

# Kurt Esser

## SUMMARY

- Professional Administrator with 25 years of experience in Athletics
- Serving as Senior Associate AD at University of New Mexico since 2007
- Experience includes University Relations, Department Leadership, Strategic Planning, Financial Affairs, Student-Athlete Life, Compliance, Risk Management, Athletic Program Administration, Planning & Construction of Facilities, External Operations, Branding, Strategic Communication, Marketing, Multimedia Rights, Corporate Partnerships, Business Operations, Human Resources, University-Community Relations, and all facets of Athletics Development

## EDUCATION

### University of Kansas – Lawrence, Kansas

- Master of Science in Education; emphasis in Sport Administration & Psychology (1995)

### Indiana University – Bloomington, Indiana

- Bachelor of Arts in Economics (1988)

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

- Cardinal Advisors – PREP Executive Development (2015)
- Cardinal Advisors – Strategic Planning Workshop (2014)
- NACDA – National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics; Leadership Institute (2012)
- NACMA – National Association of Collegiate Marketing Administrators (since 2006)
- Sports Management Institute – at North Carolina and Southern California (2009)
- 1A Athletic Directors' Association – Annual Institute (2006)

## COMMUNITY

- United Way
- Special Olympics
- Coaches Versus Cancer
- Sagebrush Community Church

## PERSONAL

- 50 years of age
- Excellent health
- Raised in Indianapolis, Indiana
- Married 17 years to Tricia (nee) Rohloff from Plano, Texas  
Employed at Hub International in Benefits Administration
- Children – Reese (12) and Jack (8)
- Interests include Time with Family, Travel, Reading, Music, Running and Grilling

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

### **University of New Mexico – Albuquerque, New Mexico** **Senior Associate Athletics Director (2007 to Present)**

#### **University Relations**

- Collaborate with Director of Communications for Strategic Communications
- Crisis Communications planning with University VP for Communications
- Committee for Education and Building a Culture of Respect
- Collaborate with University Risk Management Officer
- Member of President’s Inauguration Committee
- University Alcohol & Drug Policy Committee
- University Social Media Users Group
- University Strategic Marketing Team
- Negotiated extension of University Pouring Rights with Pepsi

#### **Department Leadership**

- Member of Athletic Department Senior Staff
- Administrator for Department Strategic Plan
- Athletic Department Crisis Management Team
- Athletic Department Budget Task Force

#### **Financial Affairs**

- Collaborate with Department CFO for Financial Planning & Budget Design
- Collaborate with Unit Managers and Coaches for Budget Design & Management
- Responsible for Revenue Enhancement initiatives for the Department

#### **Compliance & Risk Management**

- Participate in Risk Management Assessment for Operating Units within the Department
- Collaborate with Coaches and Student-Athletes to support Compliance education and reporting
- Assessment and refinement of comprehensive Departmental Policies & Procedures
- Advance and support Diversity & Inclusion initiatives throughout Department
- Involved with all facets of Title IX Compliance and Gender Equity

#### **Athletics Program Administration and Student-Athlete Experience**

- Athletic Program Administrator for:
  - Volleyball - Women’s Indoor & Beach
  - Swimming & Diving – Women’s
  - Track & Cross Country – Women’s & Men’s
  - Golf – Women’s & Men’s
  - Previous oversight of Soccer – Women’s & Men’s and Skiing – Co-Ed
- Responsible for all facets of day-to-day administration
- Collaborate with Head Coaches for planning and management of program
- Search Process for Football Coach, Men’s Basketball Coach and Women’s Basketball Coach
- Led Search Process for Women’s Soccer Coach, and Swimming & Diving Coach
- Assisted SAAC Leadership with Event Programming including “Welcome Back Event”
- Worked with Committee in Developing the “Lobos for Life” Program

## University of New Mexico (cont.)

### External Affairs and Development

- Management for all facets of External Affairs (from 2007 – 2013)
- Responsible for 50% of revenue generation to fund Annual Budget
- Recruit, hire, train and manage 14 professional staff
- Steward portfolio of Donors for Major Gifts
- Secured State Capital Outlay for purchase of two Athletic Team Vans
- Increased Licensing Revenue for 7 consecutive years
- Created Marketing Plans for 8 ticketed athletic programs; 7 programs in Top-25 Attendance
- Member of Facility Renovation Team responsible for \$100 million in Capital Improvements
- Responsible for assessment and design of Outsourcing Program for Concessions

