

A Career Rebound For Federally Charged Coach

(KNZA)--Despite his recent guilty plea to federal charges related to a car theft ring, Highland Community College's Head Women's Basketball Coach will remain in that position.

The decision by the college to retain B.J. Smith was made public Wednesday in a written statement released by the Vice-President for Institutional Advancement and the Executive Director of the HCC Foundation.

Craig Mosher, Ph. D. says that while the college “recognizes the serious situation that has taken place,” college officials remained supportive of Smith.

The coach recently met with Highland President David Reist who, following consultation with legal counsel and the College Board of Trustees, stated that Smith will be assisted by the college through his current situation. He will remain in place as the women's basketball coach, subject to guidelines established for his conduct and subject to the sentencing agreement set to happen on July 1st.

Reist says the decision keeps with the mission of community colleges to better the situation of those who are willing to improve.

Smith, according to the statement, has kept Highland officials informed about all details of his legal troubles while fully cooperating with law enforcement.

Smith recently pleaded guilty to obtaining fraudulent transfer titles from the Osage Nation for five vehicles in 2011 and 2012, allowing the vehicles to be resold.

Just weeks ago, Smith led Highland's women's basketball team to a second place national finish.

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