GEORGIA STATE BASKETBALL

GENERAL INFORMATION
Full name: Georgia State University
Location: Atlanta, Ga.
Founded: 1913
Enrollment: 32,500
Nickname: Panthers
Colors: Blue and White
Arena: GSU Sports Arena (3,800)
Affiliation: NCAA Division I
Conference: Colonial Athletic Association
President: Dr. Mark Becker
Director of Athletics: Cheryl L. Levick

BASKETBALL INFORMATION
2011-12 Record: 22-12, 11-7 CAA/6th
Starters Returning/Lost: 1/4
Letterman Returning/Lost: 7/7
First Year of NCAA Basketball: 1963-64
All-Time Record: 484-852
NCAA Appearances: (2) 1991, 2001
NIT Appearances (1): 2002
CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament (1): 2012

The 2012-13 Georgia State University men's basketball outlook is an official publication of the Georgia State Sports Communications office. The outlook was written, designed and edited by Associate Sports Communications Director Mike Holmes. Cover design by Summit Media. Photography by Georgia State Sports Information, Paul Abell, Todd Drexler, Randy Wilson, Steven Jones and many others. Special thanks to those who assisted in this outlook goes to Allison George, Charlie Taylor, fellow SID's and members of the Georgia State men's basketball coaching staff.

On the cover: Georgia State captains for the 2012-13 season, Manny Atkins, Rashaad Richardson and Devonta White.

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BASKETBALL STAFF
Basketball Office Telephone: 404.413.4050
Head Coach: Ron Hunter (Miami (Ohio), 1986)
Record at School/Years: 22-12 / 2nd Yr.
Career Record/Years: 296-231 (.562) / 19th Yr.
Associate Head Coach: Darryl LaBarrie (Georgia Tech, 2001), 2nd Yr.
Phone: 404.413.4055 • Email: dlabarrie@gsu.edu
Assistant Coach: Everick Sullivan (Louisville, 2002), 2nd Yr.
Phone: 404.413.4052 • Email: esullivan@gsu.edu
Assistant Coach: Claude Pardue (Emory, 2008), 2nd Yr.
Phone: 404.413.4053 • Email: cpardue@gsu.edu
Director of BB Operations: Nate Summers (IUPUI, 2009)
Phone: 404.413.4056 • Email: nsummers@gsu.edu
Administrative Assistant: Melanie Fields
Strength & Conditioning: Jamal Terry (Morris Brown, 2000)
Athletic Trainer: Dinika Johnson
Graduate Assistants: Junard Hartley & Jeff Diepenbrock
2012 ATLANTA TIP-OFF CLUB
GEORGIA COLLEGE COACH OF THE YEAR

2003 & 2006 SUMMIT LEAGUE
COACH OF THE YEAR

HONORS

• NABC Guardians of the Game Pillar Award for Service
• 2009 Giant Steps Award from the National Consortium for
  Academics and Sport (NCAS)
  • Minority Achievement Award from the Center for
    Leadership Development
  • One of seven head coaches who served on the Division I
    Basketball Academic Enhancement Group, as appointed by
    late NCAA President Myles Brand.
• Member of the National Basketball Coaches Association
  (NABC) Board of Directors.
• Spokesman for Samaritan’s Feet, helping to collect shoes for
  children throughout the world.
WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT RON HUNTER:

“Ron is one of the class individuals in the sport. Georgia State hit a home run with Ron Hunter. His unbridled enthusiasm for the job and, just as importantly, his passion for a tremendous cause will make him an instant hit in Atlanta and in the CAA.”

--Andy Katz, ESPN.com

“I would characterize Ron Hunter as a builder with great enthusiasm. He took the IUPUI program and guided it through amazing growth, from obscurity to respectability with hard work and an upbeat approach. That was not an easy task. He worked around an environment with the Indiana, Purdue, Notre Dame and Butler basketball programs, so he was operating around a lot of tall trees at IUPUI. That will make him a great fit at Georgia State because of the similar characteristics of competition for that program. Ron’s whole body of work is remarkable. Look how fast he took IUPUI to the NCAA Tournament. That is nothing short of being a Michelangelo.”