### Multimedia Rights

- Negotiated 4-year extension of \$20 million Multimedia Rights agreement with Learfield Sports
- Created the LoboTV Department including streaming, creative and in-venue video
- Secured agreement with Root Sports to broadcast Lobo Coaches Shows
- Created agreement with Campus Arts Digital Media Lab to utilize their production facilities
- Responsible for in-house production of all Department shows
- Coordinate logistics and guests for Television and Radio Shows

### Social Media & Website

- Assessment and design of Social Media Policies & Procedures for Athletic Department
- Recruit and manage 5 person Social Media Team
- Negotiated new agreement with NeuLion and Sidearm Website provider
- Ranked in top 10% in Social Media Klout

### Fan Experience & Promotions

- Designed and launched Customer Service Team within the Department
- Created and Hired the Event Management position
- Contracted Ephus 21 to measure Fan Enjoyment
- Created Student Affinity Group; named Howl Raisers
- Created Fan Forums to seek feedback on Game Day Experience

### Branding

- Launched new Logo and Branding related policies for Athletic Department
- Created partnership with Bookstore to manage Lobo Den Operations
- Designed all Branding facets of Athletic Venues
- Developed the Athletic Department Mission Statement, “#Lobos4Life”

### Human Resources

- Involved in Performance & Compensation Evaluations for Staff and Coaches
- Led Department searches for:
  - Director of Human Resources
  - Assistant AD for Event Management
  - LoboTV Producer
  - Community Outreach Director
- Designed and manage Howl Yes! Committee
- Designed and hosted Young Professional Development Committee

## **University of Nevada, Reno – Reno, Nevada**

### **Associate AD for Marketing & Communications (2002 to 2007)**

- Assessment, design and management for all facets of Marketing Plans
- Design and implementation of Wolf Pack Sports Network for Radio, TV and Internet
- Athletic Program Administrator for Men's Basketball
- Cultivation and stewardship for two gifts of \$1,000,000 each
- Partnered with Learfield Communications for Multimedia Rights Agreement
- Assisted AD in Search Process for several Head Coaches
- Oversight for all facets of Media Relations
- Managed Licensing Agreement with Collegiate Licensing Company
- Created Branding guidelines for Athletic Logos and Fonts
- Oversight for Concessions Management Agreement with Sodexo
- Responsible for all facets of Video Operations

## **Learfield Communications – Dallas, Texas**

### **Director of Client Services (1999 to 2002)**

- Secured Rights Agreements with Universities
- Responsible for planning and logistics for New University start-ups

## **Host Communications (acquired by IMG) – Dallas, Texas**

### **Director of Marketing & Public Relations (1996 to 1999)**

- Marketing and PR activities for NCAA Football and Sears Collegiate Champions Program

## **Illinois State University – Normal, Illinois**

### **Assistant Ticket Manager (1994 to 1996)**

- Involved in all facets of Ticket Office Operations

## **University of Kansas – Lawrence, Kansas**

### **Assistant to Ticket Manager (1992 to 1994)**

- Involved in all facets of Ticket Office Operations

## **Indianapolis Department of Parks & Recreation – Indianapolis, Indiana**

### **Executive Director of Indianapolis Peace Games (1989 to 1991)**

- Planning and management of community-wide athletic competition for 15 Sports

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

### **NCAA – National Collegiate Athletic Association**

- Secured NCAA Men's Golf Regionals for 2016, NCAA Women's Golf Regionals for 2017
- Directed NCAA Indoor Track & Field Championships (2014)
- Division I Women's Soccer Committee (2013)
- Directed NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament; 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> rounds (2012)
- Communications Task Force (2012)
- Division I Men's Soccer Committee (2008 to 2012)

### **NACMA – National Association of Collegiate Marketing Administrators**

- President (2010)
- Board of Directors (2006 to 2012)