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Eastern Michigan University

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Coach Chris Creighton Addresses the EMU Community

EMU's 37th full-time head coach was introduced to the public Thursday afternoon



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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) -- Eastern Michigan University Vice President/Director of Intercollegiate Athletics [Heather Lyke](#) made the move to hire former Drake University Head Football Coach, [Chris Creighton](#), Wednesday, Dec. 11. Creighton was introduced as the head man of the EMU football team Thursday afternoon, Dec. 12, at a press conference held at the Convocation Center.

EMU President, **Dr. Susan Martin**, was extremely enthusiastic about the hiring of Creighton. She felt that Creighton will serve as the medium between the athletic department and the fans and community, bringing excitement surrounding the football program back to the university.

"We will fill that stadium, we will go to a bowl game," remarked Martin. "We will not rest until we have championship football and we go to bowl play. We welcome Chris and his family to the EMU family."

Lyke showed that she is equally enthused about Creighton. The first-year director of athletic set the tone for the excitement about the hiring of Creighton at the beginning of Thursday's event.

"In recruiting terms, we've landed a difference-maker," said Lyke. "He will be an invaluable member of the EMU family."

It is not only the success on the field that Creighton brings to the table at EMU, but his ability to mold men through the game of football. According to Lyke, this is what set Creighton apart from the rest of the candidate pool during the hiring process.

"He is intensely competitive," mentioned Lyke. "But what he's really good at is teaching the kids to believe in themselves and believe in something bigger than themselves."

On top of the success he has had with student-athletes on a personal level, he has been outstanding as a leader on the field. The head coach at Drake University the last six seasons, boasts a career record of 139-46, without having a winning percentage lower than .667 at any of his three previous institutions.

"Chris' success is self-evident," declared Lyke. "During his career he has accumulated a 139-49 record and he has won eight conference championships. Chris' plan for building and sustaining success works."

It was clear to see why she chose Creighton for the job of creating a new culture for the EMU football squad. Lyke also mentioned an e-mail that a current Drake University football player had sent to her late last night.

She read: "He has molded who I have become along with 99 other Bulldogs. I want to congratulate you on a wonderful hire. He is a person who turns boys into men."

Following the statements from Lyke, it was apparent that Creighton had an impressive resume and has brought a winning mentality to multiple institutions across the nation. However, she was most excited about the enthusiasm for the student-athlete experience that the 17-year head coach brings to Eastern Michigan. After Lyke completed her introduction of the new head coach, Creighton took the stand to address the EMU community.

"I am absolutely fired up to lead this football program," exclaimed Creighton. "I got the first phone call from Heather, which lasted an hour. After that, I had my hand in the air saying pick me."

Although it was a difficult day to leave the place he called home for six seasons in Drake University, the San Francisco, Calif. native believes that Ypsilanti and Eastern Michigan are the right fit for him. He has a vision of bringing the right experience to the student-athletes at EMU.

"I have a vision and I want to make the experience of playing football at Eastern Michigan University one of the most incredible experiences of their lives," remarked Creighton. "That's what keeps me up at night. I could see it in the eyes of the guys (current student-athletes) in that room downstairs, and they want to be great."

Creighton is a proven winner, and he will recruit players that will make the EMU football program successful. He is interested in recruiting the right people, both staff and student-athletes. It is not the scheme of football he is worried about, but the players and personnel he brings to the field everyday; that is what makes the difference to the newly appointed head coach.

"I believe in people more than schemes," stated Creighton. "People are going to ask, 'how are you going to recruit?' I'm going to go out and find winners. Guys who know who they are so deeply, that they don't have to go to a finished product, or a sure thing where they are just a cog in a wheel. They are willing to get on the front end, willing to build something and grind that out on a daily basis. I know they are out there."

Winning is a necessity in rebuilding the EMU football program. Coach Creighton believes there is a lot of potential at

Eastern and he thinks the Green and White can "close the gap" on the potential.

"Winning is a byproduct of doing things the right way," remarked Creighton. "There is a gap between where we are and our potential, we are going to wake up every day finding a way to close that gap."

Ultimately, it is not about just winning and losing to this head coach. In [Chris Creighton](#), Eastern Michigan has found a man who not only embraces the competitive nature of intercollegiate athletics, but someone who cares about the relationships built over time with the players, coaches, community and staff.

"It won't be me, it will be we," said Creighton. " We're going to have a crystal clear vision and that is making it one of the most incredible experiences of their lives. This game is about relationships. We have the chance to do life intensely for four and a half years, and after that."