--Floyd Keith, Executive Director of the Black Coaches Association

“This is an outstanding hire for Georgia State University. Ron Hunter has an established track record as a successful Division I head coach. He’s a terrific recruiter and a fantastic coach. He and his family will bring a great deal to Georgia State University and the Atlanta community.”

--Herb Sendek, Head Coach at Arizona State University

“Ron Hunter is really special. Georgia State is to be congratulated on a great hire. He had tremendous success at IUPUI, and his compassion and humanitarian side is so remarkable. Coach Hunter is going to bring something that will elevate Georgia State University in the consciousness of Atlanta. The community of Atlanta and the University will be taken with him and with the type of basketball program he will build.”

--Jim Haney, NABC Executive Director

Ron Hunter Has Coached:

• 18 all-conference honorees
  - George Hill (2008)
• 1 Defensive Player of the Year
• 10 all-newcomer selections
• 2 Newcomers of the Year
  - Austin Montgomery (2007)
  - Robert Glenn (2009)

Since 2003, his teams have always finished in the top half of the league standings, including runner-up finishes in 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010.

Led teams to their conference championship games five times from 2002-10.
Since beginning his tenure as Georgia State University’s seventh president on Jan. 1, 2009, Mark P. Becker has launched a major strategic planning initiative focused on positioning the university to become one of the nation’s premier urban universities. Embracing its commitments to recognized excellence in both education and research, as well as its unique location in and commitment to Atlanta, the university is rising to new levels of accomplishment and impact.

Under Becker’s leadership, GSU in 2011 approved and began implementation of its 10-year Strategic Plan, whose mission is to position Georgia State “as a dynamic academic community where teaching and research combine to produce leaders and create solutions to conquer the challenges of the 21st century.”

In 2010 Becker oversaw the launch of the Second Century Initiative for faculty excellence, or “2CI.” This initiative is recruiting additional faculty members to Georgia State to build internationally recognized scholarly strength and critical mass in areas of priority.

Seeking to recognize the importance and influence of international commerce and technology for Georgia State students and researchers, Becker has worked to enhance Georgia State University’s global reach, the cornerstone of which was the 2010 opening of GSU’s Confucius Institute, a partnership with the Beijing Language and Culture University and one of the first business-oriented Confucius Institutes in the United States.

In addition, Becker leads a diverse university whose undergraduate academic profile continues to rise, and a number of the university’s excellent graduate programs enjoy strong national rankings.

Becker also has overseen a number of physical improvements and enhancements including: the opening of the Parker H. “Pete” Petit Science Center; the university’s first freshman housing and dining complex, the Piedmont North housing and dining complex; the construction of on-campus Greek housing; and the purchasing of land for future growth and expansion in downtown Atlanta.

Prior to his appointment to Georgia State, Becker served as executive vice president for academic affairs and provost at the University of South Carolina.

Before assuming that role, Becker spent three years at the University of Minnesota as a biostatistics professor, dean of the School of Public Health and assistant vice president of Public Health, Preparedness and Emergency Response.

From 1989 to 2000, Becker was a professor and associate dean for academic affairs at the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health. He also has held academic appointments at the University of Washington, the University of Florida and Cornell University.

Becker earned his bachelor’s degree in mathematics from Towson State University and his doctorate in statistics from the Pennsylvania State University.

Active in the Atlanta community, Becker is a member of the Central Atlanta Progress Executive Committee; Atlanta Committee for Progress Board of Directors; Georgia Aquarium Board; Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors; Georgia Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors; Georgia Research Alliance Board of Trustees; Commerce Club Operating Board; ARCHE (Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education) Board; the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities Board of Directors; and the World Affairs Council of Atlanta Board of Directors.

During his career, Becker has been involved in several professional associations, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the International Biometric Society and the American Statistical Association, where he is a fellow. He has been principal investigator on research grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation, and he has published extensively in leading journals of medicine, public health, and statistics. Becker has served on a number of editorial boards, was co-editor of Sociological Methodology, and was a guest editor for Sociological Methods and Research and for the Journal of the American Statistical Association.

