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GSU cross country programs welcomes a new coach

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University Park, IL,
February
08,
2022

GSU cross country programs welcomes a new coach



[John Niendorf](#) has been named interim head coach for the men's and women's cross country programs at Governors State University (GSU). He takes over for [Kevin Kredens](#), who served for seven seasons at GSU. Niendorf's coaching staff will include second-year assistant coach [Dave Ladehoff](#).

"It's a huge blessing to get this opportunity at GSU, I'm incredibly excited and want to hit the ground running," said Niendorf. "My emphasis will be on improving academically, becoming more competitive, and recruiting."

Niendorf joined the Jaguars in August as an assistant coach. He worked closely with All-CCAC selection [Lenny Baumann](#), implementing a training regimen that helped Baumann qualify for the NAIA National Championships. Niendorf traveled to Vancouver,

Washington for NAIA Nationals and provided race strategy as Baumann finished in the top half of the field.

"John brought a new energy to our cross country teams this past season," said GSU Director of Athletics Tony Bates. "He has the ability to recruit and grow the program and has the full support of our athletic department."

Niendorf is no stranger to the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference having competed for St. Francis where he was a member of the 2012 NAIA national championship team. He posted a personal-record 8K time of 25:35 at the CCACs that same year. He was a CCAC All-Academic Team selection and chosen as USF's Scholar Athlete of the Year. As a track performer, he posted PRs of 15:22 at 5,000 meters and 9:50 in the steeplechase, earning All-CCAC honors in the later event. He graduated with a degree from USF in 2015. As a high schooler, Niendorf ran cross country and track at Lincoln Way East and Lincoln Way North, setting multiple school records.

Niendorf teaches history at Rich Township where he has coached cross country and track. He has coached multiple all-conference and state qualifiers and has former athletes who have gone on to earn college scholarships.

Niendorf is an active runner, clocking 2 hours, 45 minutes in his first marathon. He competed in the 2021 Bank of America Chicago Marathon and was the top USF Alumni finisher at the 2021 Fighting Saints Twilight Invitational. He and his wife Donna reside in his hometown of Crete, Illinois.