping the Mountaineers to a school record for total (49,648) and average (3,103) home attendance; ranking 35th of all NCAA Division I programs and recording the fifth-largest per game increase nationally from the previous season.

In 2011-12, Carey coached a Mountaineer squad returning only one senior and one starter from the previous season to its third consecutive

NCAA tournament and fourth in the last five seasons. Predicted to finish ninth in the BIG EAST Preseason Coaches' Poll, the Mountaineers exceeded expectations finishing in a tie for fourth place and earning a bye in the BIG EAST Championship. WVU's scoring defense ranked in the top 10 nationally all season, closing out the year at No. 6, and held 23 opponents to under 60 points. WVU defeated 17 opponents by a double-figure margin and out-rebounded 28 opponents, including 13 BIG EAST teams in the regular season.

For the first time in program history, WVU defeated three-straight top 25 teams, including the highest ranked opponent in program history as the Mountaineers took a 65-63 victory from No. 2 Notre Dame in front of a sold out crowd on national television. The win was WVU's first ever in Notre Dame, Ind. Carey saw three players earn all-conference honors as junior Asya Bussie, the 15th player in WVU history to reach 1,000 points and 500 rebounds, was named first team All-BIG EAST, sophomore Christal Caldwell earned All-BIG EAST honorable mention and Linda Stepney was named to the All-BIG EAST freshman team.

In the last nine years, under Carey's direction, WVU has advanced to the NCAA tournament second round (2006-07, 2007-08, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12), the NCAA tournament (2003-04), the WNIT championship game (2004-05), the BIG EAST tournament finals (2005-06, 2009-10) and the second round of the WNIT (2008-09).



Bria Holmes finished third in career scoring at West Virginia with 2,001 points. Holmes became the program's highest draft pick selection with her 11th overall pick by the Atlanta Dream in the 2016 WNBA Draft.

The team has also posted seven 21-win seasons during that time.

Certainly, success and respect have found their way to the Mountaineer women's basketball program.

The 2013-14 season was a season with many firsts. WVU recorded its most wins in program history with a 30-5 overall record, made its fifth consecutive NCAA appearance with a No. 2 seed—the highest in program history, recorded its highest ranking to date in program history at No. 5 in the *Associated Press* poll and recorded wins over five top-25 teams, including four in the top 15. A team led by five seniors, the Mountaineers broke a program scoring record set in 1981 with 2,581 total points.

In only his second season in the Big 12 Conference, coach Mike Carey led the Mountaineers to a Big 12 Regular-Season Championship title, finishing with a 16-2 league record and sharing the top of the league standings with Baylor. Carey was named Big 12 Coach of the Year as the Mountaineers captured a conference regular-season title for the first time since winning the Atlantic 10 title in 1992.

With the loss of five core seniors, the 2014-15 Mountaineers had many ups-and-downs before reaching the WNIT Championship title game. The Mountaineers (23-15, 7-11 Big 12) pushed its home court win streak to 16 games. West Virginia's 19 home victories were the most in program history and tied for the nation lead. Junior guard Bria Holmes shattered WVU's junior scoring record with 716 points, just 14 shy of the program's single-season mark of 730 set by Rosemary Kosiorek in 1992. Holmes again was honored with unanimous All-Big 12 First Team accolades. Senior Averee Fields followed with 524 points, while Lanay Montgomery broke a WVU sophomore record with her 124 blocks. WVU reeled off a school-record five consecutive postseason victories before falling 62-60 to UCLA in the WNIT Championship game at the Charleston Civic Center in Charleston, West Virginia.

West Virginia entered the 2015-16 season as the sixth-youngest team nationally by scholarship percentage. Coach Carey's Mountaineers posted a 25-10 overall mark and finished third in the Big 12 with a 12-6 record. West Virginia reached the NCAA Tournament for the 11th time overall and

the 10th consecutive postseason appearance. WVU won a NCAA statistical award by boasting 6.5 blocked shots per game. The Mountaineers were led by All-Big 12 First Team performer Bria Holmes, who averaged 16.8 points, 4.1 rebounds and 3.7 assists per game. Holmes garnered Senior CLASS Award All-America Second Team accolades and was named All-America Honorable Mention by the Associated Press and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association. In April 2016, Holmes became the program's highest draft pick with her 11th overall selection by the Atlanta Dream in the WNBA Draft. Freshman Tynice Martin was named the Big 12's Freshman of the Year after averaging 10.3 points and 3.2 rebounds per game. Junior center Lanay Montgomery continued to anchor the Mountaineer defense with her 97 blocks and 8.1 rebounds, garnering All-Big 12 Second Team honors and Big 12 All-Defensive Team accolades. Senior Arielle Roberson picked up All-Big 12 Honorable Mention after boasting 7.5 rebounds and 4.4 points per game. West Virginia advanced to the NCAA Second Round for the first time since 2014 after picking up a 74-65 win over Princeton.

