

Rene Portland, 65, Longtime Penn State Basketball Coach, Dies

By **Richard Sandomir**

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Rene Portland, who as the coach of the Penn State women’s basketball team for 27 seasons won more than 600 games but was accused of discriminating against lesbian players, died on Sunday in Tannersville, Pa. She was 65.

Her death was confirmed by the D’Anjolell Memorial Home in Broomall, Pa. She had recently received a diagnosis of peritoneal cancer.

Portland, who won three national championships as a star player at Immaculata College (now University) in the mid-1970s, was hired to coach the Penn State Lady Lions in 1980 after successful stints as the coach at Saint Joseph’s University in Philadelphia and the University of Colorado. She was the only coach hired by Joe Paterno, the longtime Penn State football coach, who had a brief tenure as the university’s athletic director.

“The search committee came to me and said, ‘If we can get Rene, get her,’ ” Paterno told The Philadelphia Daily News.

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