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Grant Leonard Promoted to Queens Head Men's Basketball Coach

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Grant Leonard has been promoted to head men's basketball coach, Queens University of Charlotte director of athletics Cherie Swarthout announced today. Leonard, who has been coaching for 18 years, joined the Royals in 2013 and has served as associate head men's basketball coach since 2016. He will be the sixth head coach in Queens men's basketball history.

"Grant has been instrumental in the development of and critical to the success of our basketball program the past nine years," Swarthout stated. "He has remained loyal and committed to the process of building the Royals into a championship and nationally relevant program. His analytical approach combined with his ability to build relationships will continue to propel us forward."

Leonard has been a key component to the Royals' success on the court for nearly a decade as Queens has posted a 189-37 record and an impressive .837 winning percentage over the past seven seasons. The Royals have been nationally ranked in the top 25 in 111 of 112 polls (NABC or D2SIDA) dating back to November 2015. Additionally, they have reached the top 10 in each of the last seven seasons peaking at No. 1 in January of 2018.

Recording a winning streak of eight or more games in each of the last eight seasons with this year's 17-game winning streak setting a new program record, the Royals have made seven consecutive NCAA Championship appearances. They completed the 2021-22 season reaching the Sweet 16 for the fourth time in the past six seasons which includes the COVID-interrupted 2019-20 season. Queens also recorded its fourth 30-plus win season in such time.

Queens won the 2018 and 2019 Southeast Regional Championships to advance to the Elite 8 in back-to-back seasons, advancing to the national semifinals in 2018. Leonard also helped the Royals secure three regular-season titles and two conference tournament titles after finishing in the top two for eight consecutive seasons in South Atlantic Conference play.

"My family and I couldn't be more honored to have the responsibility to take over this prestigious program," Leonard said. "The foundation has been laid by the past student-athletes and coaches and they have set a championship tone; we will continue to build on that with a focus on daily work, character, integrity, toughness and development. The Queens community is a special place and I couldn't be more excited to assist Queens with its mission of giving students a transformational experience here in Charlotte."



In addition to serving as associate head coach for the Royals, Leonard has been the head coach and general manager for Team D2 which has competed in The Basketball Tournament (TBT) since the summer of 2019. TBT is a single-elimination, 64-team tournament that has a grand prize of over one million dollars. Leonard's teams have been comprised of former DII players who are now competing at the professional level, and they have made it to the round of 32 or better all three seasons.

Leonard has also been instrumental in recruitment and player development for the Royals over the years. Twenty-four Queens alumni have played professional basketball in the past nine seasons. Additionally, three have been named NABC All-Americans and 10 have earned all-region and all-conference first-team honors.

During his collegiate coaching career, Leonard has worked at five schools and in all three divisions of NCAA competition. He came to Queens from Paine College (2011-2013) where he served as first assistant coach, recruiting coordinator, director of skill development, and defensive specialist. In his first of two years at Paine, the Lions achieved their first winning season in seven years and finished second nationally in Division II with seven blocks per game. Leonard also worked as an academic advisor for student-athletes and an adjunct professor while at Paine.

Leonard's previous coaching stops include Flagler College (2009-2010), the University of Texas-Pan American (2006-2009), and Washington College (2005-2006). In his lone season at Flagler, the Saints accumulated more Peach Belt Conference victories than at any other point during the program's tenure in the league at the time. Texas Pan-American saw similar success with an increase in total wins during each of Leonard's three years with the team. At Washington, Leonard helped head coach Rob Nugent record a career-high 14 wins and his first-ever conference tournament victory.

Leonard graduated Cum Laude from William Penn University in Oskaloosa, Iowa, in 2004, with a bachelor's degree in psychology. He was a two-time Daktronics Academic All-Region Player as well as a two-time Midwest Classic Academic All-Conference Player with the Statesmen. He also holds a master's degree in psychology from Washington College.

Leonard and his wife Haley, a Charlotte native and math teacher in the CMS school district, both reside in Belmont.

Be sure to follow the men's basketball program on Twitter and Instagram @queensmbb. Fans are also encouraged to follow Queens Athletics on social media @QueensAthletics, to stay up to date with everything Royals Athletics.

ABOUT QUEENS ATHLETICS

A leading NCAA program located in Charlotte, N.C., Queens has been competing in co-ed intercollegiate athletics for 30-plus years. Distinguished by its commitment to the nurturing of excellence through a purposeful process, Queens Athletics intentionally promotes a unique experience that leads to success as the Royals deliver sustainable performances at or above a 3.3 GPA in the classroom and consistently rank in the top 10 of the Learfield Directors' Cup in competition.

Housing a diverse portfolio of varsity level sports, Queens athletes represent nearly 50 countries. The Royals hold 23 team national championship trophies, 142 individual national titles, and 95 conference tournament championships competing across six different

conferences. Queens produces professional athletes and is an Olympians and Paralympians Made Here designated institution.

ABOUT QUEENS UNIVERSITY OF CHARLOTTE

Queens University is a private, coeducational university located in Charlotte, N.C. The university serves nearly 2,500 students with 43 major and 63 minor undergraduate degree options and 12 graduate degrees. Students represent 44 states and 70 foreign countries. As part of the university's vision to promote educational experiences that nurture intellectual curiosity and promote global understanding, nearly two-thirds of traditional undergraduates participate in study abroad experiences and 100 percent take part in internships. The U.S. News & World Report ranked Queens 15th among regional universities in the south in its 2022 edition of Best Colleges.

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