



CHRISTOPHER KOVATCH

LHSCA President

LAVANTA DAVIS

LHSCA 1st Vice-President

ROBERT VALDEZ

LHSCA 2nd Vice-President

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Jessica Barber Named New Director of the Louisiana High School Coaches Association

BATON ROUGE, La. — The Louisiana High School Coaches Association (LHSCA) is proud to announce the hiring of Jessica Barber as its new Director. A native of Franklinton, Louisiana, Barber brings nearly two decades of coaching experience, program development, and player mentorship across high school, AAU, and collegiate basketball.

“This is a role that requires the right fit—someone who can serve as a bridge between our high school coaches and the broader LHSCA community,” said Christopher Kovatch, President of the LHSCA. “Jessica checks all the boxes. She’s organized, tech-savvy, an excellent communicator, and has experience at both high school and college levels. She’s worked with people from all walks of life and has succeeded at every stop. We’re excited to begin this new chapter with her.”

Barber becomes the fourth Director—and the first woman to hold the position—in the history of the LHSCA. Her appointment represents a historic and forward-looking step for the organization as it continues its mission to support, develop, and recognize high school coaches across Louisiana.

“I can’t deny that being the first woman in this role was intriguing,” Barber said. “At first, it felt a little intimidating, but I know my background has prepared me for this. I’m ready to get started.”

Barber most recently served as an assistant coach for the University of Southern Mississippi women’s basketball program from 2023 to 2025, where she played a key role in recruiting Louisiana talent and further solidified her reputation as a mentor and leader. She also coached alongside LHSCA Hall of Famer Barbara Farris, deepening her ties to Louisiana’s coaching community.

Prior to USM, Barber was the Associate Head Coach at the University of Louisiana at Monroe ULM. Her earlier coaching stops include Pine High School, Franklinton High School, Loyola University New Orleans, and Edna Karr High School—where she led the Cougars to four consecutive district championships and two semifinal appearances, the best finishes in school history.

A three-time District Coach of the Year and former State Farm/New Orleans Pelicans Louisiana High School Coach of the Year, Barber is also well known in AAU circles through her longstanding involvement with the New Orleans Dominos.

LHSAA... Beyond the Game

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As a player, she was a four-year letterwinner at the University of Mobile, earning First-Team All-Conference honors and GCAC Freshman of the Year. She remains the program's all-time leader in assists.

"It's Louisiana. It's home," Barber said. "No matter where I've been, I've always loved this state and took pride in recruiting Louisiana as a college coach. That connection has always been important to me."

Barber is a member of the Women's Basketball Coaches Association and is currently pursuing her master's degree in Sport Administration. Her experience, leadership, and vision will be key assets in advancing the mission of the LHSCA and supporting coaches across the state.

About the LHSCA:

The Louisiana High School Coaches Association is a division of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) and exists to promote professional growth and educational opportunities for high school coaches throughout the state.

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