Becker and his wife, Laura Voisinet, have two grown children, Matthew and Julia.
n just three years at the helm, Georgia State University Director of Athletics Cheryl L. Levick has overseen the remarkable transformation of Panther Athletics, from the launch of GSU football to the enhancement of every sports program to the announcement that Georgia State will move to the Sun Belt Conference on July 1, 2013.

Levick presided over the Georgia State football program’s highly successful debut in 2010, and now, after just two seasons, she has the Panthers poised for a jump to the Football Bowl Subdivision, a move that will continue GSU’s ascent to the forefront of college athletics.

Her significant imprint extends to the basketball court as she lured successful head coach Ron Hunter, who revitalized GSU basketball in his first season and led the Panthers to their first postseason berth in a decade.

Levick’s first three years on the job have also been marked by dramatic upgrades in facilities and fund-raising. Annual giving to the Panther Athletic Club has increased more than ten-fold, and the two largest gifts in the history of GSU athletics have been secured. Construction projects include the GSU Football Practice Complex, new facilities for strength and conditioning and sports medicine, and upgrades to every venue used by the Panthers.

And the progress continues. In 2012-13, sand volleyball comes on board as Georgia State’s 19th sport, complete with a state-of-the-art facility on the GSU campus. The new sand volleyball complex is part of an ambitious Athletics Master Facilities Plan that Levick has developed to address the needs of every sport.

One constant amid the change is the success of GSU student-athletes in the classroom as the Panthers maintain a cumulative grade point average over 3.0 while completing more than 5,000 hours of community service annually.

In 2011, Levick was recognized by the SportsBusiness Journal as a “Game Changer” among women in sports business.

With a resume of experience and success at prestigious athletics programs across the nation, Levick came to Georgia State in March 2009 from the University of Maryland, where she served as chief of staff/executive senior athletic director, overseeing daily management of the 27-sport program. Her impressive career includes a total of seven years as director of athletics at Santa Clara University and Saint Louis University as well as nearly two decades in senior administrative positions at Maryland and Stanford University and stints with the Pacific 10 Conference and the NCAA headquarters.

Levick was named the 2001 Division I Athletic Administrator of the Year by the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators (NACWAA). In 2005-06, she received the General Sports TURF Systems Athletic Director of the Year Award for the NCAA Division I Central Region, and she was recognized in both 1998 and 1999 as one of the nation’s Top 25 Female Sports Executives by Street & Smith’s Sports Business Journal. She is a past president of the NCAA Division I-AAA Athletic Directors Association.

Before going to Maryland in 2007, she served three years (2004-07) as director of athletics at Saint Louis, where she led the transition from Conference USA to the Atlantic 10 Conference and served as the lead fundraiser for a new $80 million on-campus arena and practice complex. In 2006, she received the Carl O. Bauër Award as the top amateur sports figure in the St. Louis area.

Levick also spent four years (2000-04) as director of athletics and recreation at Santa Clara University, where she oversaw a major renovation of the school’s basketball arena. The Broncos’ women’s soccer team captured the 2001 national championship, still the only NCAA team title in school history.

Prior to Santa Clara, Levick worked 12 years at Stanford as senior associate athletic director and senior woman administrator. She served as the primary administrator for 33 varsity programs that won 44 national championships and six straight Sears Cup titles during her tenure.

Levick previously served as assistant commissioner of the Pac-10 Conference, assistant director of communications and women’s programs at the NCAA, women’s gymnastics coach and associate athletic director at Slippery Rock University, and assistant gymnastics coach and synchronized swim coach at Indiana University. She began her career at Pattonville Senior High School in St. Louis, Mo., coaching gymnastics and women’s track.

Levick is a 1974 graduate of the University of Missouri, and she holds a masters degree in athletic administration from Indiana University. She has two daughters: Heather, who is married to Michael Klass, and Melissa.
GSU WELCOMES THE SUN BELT CONFERENCE TO ATLANTA

JULY 2013

APRIL 9, 2012:
Georgia State University officially accepted an invitation to join the Sun Belt Conference in all sports beginning in July 2013.

SUN BELT CONFERENCE

Georgia State Basketball will begin play in the Sun Belt in 2013. The move will allow the Panthers to play in one of the premier power conferences in the country.

