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Courtney Paris is the Newest Los Angeles Spark; Chanel Mokango Re-Signs

Former Women's College Basketball Player of the Year Adds Depth in the Paint

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles Sparks continue their busy off-season with the signing of center [Courtney Paris](#) to a free agent contract and the re-signing of forward [Chanel Mokango](#), General Manager Penny Toler announced Tuesday.

These signings come on the heels of four players – forwards Ebony Hoffman and LaToya Pringle and guards Loree Moore and Natasha Lacy – joining the Sparks last week as free agents, and guards Ticha Penicheiro and Noelle Quinn re-signing with Los Angeles. Per team policy, terms of all contracts are not disclosed.

The 6'4" **Paris** joins her third WNBA team after being waived by Chicago during the 2010 preseason. The seventh overall pick in the 2009 Draft by Sacramento, she averaged 4.8 points and 4.1 rebounds in 33 games with the Monarchs that season. Her career high of 19 points was scored against New York, on Aug. 7, 2009, while she hauled down 13 rebounds vs. Phoenix on Sept. 13.

As a member of the Oklahoma Sooners from 2005-09, the Piedmont, Calif., native enjoyed one of the most decorated careers in the history of women's college basketball. The first-ever four-time *Associated Press* First Team All-American – also earning National Player of the Year honors in 2007 – Paris is the only player U.S. college basketball history, male or female, to amass 2,500 points and 2,000 rebounds in a career. She also holds 20 NCAA Division I women's records including most career rebounds, most career double-figure scoring games and career double-doubles.

At Oklahoma, Paris teamed with her twin sister Ashley, who was the Sparks' second round draft pick in 2009. Courtney Paris is currently playing for Spain's Rivas Ecopolis, averaging 10.5 points and 8.6 rebounds per game in domestic play and 11.4 and 8.3, respectively, in the EuroLeague.

"Among our off-season goals is to get bigger and stronger in the paint, and Courtney certainly brings those attributes to the Sparks," Toler said.

Mokango returns for a second season in Los Angeles following a rookie campaign that saw her appear in 21 contests, averaging 0.4 points and 0.6 rebounds in just 3.4 minutes played per game. She tallied career bests of four points vs. Tulsa (July 20, 2010) and four rebounds against New York (June 29). The 6'5" native of Congo who played collegiately at Mississippi State is honing her game this off-season with Mersin in Turkey, posting 10.2 points and 6.9 assists per contest.

"This is an important season for Chanel," Toler said. "She displays the type of athleticism GMs in this league covet. She has a lot of potential and I'm really interested in seeing how she has improved this off-season."

The Sparks begin their 15th WNBA season on Friday, June 3, hosting the Minnesota Lynx at STAPLES Center at 8 p.m. PT. For group and season ticket information, call 877-44-SPARKS or visit LASparks.com.

About the Los Angeles Sparks

The Los Angeles Sparks, an original Women's National Basketball Association team, enter their 15th season in 2011. The Sparks are one of six WNBA franchises that fall under the league's independent ownership model. Winner of back-to-back WNBA championships in 2001 and 2002, Los Angeles' roster of star athletes includes 2008 WNBA MVP and Rookie of the Year Candace Parker, four-time WNBA champion and all-time leading scorer Tina Thompson, and two-time WNBA champion DeLisha Milton-Jones. The Sparks play their home games at STAPLES Center in the heart of downtown Los Angeles. For ticket information, call (877) 44-SPARKS or visit LASparks.com.