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RMU Names Chris King Director of Athletics
The award-winning AD is a graduate of Robert Morris University

Pittsburgh, May 6, 2019 – Chris King is coming home.

Robert Morris University has named King the university's vice president and director of athletics, effective June 1. King is currently director of intercollegiate athletics at University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), where last year he won the NACDA Under Armour Division I-AAA Athletic Director of the Year Award.

RMU will hold a press conference at 11 a.m. Tuesday, May 7, in the Harshman Rotunda of the UPMC Events Center to introduce King.

A native of Apollo, Pa., King is a 1994 graduate of Robert Morris University's vaunted Sport Management program.

"I'm honored and humbled to serve as the next director of athletics at Robert Morris University. As an alumnus, I'm excited to have the opportunity to guide an athletics department with a championship culture and a history of success, and to be part of a team making a significant impact as part of a nationally ranked doctoral university," said King.

King has been director of intercollegiate athletics at UTRGV, formerly the University of Texas-Pan American, since 2009. Previously an independent NCAA Division I institution, under King's leadership UTRGV joined the Western Athletic Conference in 2013. The men's basketball team has made two straight postseason appearances, while the women's basketball team has reached the postseason in four of the last five years.

King has led the athletics department through a strategic plan that improved facilities and fundraising, elevated the UTRGV Athletics brand, and helped student athletes win championships while achieving academic success. UTRGV currently ranks second in the Western Athletic Conference Commissioner's Cup standings.

The volleyball and women's tennis teams won WAC tournament championships and advanced to their first NCAA tournaments in 2016 and then won WAC championships in 2018. Since joining the conference, UTRGV has won four team and 32 individual WAC Championships.

"Chris King will take RMU Athletics to the next level. He prizes above all else the student athlete experience, and his achievements at UTRGV and throughout his career will bring an unparalleled level of leadership to our athletics program," said RMU President Chris Howard.

RMU has 16 NCAA Division I sports, and the Colonials have claimed 49 regular-season championships and 50 league tournament titles. Fourteen RMU teams have won at least one conference championship. This year, the women's basketball team, the women's ice hockey team, the men's lacrosse team, and the men's golf team each won a conference tournament title. Women's basketball, men's lacrosse, and men's golf also qualified for the NCAA tournament, the first time in RMU history that three sports earned an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament.

Since 1998, 29 Colonials have been named NEC Scholar Athletes of the Year, and RMU has placed 55 student athletes on District II Academic All-America Teams.

On May 1, RMU opened the UPMC Events Center, a 161,000-square foot multipurpose facility that is the new home of men's and women's basketball and women's volleyball. The UPMC Events Center was funded entirely through corporate sponsorships and donations, and will also host concerts, conferences, and other events.

"RMU offers the best combination of aligned values, academic excellence, competitive tradition, outstanding facilities and support from donors, alumni and the community," said King.

King previously worked at two of the nation's premier NCAA Division I programs: the University of Central Florida, where he was assistant athletic director for compliance and assistant athletic director; and the University of Alabama, where he was associate athletic director of compliance and associate athletic director for administration. At Alabama, he was hired to lead the institution and its athletics department through a five-year NCAA probation sentence.

"Chris has got a lot of energy. He's very personable. He thrives on having big initiatives and carrying those out," said Oliver Luck, CEO and commissioner of the XFL, and a former NCAA executive vice president who also was director of athletics at West Virginia University. Luck co-chaired a football feasibility committee that King formed at UTRGV.

King is a member of the RMU Sport Management Advisory Board and is a member of the RMU Sport Management Hall of Fame.

“We should not overlook that Chris has achieved this impressive level of success as an RMU graduate, and his accomplishments reflect the excellence of the Sport Management program,” said Howard. “We are thrilled that he has returned to Colonial Country.”

King was among 100 candidates RMU considered to succeed Craig Coleman, who stepped down in December 2018 after 13 years as director of athletics. In addition to his bachelor’s degree in sport management from RMU, King has a master’s in education from Campbell University. He and his wife, Alicia, have two daughters, Kylie and Mackenzie.

“RMU played a profound role in my professional career and trajectory, and I am confident I would not be working in college athletics without the education and opportunities this institution provided to me 25 years ago,” said King. “My family and I are thankful to President Howard and the selection committee for providing the opportunity to represent my alma mater.”

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ABOUT ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY

Robert Morris University is a nationally ranked doctoral research university enrolling approximately 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students in more than 90 undergraduate and graduate degree programs. RMU offers fully online courses as well as a traditional residential college experience at its campus on 230 scenic acres 17 miles from downtown Pittsburgh. The Colonials compete in 16 NCAA Division I sports, including ice hockey, basketball, football, volleyball and lacrosse.

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