* For the third consecutive season, the Sun Belt sent multiple teams to the postseason with WKU, Middle Tennessee and Louisiana-Lafayette representing the league in the NCAA Tournament, NIT and CIT, respectively. The Sun Belt has sent multiple teams to the postseason in ten of the past 12 seasons, and two teams have been represented in both the NCAA and NIT nine times since 2001.

* Formed in 1976, the Sun Belt Conference quickly rose to the greatest heights of collegiate athletics by sending a team to the NCAA Final Four in the league’s first year of existence. Fast forward 37 years and the league again finds itself at the pinnacle of collegiate athletics as a member of the 11 league alliance of the Bowl Championship Series. Through it all, the constant has always been success, progress and academic excellence.
2002 National Invitation Tournament

TAAC Champions

1991 NCAA Tournament

2012 CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament
GEORGIA STATE'S
CONFERENCE TITLES

1990-91    TAAC Tournament
1999-00    TAAC Regular Season (Co-Champions)
2000-01    TAAC Regular Season
2000-01    TAAC Tournament
2001-02    A-Sun Regular Season

Hello Cinderella
Hampton, Georgia State win shockers

NCAA Tournament win over Wisconsin, 50-49
School-Record
29 Wins in 2001
Four 20-Win Seasons Since 2001

Back-to-Back Postseason Berths with 2001 NCAA Tournament and 2002 NIT
Won or Shared First-Place in Conference
Three Straight Years (2000-01-02)
25-Game Homecourt Winning Streak (2000-02)
Lefty’s Legacy

The head coach at Georgia State from 1997-2003, Charles “Lefty” Driesell is one of the winningest coaches in college basketball history.

- Ranks ninth all-time in NCAA Division I wins
- The first coach in NCAA history to win 100 games at four different schools
- Inducted into the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame in 2007
- Record of 786-394 from 1960-2003
- Led four schools (Davidson, Maryland, James Madison & Georgia State) to the NCAA Tournament
- Recorded 22 20-win seasons
- Won 21 conference titles
- Earned 21 postseason bids

THE LEFTY LEDGER

- Davidson, 1960-69
  Record: 176-65 (9 yrs.)
- Maryland, 1969-86
  Record: 348-159 (17 yrs.)
- James Madison, 1989-97
  Record: 159-111 (8 yrs.)
- GEORGIA STATE, 1997-2003
  Record: 103-59 (6 yrs.)

MOST NCAA DIVISION I WINS

- 927 Mike Krzyzewski
- 902 Bob Knight
- 890 Jim Boeheim
- 879 Dean Smith
- 876 Adolph Rupp
- 875 Jim Calhoun
- 830 Jim Phelan
- 804 Eddie Sutton
- 786 LEFTY DRIESELL

786 WINS

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME

Driesell Pride MBB 29-5

700 Career Wins

Charles ‘Lefty’ Driesell Court
JIHAD ALI earned the CAA’s prestigious Dean Ehlers Leadership Award in 2012 and became GSU’s first two-time CAA All-Academic honoree in 2012.

Eric Buckner earned All-CAA Third Team honors in 2012.

LEONARD MENDEZ became Georgia State’s first All-CAA selection in 2008.

Rashad Chase was named CAA All-Rookie in 2006.

Jim Jacobs, 2006

Chris Collier, 2011

Chavelo Holmes, 2007

Rodney Hamilton, 2008

Terrence Brandon, 2009

Joe Dukes earned All-CAA honors in 2009 & 2010.
GEORGIA STATE’S RETIRED JERSEYS

THOMAS TERRELL (above) and SHERNARD LONG won back-to-back conference MVP awards.

JIM ADAMS, Academic All-America, 1966

ALL-AMERICA

SHERNARD LONG 2001

THOMAS TERRELL 2002

NATE WILLIAMS was one of three straight Panthers to win the conference scoring title from 2001-03. The two-time All-Atlantic Sun selection is enjoying a pro career overseas.
PANTHERS IN THE PROS

BRAD STRICKER
played with the Denver Nuggets in the 2007-08 preseason.

NATE WILLIAMS (2001-04)
spent time with the New Orleans Hornets and Charlotte Bobcats.
He now plays in Europe.

