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Office of University Communications

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Sherika Montgomery, '09, '11, Brings Big South Conference Experience to Winthrop University

As a student-athlete at Gardner-Webb University, Sherika Montgomery appreciated everything the University administration, faculty, staff and coaches did to help her succeed in the classroom and on the basketball court. After GWU, she worked seven years in the Big South Conference Office, where she was most recently Assistant Commissioner and Senior Woman Administrator. In those roles, she helped set policies, but she's been waiting for a chance to work directly with student-athletes on a college campus.

 photo of Sherika Montgomery


When Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C., offered her a job as associate athletic director for student success, she couldn't wait to get started. "This was an opportunity for me to get on campus and provide some of that service and experience that was provided to me as a student-athlete," Montgomery shared. "Now I'm able to give back."

Montgomery is excited to be at Winthrop, working with her colleagues to provide services to more than 320 student-athletes. She oversees compliance, academic services, life skills, and all initiatives tied to student-athlete wellness. Her duties also include sport oversight for multiple sports as well as oversight of strength and conditioning and athletic training. She serves on the Winthrop University Scholarship Committee and the search committee for the Winthrop University Vice President for Student Affairs/Life. Off campus, she will continue to serve as chair of the NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics. She is also on the board of directors for Project Life Movement, a national initiative to increase the number of bone marrow and tissue donors by testing and registering college students. Under her leadership, students from across all 10 Big South Conference institutions have registered. In 2016, Presbyterian College's student-athlete Aaron Lesiak helped save a life with his donation.

Montgomery earned a bachelor's degree in sport management with a minor in recreation from GWU in 2009 and her master's in sport science/pedagogy in 2011. Through her undergraduate studies, playing basketball and serving on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), Montgomery realized all the careers in sports available to her. "Once I got into my academic career and really understood the significance of being able to go to college on a full athletic scholarship," Montgomery related, "I knew that sports management was a realm that I would like to learn more about and learn the different career fields and opportunities. I could potentially see myself providing the same impact and opportunity that was provided to me."

 Sherika Montgomery poses with student-athletes

Sherika Montgomery poses with student-athletes at the 2016 fall meeting of the Big South Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.

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Originally from Plantersville, Miss., Montgomery chose another college over GWU her first year. GWU Head Women's Basketball Coach Rick Reeves had attempted to recruit her, but she didn't want to be almost 10 hours away from her family. After that year, she realized her mistake and transferred to GWU, knowing NCAA rules would require her to sit out a year from playing basketball.

“My time at GWU taught me to be adaptable and to be grounded in my faith,” she revealed. “I had to trust the process. God put me at GWU for a reason—in this environment that was going to allow me to really appreciate my faith more than ever. Every practice, every conditioning time, every time the basketball team came together, we started with prayer. It was so comforting to know that regardless of what we were going through we always had our faith and a place for our faith to be evident.”