

Kevin Nickelberry  
Assistant Coach/Recruiting Coordinator

Kevin Nickelberry, who has over a decade of service as a Division I men's basketball head coach, enters his third season overall at LSU and his second season as LSU's Assistant Coach and Recruiting Coordinator.

Before being named Assistant Coach prior to the 2020-21 season, Nickelberry served the 2019-20 season as the Assistant to Head Coach Will Wade.

Nickelberry was part of an LSU staff that has averaged 20 wins over the last two seasons and reached the second round of the 2021 NCAA Tournament. That team was led by sophomore Trendon Watford and freshman Cameron Thomas, both first-team All-SEC selections and junior Javonte Smart, a second-team all-league veteran point guard. The Tigers played in the 2021 SEC Tournament championship game for the first time since 1993.

He has helped with the recruiting efforts as part of a staff that ranked fifth in recruiting of the 2020 class and seventh for the class of 2021.

Nickelberry was influential as the lead recruiter for five-star center Efton Reid and four-star guard Brandon Murray as part of a 2021 class that also included four-stars Jerrell Colbert and Alex Fudge and three-star signee Bradley Ezewiro.

The veteran coach was also part of the effort to work the transfer portal that resulted in Xavier Pinson, Tari Eason and Adam Miller joining the LSU program.

At LSU, Nickelberry has been involved in pre-game scouting and in-game coaching with a focus on game management, time out and late game coordination. He is involved in player development with a primary focus on guards.

Nickelberry previously served as the head coach at Howard University (2010-19), Hampton (2006-09) and the Columbia Union women's team (1991-94). He also served as an assistant coach at Howard, Monmouth, Holy Cross, Charlotte and Clemson before being named head coach at Hampton.

His 2019 Howard squad became the first team at the school since 1992 to advance to postseason play, earning a spot in the College Basketball Invitational field. His teams at Howard recorded GPAs of at least 3.0 in eight of his seasons at Howard.

All but one four-year senior graduated during his tenure as head coach. Off the court, he stressed academic work, including having nearly 50 players named to the MEAC Commissioner's All-Academic team. He also pushed his squad to a 1.000 Academic Progress Rate for 2014-15.

When he came to LSU, Nickelberry left as No. 2 in all-time wins in Howard history.

When Nickelberry took over the job at Howard in 2010, he inherited a program that had not seen a winning season in almost a decade. He became known as a “program builder” both on and off the court. Through good recruiting efforts, he brought in players and coached them through seasons that earned first team All-MEAC honors and worked with multiple players that would earn conference rookie of the year and player of the year honors.

He recruited and coached three players who made the Top 50 All-Time MEAC team –James Daniels who was both Rookie of the Year and Player of the Year; Charles Williams, the Rookie of the Year who was the leading scorer in MEAC history; and, R. J. Cole who earned Rookie and Player of the Year honors.

While head coach at Hampton, he was rated among the top 25 “Up-and-Coming” coaches by Sporting News and hoopscooponline.com in 2008.

At Hampton, he averaged 10 conference wins a year and had two recruiting classes ranking in the top 60 in the country. While there, his team’s scoring defense went from 168 in Division I to 12th in the NCAA by the end of his third year.

During his years as an assistant coach, he was named by Basketball Times, The Hoop Scoop and Rivals.com as one of the top assistants in the country. Nickelberry worked in all areas including recruiting, fundraising, marketing and public relations.

In his coaching career, he has been a part of preparing players who earned over 20 Rookie/Newcomer/Player of the Year honors as well as coaching over 30 all-conference players.

Prior to beginning his coaching career, Nickelberry was involved in many successful entrepreneur ventures. He was the president of two public relations firms and founded an at-risk youth non-profit organization in the Washington, D. C. area.

He spent the 2009-10 year as the head coach of the Libya National Basketball team and the team with Coach Nickelberry at the helm, won more games than any other time in international play.

Nickelberry began his coaching career as the head women’s basketball coach at Columbia Union College in 1991.

The 56-year-old Nickelberry was born in Washington, D.C., and played at Virginia Wesleyan University where he graduated in 1986 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications. Nickelberry and wife, Felicia, are the parents of three sons – Carter, Kyan and Kelby.

The Nickelberry File

Seasons Completed at LSU: Two

Birthdate: October 15, 1964

Wife: Felicia

Children Carter, Kyan, Kelby

Hometown: Washington, D.C.

Education: Virginia Wesleyan University, '86

College Coaching Experience

1991-92: Assistant Coach, Columbia Union

1991-94: Head WC, Columbia Union

1995-98: Assistant Coach, Howard

1998-99: Assistant Coach, Monmouth

1999-01: Assistant Coach, Holy Cross

2001-03: Assistant Coach, Charlotte

2003-06: Assistant Coach, Clemson

2006-09: Head Coach, Hampton

2009-10: Assistant Coach, DePaul

2010-19: Head Coach, Howard

2019-20: Assistant to the HC, LSU

2020- : Assistant Coach, LSU