IN THE NBA

GEORGE PENDLETON (1975-77)
Drafted by Indiana Pacers, 1977 (4th)

JOE BROWN (1981-83)
Drafted by Cleveland Cavaliers, 1983 (9th)

LANARD COPELAND (1985-89)
Philadelphia 76ers, 1989-90
Los Angeles Clippers, 1991-92

NATE WILLIAMS (2001-04)
New Orleans Hornets, 2005-06 (preseason)
Charlotte Bobcats, 2006 (summer league)

LAMONT McINTOSH (2000-04)
Atlanta Hawks, 2005 (summer league)

BRAD STRICKER (1998-99)
Denver Nuggets, 2007-08 (preseason)
San Antonio Spurs, 2008-09 (summer league)
LANARD COPELAND
The former Panther enjoyed a 17-year professional career in the Australian National Basketball League. He is the fifth-leading scorer in league history and a three-time all-star.

THOMAS TERRELL
was a top player in Spain before moving to France to play for Hyeres-Toulon.

OUSMAN K Rubally
Recent GSU graduates TREY HAMPTON (Romania) and OUSMAN K Rubally (England) are currently playing in Europe. LEONARD MENDEZ played in Chile last year and will be in Uruguay this season, while ERIC BUCKNER recently signed to play in Turkey.
Located in the heart of downtown Atlanta, the Georgia State Sports Arena has been the home of Panther basketball since 1973, offering a first-class facility for GSU student-athletes and fans.

The Sports Arena court is named for legendary head coach Charles "Lefty" Driesell.
The Georgia State Sports Arena was the site of the ESPN Slam Dunk Contest and Three-Point Shootout during the NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four in both 2002 and 2007.

The facility also served as the venue for the badminton competition at the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta.

The home of Georgia State basketball since 1973, the facility has received numerous upgrades in the last few years, including a video board, a new floor and escalator. New student seating has also been added in both end zones.

The Panthers have hosted many top opponents at the Sports Arena, including Georgia Tech and Florida State in recent years.
“When nothing seems to help,
I go look at a stonemason
Hammering away at his stone,
Perhaps a hundred times
Without as much as a
Crack showing in it.
Yet at the hundred and
First blow it will split in two,
And I know it was not that
Blow that did it, but all
That had gone before.”

- Jacob Riis
FIRST CLASS FACILITIES FOR THE PANTHERS
GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY is located in the heart of Atlanta, an international city where people from all walks of life and every corner of the globe come to study, work and play.

ATLANTA

Some of the many attractions within minutes of the Georgia State campus:
- Georgia Aquarium
- Centennial Olympic Park
- Georgia Dome
- Philips Arena
- Rialto Theatre
- Martin Luther King Jr. Center
- CNN Center
- State Capitol
- Turner Field
- World of Coca Cola
- Fox Theatre
- Carter Presidential Library
ATLANTA BY THE NUMBERS

- Population of 5 million in metropolitan area
- Third in the nation for Fortune 500 companies
- More than 25 Fortune 1000 firms
- Sixth on Forbes 2011 Top Ten list of cities for new college graduates
- Home to the world’s busiest airport, serving 90 million passengers annually.

At Georgia State, Atlanta weaves in and out of the educational experience. GSU students benefit from opportunities and advantages such as inspiration for class projects, resources for research, access to prominent leaders and thinkers, and proximity to internships, jobs and service related to their course of study.
Located in the heart of one of America’s great cities,

**THE GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS**

has a profound influence on the changing landscape of downtown Atlanta. While the building blocks of the university will always be high-achieving students, world-class faculty and ground-breaking research, Georgia State boasts an ever-expanding and improving campus to accommodate that foundation.
In the last decade, the Rialto Theater restoration, Student Center, Student Recreation Center, University Lofts, University Commons, Helen M. Aderhold classroom building and Parker H. Petit Science Teaching and Research Center have transformed the downtown cityscape at Atlanta's core.

Many more new buildings are on the horizon, including additional on-campus housing.
On-campus housing at Georgia State University continues to grow, and more than 3,000 GSU students now live on campus.

The fall of 2009 saw the opening of the new freshman residence hall, which includes a dining facility. In 2010, GSU opened its first Greek housing, and in 2011, the university added the Piedmont North residence hall.

