

Herbster strives to make impact on students' lives

By David Lias
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Ask David Herbster what he likes about his work at USD, and he has no problems answering. "What I enjoy the most about my job is the people," David said, "and that's not only the people here in the department and on campus, but it's also the people here in Vermillion and all of the alumni that I've been able to meet and interact with. It's a lot of fun to bring an alumni 'back into the family.'"

"For example, we had an alum who swam here back in the late 1980s, and hadn't been back all of that often, and hadn't really been a supporter of the program just because of distance and time and other family and professional commitments," he said.

David first met this USD grad in Virginia, where he presently resides. "In one of my travels, I ended up in Virginia, and I met with him. This was back in 2008. And, slowly, just through various contacts, I was able to engage him, bring him back into the program and all of sudden now you've got someone who today is a major donor to USD," he said. "And you've got someone who now feels so

connected and a part of USD."

David is in his fifth year as associate athletic director at The University of South Dakota and director of development at the USD Foundation in 2011-12. He also served as interim athletic director from April 2010 to July 2010.

Dave's duties include fundraising and coordinating activities with the Howling Pack and Coyote alumni. He oversees the athletic department's marketing, ticketing and special events while working closely with USD Athletic Director David Saylor.

He developed and currently directs the department's major fundraising campaign to fund scholarships called Great Expectations, as well as reorganized the annual giving efforts into a unified support program called the Howling Pack. David has also been instrumental in reshaping the department's marketing and corporate sponsorship efforts and developed a comprehensive program that incorporates and integrates all available and newly created inventories.

In other words, during these past five years, he's

Spotlight



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA

been very, very busy. "It's a lot of fun. Sometimes it's like running on a treadmill that's going faster than you can run." David said with a laugh, "because my job has actually grown a great deal in responsibility compared to when I started here."

Today, he oversees all of the university athletic department's external activities, which would include all of the fundraising, the Howling Pack, and all of the university's scholarship endowments.

"I also oversee all of the marketing and promotions, all of our corporate sponsorships, our sports information staff, and I've helped with creating our radio network," David said.

He also brought in Learfield Sports to create Coyote sports properties to expand the university's abilities and personnel in the area of selling corporate sponsorships.

"Through that, we created what's now known as Coyote Sports Properties, and what they do is all of our selling and hopefully increase our television and radio coverage," David said. "This year, we added and an AM and a FM signal in Rapid City, as well as a radio station in Watertown."

This year, he oversees Coyote football, women's basketball, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's golf, and women's tennis.

"I help the coaches of those teams with their needs, and respond to their requests for their programs," David said. "I'll work with them in building a budget and building a schedule, and assist them with any student-athlete issues, and any other issues on campus pertaining to their sport. They've got someone to go to immediately for help with anything regarding their program."

David came to USD from Omaha where he served as assistant to the chancellor and director of athletics at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) from 2005-2007 where he was responsible for the administration of an NCAA Division I men's ice hockey program and 14 NCAA Division II programs. While there, his teams won three NCAA national championships and 14 NCC championships.

Prior to UNO, David was director of athletics at Concordia University-St. Paul (Division II) from 2001-2004. He spent three years (1998-2001) as the director of special events and promotions for Special Olympics Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN. Prior to that, he was the assistant director of athletics for marketing and development at Pittsburg State (KS), assistant director for marketing and promotions at North Dakota State and



DAVID HERBSTER

promotions coordinator at Virginia Tech.

A 1991 graduate of Virginia Tech (B.S., marketing), David was a member of the Division I Hokies men's basketball team, including serving as captain in the 1990-91 season. He earned an M.S. in education (sports management) from Virginia Tech in 1994.

He has served on various NCAA committees and also has been active in community service. He and his wife, Kelly, have three daughters: Morgan, Kasey and Leah.

One of David's roles at USD is to help class members reunite. "I love putting on the reunions, and to see everyone come back to campus, and the camaraderie they have with their old classmates, the nostalgia that they feel, and the stories that you hear.

"That to me is so

rewarding. It's the human element of what we do here in the department," he said. "The other human element of it is to see the student athletes come in as 18-year-old freshmen and then watching them walk across the stage (at commencement) as grownups, as men and as women, and you've really been able, in essence, to watch them grow up over the last four or five years."

Watching a student-athlete take those final steps on campus, with diploma in hand, is the main reason David sought to work in his current role.

"I remember what a profound impact that made on my life, and I wanted to be in a situation that, in one fashion or another, I could be a part of making that happen for other people's lives," he said.

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