

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 21, 2026 **CONTACT:** Nancy Yeang **PHONE:** (909) 204-6012

Lynwood Unified Coach Honored for Three Decades of Excellence On and Off the Court

LYNWOOD, CA – Lynwood High School girls' basketball head coach Ellis Barfield was honored with the Humanitarian Excellence Award by the Lynwood Alumni Foundation earlier this Spring, recognizing three decades of leadership that have shaped one of the region's most accomplished athletic programs.

Under Barfield's guidance, the highly competitive program has earned more than 700 wins and 30 consecutive league championships. These milestones place Lynwood High among the most consistent high school basketball programs in the region – but for Barfield, the accolades have never been the goal. Instead, he said they reflect a decades-long commitment to mentorship through creating opportunities for student-athletes to succeed beyond the court.

"This has never been about me, it's something bigger. We draw the community together, especially when they see these young ladies winning, having great grades and doing good things," Barfield said. "That's a good example for everybody. I look at it as giving forward. It's service. If we all did a little bit here and there, it'd be a better world. I feel this is my purpose in life."

Barfield's approach is rooted in his own experiences. His family moved frequently, which he said limited his growth as an athlete, before he settled in Lynwood. It was there when, as the oldest son, he began coaching his siblings on the fundamentals of the game, hoping to give them the consistency that he wasn't able to have.

That same mindset now drives Barfield's year-round basketball development model, a feeder system that begins at the elementary school level, primarily coached by program alumni. Through camps, club teams and a structured development program, former players return to mentor the next generation, helping young athletes build skills early and to pay it forward to a program that helped them in their early years.

According to Barfield, this approach keeps Lynwood High School competitive against top-ranked, well-funded private school basketball programs, relying on the commitment and dedication of the community rather than dollars to develop the athletes' talents to compete at the highest levels.

Lynwood High senior Shanilah Ewing, who began training in the school's feeder basketball program at a young age, recently earned All-Star Game MVP honors and was named a CIF Southern Section Athlete of the Year. In addition to her athletic success, Ewing maintains a 4.0 GPA and serves as a leader on campus. Ewing has committed to California State University, Dominguez Hills, where she will continue her academic and athletic career, carrying forward a legacy shaped by her time at Lynwood Unified.

"Every day is a new opportunity, that is something Coach Barfield always reminded our team, and it is how I approach life. I have been taught to take advantage of opportunities, have gratitude toward each day and always put my best foot forward to be part of something bigger than myself," Ewing said. "I never imagined being named Player of the Year, and I give all the credit to Jesus Christ, my amazing support system: family, coaches, teammates and the rest of my Lynwood community, especially my mom for being my number one supporter and Coach Ellis for instilling in me work ethic, morality and grit."

Over the years, Barfield has mentored more than 100 student-athletes to the next level, including Ewing, with several playing at the McDonald's All-American Game. The program's national recognition spans multiple eras in Barfield's career, with recent standouts having gone to Division I level collegiate play and the Women's National Basketball Association.

"What Coach Barfield has accomplished at Lynwood High School goes far beyond the game. He has created a culture rooted in service to others, ensuring that every student who comes through his program leaves better prepared for life," Superintendent Patrick Gittisriboongul, Ed.D., said. "He represents the very best of Lynwood Unified's commitment to our students, and his program is proof that when you invest in the student and the community, success will follow."

PHOTO CAPTION:

LHS_BARFIELD1: Lynwood High School girls' basketball head coach Ellis Barfield (middle) was recognized for his three decades of leadership that have shaped one of the region's most accomplished athletic programs.

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