The University Commons, opened in 2007, is a 4.2-acre complex of four buildings surrounding a landscaped courtyard. All units come with fully-equipped kitchens, furnished bedrooms and spacious living areas.

The University Lofts, opened in 2002, contain fully-furnished, loft-style apartments that blend urban style with modern features.

All residence halls feature a full range of amenities including study and community lounge areas, laundry facilities, 24/7 security patrols, on-site or nearby parking and more.
Georgia State University’s residence halls were ranked NO. 1 IN THE NATION by Dormsplash.com in 2011.

Piedmont North opened in 2011.

The Freshman Hall opened in 2009 and includes a dining facility.
JAMAL TERRY, Assistant for Speed, Strength & Conditioning, possesses a wealth of experience and oversees the men’s basketball program.

The Panthers train in a brand new, 3,000-square foot facility that features state-of-the-art equipment.
SPORTS MEDICINE

DINIKA JOHNSON, Head Athletic Trainer, joins the men’s basketball program this year and oversees all aspects of the teams' health and wellness.
ATHLETICS MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

An institution on the rise, Georgia State University has a tradition of progress that is reflected in its rising stature, growing campus and broadening influence.

The Georgia State Athletics Master Facilities Plan is a blueprint for success and growth for GSU Athletics that will allow every Panther program to compete at the highest level.

By building top-notch venues for every sport, Georgia State can recruit the best student-athletes and help them develop into champions. These new facilities will also enhance the game day experience for students, alumni and fans.

The centerpiece of the Athletics Master Plan is the transformation of the GSU Sports Arena, the home of Panther basketball and volleyball as well as the athletics offices.

The new Sports Arena will include a GSU Walk of Fame and team store.

The Athletics Master Plan also includes new venues for baseball, softball, men’s and women’s soccer, court volleyball and sand volleyball.
The conference continued to make its presence known nationally last season with five teams advancing to the postseason, including Georgia State.

Last year, VCU advanced to the Round of 32 of the NCAA Tournament, while Drexel advanced to the Elite Eight of the NIT. The Panthers and Old Dominion played in the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament while Delaware participated in the College Basketball Invitational.

21 CAA teams have earned postseason berths over the last four seasons.

Stretching along the East Coast, the CAA footprint includes six of the nation’s top media markets – New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, D.C., Atlanta and Baltimore.

Regarded as one of the nation’s top collegiate conferences, the CAA has produced:
- 16 national team champions in five different sports
- 33 individual national champions
- 12 national players of the year
- 12 Honda Award winners
COMMUNITY OUTREACH is an essential component of the Georgia State program.

Panther student-athletes volunteer for a wide range of programs and organizations, including Samaritan’s Feet, Make-A-Wish, Habitat for Humanity, Boys & Girls Club, the Salvation Army, local elementary schools and many others.
Head coach Ron Hunter has coached a game barefoot each of the last five years to raise awareness for Samaritan’s Feet. The Panthers wore special orange jerseys in Jan. 2012 to raise awareness and then auctioned the jerseys with the proceeds going to Samaritan’s Feet. Hunter traveled to Nigeria in 2011 and took the team to South Africa in 2012 to help distribute shoes.
Georgia State played on TV six times last season. Located in one of the nation’s largest media markets, exposure comes to the program on a daily basis.
The Atlanta Hawks, Falcons, & Braves all play just minutes from the Georgia State campus.

Georgia State received UNPRECEDEDENT PUBLICITY for a first-year program as GSU Football graced the cover of ESPN THE MAGAZINE.

Atlanta hosts many major sporting events, including the Super Bowl, the NBA All-Star Game, and the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games.

Atlanta has hosted 21 NCAA Basketball Tournaments, including the Men’s Final Four in 1977, 2002 and 2007.

The NCAA Men’s Final Four will return to Atlanta and the Georgia Dome in 2013.
Georgia State University is committed to providing educational, personal and community development that will enhance the quality of the student-athlete experience.

Georgia State’s Student-Athlete Development department became just the second in the nation to be certified at the highest level by the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics.

The Georgia State program is headed by Associate Director of Athletics Dena Freeman-Patton, while Senior Academic Advisor Sidney Ball works directly with the men’s basketball team and coordinates Georgia State’s Community Service programs.

