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LINDENWOOD

Coaching with Character position first of its kind in U.S.

After three seasons as head football coach, Rick Gorzynski is being promoted by Lindenwood University.

Lindenwood is creating a new position—the first of its kind in the United States--and Gorzynski will become the Director of Coaching with Character.

“This program will be the first of its kind in the nation,” Gorzynski said. “This fits in perfectly with Lindenwood’s position as one of the NAIA’s Champions of Character schools. I’m very excited to be in a position where I can teach coaches about connecting with kids and teaching them the values to make them great citizens.”

The program will focus on coaching with an emphasis in values, citizenship, morality and integrity.

“Every school teaches coaches about theories and methods,” said Gorzynski. “But rarely are you taught about connecting with the student-athletes and helping them become better people on and off the field. I’ve been coaching for the last 36 years and this is something I’ve always felt I could do and something I’ve always wanted to do.”

Gorzynski, longtime head coach at Hazelwood East High School, is one of Missouri’s most respected and decorated high school coaches. In addition to his new role in teaching young coaches, Gorzynski will still maintain supervision of Lindenwood’s football recruiting and retention.

“Rick has helped us bring in high quality, high character young football players,” said President Dennis Spellmann. “Even though he is retiring as a football coach, we had to keep him involved in the program somehow. This was the perfect way to do it.”

Spellmann said the Coaching with Character position creates “a totally new model for the development of young coaches. Nobody’s done this before. We are going to develop young high school coaches with an emphasis on character.”

Gorzynski will teach PE and coaching methods courses, and will work closely with Dr. Emilie Johnson, who directs character education studies at Lindenwood and writes curriculum for those classes.

Spellmann said the university already has begun a national search for a new head coach.

Lindenwood University has won the Director’s Cup, given annually to the top collegiate athletic program, for two consecutive years.

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