WVU Women's Basketball Firsts

- **Coach:** Kittie Blakemore became the first head coach of the WVU women's basketball program in 1973.
- **Season:** The 1973-74 team was the first women's basketball team at West Virginia.
- **Scholarship:** In 1980, Cathy Parson was the first woman to earn a scholarship in athletics at WVU, she is WVU's all-time scoring leader with 2,115 points, and became WVU's first women's player to have her jersey retired and first woman to be inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame (in 1996).
- **All-Conference Honoree:** In 1983, Olivia Bradley became WVU's first-ever all-conference honoree as she was named to the 1983 All-Atlantic 10 second team. She earned first team accolades the following year, the first player to do so in WVU women's basketball history.
- **Postseason Tournament:** WVU returned all five starters from the 1984 campaign and posted a 20-10 record, while qualifying for its first-ever postseason tournament – the 1985 WNIT.
- **NCAA Tournament Appearance:** WVU posted a 24-8 season and won its first Atlantic 10 Championship in 1989, advancing to its first-ever NCAA Tournament.
- **All-American:** In 1992, Rosemary Kosiorek became WVU's first Kodak All-American and was a finalist for the Francis Pomeroy Naismith Player of the Year award, in addition to earning her second-consecutive CoSIDA Academic All-American honor, the first player in program history to do so.
- **NCAA Sweet 16 Berth:** In 1992, WVU finished the season with the then-most wins in school history (26) and its first-ever berth into the NCAA Sweet 16.
- **Undefeated Season At Home:** WVU went 14-0 at home in the 1992 season for the first undefeated season at home. The 2009-10 team was the second to have an unblemished home schedule as it recorded the most wins at the Coliseum in a single season with a 17-0 record.
- **Multiple Players with 1,000-Point Season:** Maria Tchobanova, Christie Lambert, Rebecca Burbridge and Ilse Opstaele each reached the 1,000-point milestone in the 1998-99 season, becoming WVU's first team to have multiple players do so in the same year.
- **Player Drafted by WNBA:** Senior guard Kate Bulger became the first WVU player drafted in the WNBA as she went as the final pick (No. 38) in the third round to the Minnesota Lynx in 2004.
- **Back-to-Back 20-Win Seasons:** In his fourth season at the helm of the program, Mike Carey guided WVU to its second-consecutive 20-win season with a 21-13 mark and a postseason appearance in the 2005 WNIT championship game. It marked the first time in school history that WVU posted back-to-back 20-win seasons and back-to-back postseason berths.
- **Player to Make a WNBA Roster:** Yolanda Paige became the first women's basketball player out of WVU to make a WNBA roster as she was drafted by the Indiana Fever in the second round of the 2005 WNBA Draft with the 16th overall pick.
- **First Team All-Conference Selection:** In 2005, Meg Bulger became West Virginia's first-ever All-BIG EAST First Team selection and it was a unanimous decision.
- **Ranked in the Top 25 for the Entire Season:** The largest senior class in school history (7) guided WVU to the then second-most wins in school history (25), including a school-record-tying three victories over Top 25 teams in 2008. The team also began and concluded the season ranked in the Top 25 of both major polls for the first time in program history.
- **Cracked the Top 10 in Major Polls:** In 2010, WVU came in at No. 8 in the ESPN/USA Today Top 25 poll, marking the first time in school history that the Mountaineers were ranked in the Top 10. WVU went on to rank as high as No. 7 in both major polls.
- **Defeated Three-Straight Top 25 Teams:** The 2011-12 squad knocked off three consecutive top 25 teams for the first time in program history. The Mountaineers defeated No. 13 Louisville 66-50 at home. WVU went on to snap a 21-game win streak at No. 2 Notre Dame in front of a sold out crowd on national television, marking the highest-ranked opponent WVU has defeated in program history. It was Notre Dame's only loss at home and only BIG EAST regular-season loss of the year. WVU returned home to take a 60-50 win from No. 21 Rutgers.
- **Reaching 30:** WVU recorded a program single-season record 30 victories during the 2013-14 campaign. The Mountaineers knocked off Albany, 76-61, in the first round of the NCAA Tournament to collect a new program-record 30th victory.
- **First Big 12 Title:** In just its second year in the league, West Virginia reeled off a 16-2 record to clinch a share of the Big 12 Conference title in 2013-14. The Mountaineers would advance to the Big 12 Championship title game, falling short to Baylor.
- **First Time to Reach Postseason 10 Consecutive Years:** West Virginia has reached the postseason the last 10 seasons dating back to a NCAA Tournament berth in 2007.
- **First Big 12 Freshman of the Year:** Tynice Martin was named the 2016 Big 12 Freshman of the Year becoming the first Mountaineer to garner a major postseason award since joining the league. Martin, who averaged 10.3 points and 3.2 rebounds per game, was also named a finalist for the United States Basketball Writers Association (USBWA) National Freshman of the Year.
- **Highest Draft Pick:** Bria Holmes became the program's highest draft pick with her 11th overall selection by the Atlanta Dream in the first round of the 2016 WNBA Draft. Holmes finished third all-time at West Virginia with 2,001 career points.



First Women's Basketball Player to Ever Dunk in a Game:
Georgeann Wells earned national attention in 1984 as she became the first women's basketball player to ever dunk in a game.

