WKU announces athletics staff updates

bgdailynews.com/2026/07/06/wku-announces-athletics-staff-updates

The Daily News July 6, 2026

Published 10:27 am Monday, July 6, 2026

Big Red cheers for the Hilltoppers in their 42-26 win over the Middle Tennessee State Blue Raiders in WKU's final home game of the regular season at Houchens-Smith Stadium on Saturday, Nov. 15, 2025. GRACE MCDOWELL / BOWLING GREEN DAILY NEWS

Western Kentucky Director of Athletics Todd Stewart announced several role adjustments and additions to the WKU athletics staff on Monday.

Kat Smith has been elevated to executive senior associate athletic director/chief revenue officer/senior woman administrator. In her expanded role, Smith will oversee the department's comprehensive revenue generation strategy while continuing to provide executive leadership of the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation (HAF). Additionally, Smith will serve as the department's senior woman administrator and as a member of the department's executive leadership team.

Cal Cannestra has been promoted to associate athletic director for external operations. Cannestra will provide support and leadership of external revenue support units including communications, marketing and tickets. Cannestra will assist with the development and implementation of strategic initiatives that support revenue generation, fan engagement and the overall growth of WKU athletics.

Tara Hornal has been promoted to assistant athletic director for internal operations. Hornal will oversee the department's human resources and business operations while serving as WKU athletics' deputy Title IX coordinator.

Mike Gaddie has been elevated to senior associate athletic director for sports medicine and student-athlete well-being. Gaddie will continue leading WKU's nationally respected sports medicine program while overseeing initiatives that support the physical, mental and overall well-being of Hilltopper student-athletes.

Callahan Wiegandt has been named director of student-athlete development. In her role, Wiegandt will oversee programming focused on leadership development, career readiness, community engagement and the overall student-athlete experience.

Lindsey Warick moves from her previous role as director of operations/assistant coach with the WKU softball program to coordinator of business operations. Warick will assist with the department's financial and operational management while supporting budget administration and team travel operations.

Averi Cline has joined WKU athletics as the academic coordinator for men’s and women’s basketball. Cline will provide academic support and monitor the academic progress of student-athletes in both basketball programs. Cline was a member of the WKU women’s golf program from 2022-26, and was part of back-to-back Conference USA women’s golf championships in 2025 and 2026.

In conjunction with the staff updates, WKU athletics has announced the following sport administrator assignments:

Baseball – Mike GaddieFootball – Jim ClarkMen’s Basketball – Kat SmithWomen’s Basketball – Jim ClarkMen’s & Women’s Golf – Cal CannestraMen’s & Women’s Track and Field/Cross Country – Chandler DeRieuxSoccer – Les ForsytheSoftball – Benji StewartTennis – Jared MacDonaldVolleyball – Mike GaddieCheer – Audrey Ann LasterDance – Audrey Ann Laster