

MURFREESBORO - Wilson County native and former Mt. Juliet High basketball standout Diane (Cummings) Turnham is one of five inductees into the 2012 Blue Raider Athletic Hall of Fame class at Middle Tennessee State University.

Turnham has made a career in women's athletics at Middle Tennessee, coaching basketball as an assistant under three different head coaches, Larry Joe Inman, Jim Davis, and Lewis Bevins. She spent four years as an assistant coach, and three of those years, the team played in the post-season.

When Title IX was instituted, former Athletic Director Jimmy Earle named Turnham as the new volleyball coach, even though she had no experience in either playing or coaching the sport.

Building the program from scratch, with a bare-bones budget, Turnham earned the reputation as a hard worker, and was the perfect choice to lead the Lady Raiders into the Title IX era. In the early days, she recalls having the team sell donuts to raise money for jackets.

Turnham coached volleyball for ten years over a 13-year span, and while her record reflected the difficulties of building a competitive program from scratch, her fondest memory is the last team she recruited and built going on to win the Ohio Valley Conference tournament and advancing to their first NCAA tournament the year following her retirement. "It showed just how far we had come, from nothing to championship level," she noted.

Athletic Director John Stanford gave Turnham her chance in administration and has since risen to the level of Associate AD under Chris Masarro, also serving as interim AD on two occasions.

She has also worked her way up through the ranks of the NCAA, and is now in her second year as chairman of the NCAA Women's Volleyball Committee. Turnham is a graduate of David Lipscomb. She is married to Kyle Turnham, and they have one son, Steven.

She is a 1976 graduate of Mt. Juliet High School where she played forward for her future boss

## **MJ's Turnham inducted into MT sports hall of fame**

Tuesday, July 31, 2012

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Larry Joe Inman.

The Hall of Fame induction ceremony will be held Saturday, Sept. 8, prior MTSU's home football game vs. Florida Atlantic.