Georgia State’s commitment to academic support and student-athlete development is paying dividends as the Panthers have enjoyed unprecedented success in the classroom. GSU’s student-athlete population has posted a combined cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better for the last four years.

JAMES FIELDS (Right) and JIHAD ALI (Left) earned CAA All-Academic honors following the 2011-12 season. Fields earned the honor for the second year in a row, while Ali also earned the award for the second time.
The ATHLETIC LEARNING LAB provides student-athletes access to computers, tutoring and advisement as well as a convenient place for individual or group study.

MEN’S BASKETBALL PROGRAM ACADEMIC HONORS IN 2011-12:

DEAN’S LIST
JIHAD ALI & JUSTIN GREEN

AD’S HONOR ROLL
JAMES FIELDS, TYLER GAMBLE & JAMAR TAYLOR

RASHAAD RICHARDSON (left) and MANNY ATKINS represent the men’s basketball team on GSU’s Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for 2012-13.
AFTER leading Georgia State to the postseason and the second most wins in school history, Ron Hunter, along with his run-and-gun, up-tempo style of basketball returns to lead Georgia State in their final season in the Colonial Athletic Association. A strong eight-member recruiting class joins a talented squad of returners who helped lead the Panthers to one of the top 20 defenses in the country last year.

“We changed the culture of Georgia State basketball last year, but there is still a lot of work to do,” commented Hunter earlier this year. “We brought back a fan base that wanted to win, but we left a lot of unfinished business on the table. We have a talented group of returners and have welcomed a highly-touted recruiting class that wants to return this program to prominence.”

Along with returning starting point guard Devonta White, Rashaad Richardson and James Vincent also saw significant playing time last year. They will be joined by transfer Manny Atkins who spent last year learning Hunter’s system, so despite losing six seniors, there will be plenty of leadership on the court to welcome five freshmen, two sophomores and one junior to the squad.

Here is a look at the Panthers:

POINT GUARDS

Junior point guard Devonta White, the Panthers leading scorer from a year ago, returns to the point guard position as one of three captains on the team this year. Following a freshman season that was derailed by an injury, White averaged 12.9 points per game while also leading the team in minutes played and shooting 83.0 percent from the free throw line, among the best in the CAA. He finished second on the squad in assists and swiped nearly two steals per game.

“Devonta is such a talented player,” continued Hunter. “He did so much for us on and off the court last year and is leadership is invaluable. To be successful, every team must have a great floor general and there is no question that Devonta is that type of player.”

Freshman David Travers and sophomore Cameron Solomon, a pair of newcomers, will add depth to the position. Solomon, a transfer from Brevard Community College, has Division I experience after playing nine games at High Point as a freshman. As a senior at nearly Lovejoy High School, Solomon averaged more than 25 points per game to lead the Metro Atlanta area in scoring.

Travers, a highly-touted recruit from San Diego, Calif., led his high school squad to the championship game of the California state playoffs last season. At 6-0, 170-pounds, like White, Travers uses his speed on the court to get by defenders to reach the basket, while having the ability to make the outside jumper.

“I look forward to watching both David and Cameron develop in our system,” commented Hunter. “They are both very talented guards who I expect will see significant playing time on the court this season.”

Adding depth to the point guard position will be sophomore Kevin Shaw, along with second-year walk-ons Tyler Gamble and Ryann Green. Shaw saw action in 13 games as a freshman, playing 23 minutes while scoring five points and adding three rebounds. He was one of the first signees for Hunter after playing for Seneca High School in Louisville, Ky.

Gamble, who became a crowd favorite last season for cheering on his team at the end of the bench, saw action in 12 games, scoring four points and grabbing six boards in his first season with the Panthers after being an all-region honoree from Commerce, Ga.

Green played in 11 games last year, including the Panthers match-up with Mercer in the second round of the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament, playing 13 minutes and grabbing two boards in his first season. Before joining the Panthers, Green played locally for former Panther Courtney Brooks at Benjamin Banneker High School.

