

Kelley D. Watts '82

As a varsity basketball player for three years at Bay Shore High School, Kelley earned all-league, All Suffolk County, MVP Newsday Classic, and three-time All-American Honors. Recruited to Rutgers University Division I team in 1982, she was a standout player at Rutgers and a member of a team that had its first perfect 16-0 conference season in the Atlantic Ten, a squad that ventured deep into the NCAA tourney, eventually falling in the Elite Eight. In her freshman year she competed in the National Sports Festival as a shooting guard on the East team, winning a bronze medal. A member of the Jones Cup Team and the USA Cobra team her accolades extended to the national level, where she was a part of a team that qualified for the 1984 USA Olympic Trials. In March of 1985, the Town of Islip, Department of Human Resources honored her in the nationally proclaimed women's history week as the outstanding woman resident in the town in the field of sports. The Negro Women's Business and Professional Council honored her as woman of the year in 1985. Kelley was further honored in 1995 when she was inducted into the Suffolk County Sports Hall of Fame.

Kelley was an assistant women's basketball coach at three prestigious Division I programs, Temple University, St. John's University, and Hofstra University. Her First Head Coaching position came in 2000 at the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York where she transitioned the program from a club team to the varsity level on Division III.

In 2002 she became the first African- American Women's Head Coach at Adelphi University and guided her team to a 20-11 record, their second 20 win season in school history. The Adelphi panthers won the NYCAC tournament title and earned a berth in the regional NCAA playoffs. She was named Female Coach of the year by the Nassau County Sports Commission and was also honored by the Metropolitan Basketball Writers Association as the NIT/ ALL- MET Women's Division II Coach of the year in 2004.

A member of the Women's Basketball Coaches Association since 1984, Coach Watts has instructed at numerous basketball clinics and been a motivational guest speaker at multiple award banquets. On the national level Kelley has been a panelist speaker for the Black Women's Sports Foundation, the Princeton Review, New York Daily News, Long Island All-Stars, and the Girl Scouts of America. She continues her mentoring to

local elementary and middle school students, and assists in running summer basketball camps for girls.

Coach Watts has a genuine devotion to the game and to her players. Her coaching philosophy centers on respect; she shares her belief in giving back with her players, by ensuring that her team takes part in community activities such as the American heart walk, hoops for heart, and the fun festival kids with cancer at Winthrop hospital. Coach Watts believes the life skills her players learn will help them excel and succeed after graduation. “My hope for them is to become responsible and accountable adults, so I strive to teach, motivate, nurture, and help them prepare to do so”. Coach Watts knows a successful program is more than just wins and she demands integrity both on and off the court. In 2006-2007 WBCA / NCAA Academic poll announced Adelphi University’s Women’s Basketball Team was ranked 21st in the nation with an overall TEAM GPA of 3.345.

From 2003-2006, Kelley’s personal example was to volunteer to coach the Open Division Empire State Games. She expressed that having played on the scholastic and open teams it would be an honor to coach the games and to have the opportunity to give back in a different capacity. In 2005 Coach Watts guided the LI Open team to a gold medal, the first for Long Island since when she played as a guard 20 years prior, on the 1985 Gold Medal team.