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Men's Basketball

Roger Powell Jr. Selected to Lead Valpo Men's Basketball Program

Valparaiso University Director of Athletics **Dr. Charles Small** has announced that **Roger Powell Jr.** has been selected as the 23rd head coach of the Valparaiso University men's basketball program.

After helping guide Gonzaga University to a 121-13 record during his four seasons as an assistant coach, Powell returns to Valpo, where he was part of head coach Bryce Drew's staff from 2011-2016 and led the team to 124 wins in five seasons, including a program-record 30 victories and a National Invitation Tournament (NIT) title game appearance in 2015-16. Powell becomes the first Black head coach in the history of the Valpo men's basketball program.

"We are thrilled to welcome Coach Powell and his family back to Valparaiso University," Small said. "His track record of on-court success started during his time as a student-athlete and has continued throughout his coaching career. Coach Powell's experience at one of the nation's most successful programs coupled with his familiarity with our institution will serve him well in his new role. His faith, family values and high character all reflect those of our University and athletic department. I cannot wait to see our student-athletes flourish under his leadership."

Powell was part of head coach Mark Few's Gonzaga staff as the Bulldogs reached the 2021 national championship game after winning their first 31 games of the season. During Powell's first season on staff in 2019-20, Gonzaga was 31-2 at the time the NCAA college basketball season was halted due to COVID-19. The Bulldogs reached the Sweet Sixteen each of his final three seasons on staff, including two Elite Eight appearances and the aforementioned trip to the 2021 national title game. The 2020-21 team spent the entire season ranked No. 1 in the nation by the Associated Press. The Bulldogs were the No. 1 overall seed in back-to-back NCAA Tournaments in 2021 and 2022.

"My family and I are extremely blessed to have the opportunity to come back to Valparaiso University where my coaching career started," Powell said. "Now as the head men's basketball coach, I have some unfinished business to attend to. It's time to get to work, so let's go Beacons!"

Prior to his arrival at Gonzaga, Powell served as the associate head coach at Vanderbilt University under Bryce Drew from 2016-2019. In his first season in Nashville, he helped lead the Commodores to an NCAA Tournament appearance. Vanderbilt notched five top-25 wins, six top-50 victories and 11 top-100 RPI wins while playing the toughest strength of schedule nationally.

During Powell's first stint on the Valpo bench, he was part of four Horizon League regular-season championships in a five-year period while also leading the 2012-13 and 2014-15 squads to Horizon League tournament titles and NCAA Tournament appearances. Valpo reached postseason tournaments in each of his five seasons on staff, including the memorable run to the NIT title game in 2016 which featured wins over Florida State, Saint Mary's and BYU.

A product of Joliet West High School and a native of Joliet, Ill., Powell was a three-year starter for the University of Illinois during his playing days, earning Honorable Mention All-Big Ten recognition in each of his final two seasons after being named to the Big Ten All-Tournament Team as a sophomore. His winning track record dates as far back as his days playing for the Illini, when he helped the team to three Big Ten regular-season titles, two Big Ten Tournament crowns and three Sweet Sixteen berths. During his senior year in 2004-05, Powell was part of an Illini team that finished 37-2, won 29 straight to open the season and reached the national title game.

Powell accumulated 1,178 points and 531 rebounds during his four-year career at Illinois. He finished his career ranked among the top 30 scorers in program history. Following his collegiate tenure, Powell began a professional career that included a stint in the NBA with the Utah Jazz during the 2006-2007 season. He also played for the Rockford Lightning (CBA, 2005-06), Arkansas Rimrocks (2006-07, D-League), Siviglia Wear Teramo (Italy, 2007-08), Murcia (Spain, 2009-10), JDA Dijon (France, 2010) and Skyliners Frankfurt (Germany, 2010-11).

Off the court, Powell founded RPJ Ministries Organization, which mentors and trains young leaders to be Godly examples on their sports team and school campuses. He also founded Integrity Sports Corporation, a company focused on building basketball skills and integrity of high school and junior high athletes. Powell is a 2005 graduate of the University of Illinois with a degree in speech communications and received his master's degree in Sports Administration from Valpo in 2016.

Powell and his wife, Tara, have four children – Bria, Liam, Gabriel and Faith.

Powell becomes just the sixth Valpo men's basketball head coach in the last 43 years.

With 14 NCAA tournament appearances and 10 conference tournament championships, Valpo men's basketball has a tradition of excellence. The program has produced eight NBA players, 10 conference players of the year and 20 20-win seasons.

Stay tuned for information regarding the Coach Powell introductory press conference.

Valpo Men's Basketball Coaching Timeline

Sidney Winters, 1917-1919

George Keogan, 1919-1921

Earl Goheen, 1921-1923

W.P. Shadoan, 1923-1925

Millard Anderson, 1925-1926

Conrad Moll, 1926-1927

Earl Scott, 1927-1929
J.M. Christiansen, 1929-1941
Loren Ellis, 1941-1947
Emory Bauer, 1947-1948
Don Warnke, 1948-1949
Wilbur Allen, 1949-1951
Kenneth Suesens, 1951-1958
Paul Meadows, 1958-1964
Gene Bartow, 1964-1970
Bill Purden, 1970-1976
Ken Rochlitz, 1976-1980
Tom Smith, 1980-1988
Homer Drew, 1988-2002, 2003-2011
Scott Drew, 2002-2003
Bryce Drew, 2011-2016
Matt Lottich, 2016-2023
Roger Powell. 2023-pres.

Coach Powell Playing Experience

2001-2005 - Illinois
2005-2006 - Rockford Lightning (CBA)
2006 - Utah Jazz (NBA)
2006-2007 - Arkansas Rimrockers (D-League)
2007-2008 - Saviglia Wear Teramo (Italy)
2008-2009 - Hapoel Jerusalem (Israel)
2009-2010 - Murcia (Spain)
2010 - JDA Dijon (France)
2010-2011 - Skyliners Frankfurt (Germany)

Coach Powell Coaching Experience

2011-2016 - Valparaiso Assistant Coach
2016-2019 - Vanderbilt Associate Head Coach
2019-2023 - Gonzaga Assistant Coach
Present - Valparaiso Head Coach