WINGS

Junior Rashaad Richardson, a 6-4 wing and captain enters his third year after making 16 starts during the 2011-12 season. During his sophomore season, Richardson tripled his minutes on the court, averaging 13.7, while scoring 5.4 points per game and shooting 34.8 percent from three-point range. He opened the season with a record performance, hitting seven three-pointers against Washington and finish the year with 40, third most on the team.
“Rashaad showed great improvement last season which is why he was named one of our captains this year,” commented Hunter. “When he shows his confidence on the court, he can make a three from anywhere. We need to continue to build that confidence in him this season.”

He will be joined by Virginia Tech transfer Manny Atkins who redshirted last year due to NCAA transfer rules. He will fill out the trio of captains that Hunter named before the start of the season.

Atkins starred at nearby Tucker High School and saw significant time with the Hokies before returning to Atlanta for his final two years of eligibility.

“Manny worked extremely hard last year,” continued Hunter. “I am expecting big things from him this year and I think he has the same expectations for himself. Although he did not play last year, I think most of us consider him a returning player for everything he was able to help us with last season.”

The duo will be joined by highly-touted freshman R.J. Hunter, the son of Coach Ron Hunter. Hunter’s lone son led his Pike High School squad to the championship game of the Indiana state playoffs last season, earning all-state honors and a three-star ranking.

“I am honored that R.J. decided to come play for us,” commented Hunter. “I have never coached my son before and I am looking forward to seeing him every day on the court. He really improved during his senior year of high school and I know that he will continue to push himself as a member of our team.”

Sophomore Justin Green, a second-year walk-on, will add depth to the position. Green saw action in six games last season following a talented high school career at nearby Lovejoy High School.

POST PLAYERS

Lone senior James Vincent showed steady improvement for the third straight season and will anchor the low block as the season gets underway. The 6-10 presence known as “Oak” played in 32 games last season, averaging 3.2 points and 2.0 rebounds per game, while shooting an impressive 54.8 percent from the floor and 75.9 percent from the free throw line.

“James worked extremely hard in the off-season,” commented Hunter. “If he continues to put in the time and work necessary, he can be one of the best big-men in the CAA this year.”

He will not be alone as five newcomers will add depth down low for Georgia State. Transfers Curtis Washington and Denny Burguillos, along with freshmen Markus Crider, T.J. Shipes and LaRon Smith will bolster the Panthers around the rim.

Washington, who spent the last two years at the University of Southern Cal, saw action during his freshman season, but was injured last year and forced to take a redshirt. At 6-9, 230 pounds, the Elizabethtown, Ky. native has great size and wingspan around the basket.

Burguillos, who spent the previous two years at Casper (Wyo.) College is a native of Valencia, Venezuela. Known for his rebounding abilities, Burguillos has an incredibly high basketball IQ which allows him to seemingly always be in the right place at the right time on the court.

“Our two transfers are highly-talented players who learn quickly,” continued Hunter. “I expect both to see significant time this year and add a ton of depth to our low post presence.”

The three freshman added to the class do not lack in talent either and may challenge for starting positions early in the season. Crider, from Hunter’s hometown of Dayton, Ohio, spent last season at Bridgton (Maine) Academy. He averaged nearly 20 points and 10 rebounds per game after a successful career at Wayne High School.

Shipes, from nearby Buford High School, has the physical presence of a tight end on the football field. At 6-7, 225 pounds, Shipes was named one of the top 30 players in Metro Atlanta last year, earning AJC and GACA First Team All-State honors. He was named the Class AA Region 6 Player of the Year following both his junior and senior seasons.

Smith, known for his ability to alter shots with a 7-3 wing span, comes to Georgia State from Heritage High School in Palm Bay, Fla. He earned all-conference and All-Space Coast First Team honors after leading Heritage to a 24-5 record and the Sweet 16 of the second largest classification in Florida. He averaged 16.3 points, 10.7 rebounds and blocked 4.6 shots per game during his senior year.

“Our three freshman in the post all have an incredibly upside,” commented Hunter. “They each have unique abilities that will be valuable in so many ways. I look forward to watching each of them develop into fine collegiate players.”

Although numerically the team is split with eight returners and eight newcomers, it is already apparent that after eight weeks of summer practice and a trip to South Africa with Samari-tan’s Feet, the team has already become one and will look for its second straight postseason appearance in March.