



For immediate release: Friday, January 5, 2024

***Forrest Karr Named AHCA Executive Director  
UMD Athletic Director Adds New Role in Serving Hockey -Starts July 1, 2024***

The American Hockey Coaches Association has its second executive director in 32 years. Forrest Karr, the Director of Athletics at the University of Minnesota Duluth since August 2022, has been chosen to succeed Joe Bertagna, the AHCA's first and only executive director, who ends his 32-year tenure on June 30. Karr, who is in his 19th year overall as a director of athletics at an NCAA member school, will retain his position at UMD. The hiring was approved by the AHCA active membership.

"Forrest is uniquely qualified for this position," said AHCA president Grant Potulny, head coach at Northern Michigan University. "As a former college hockey player and former Division 1 coach, he has intimate knowledge of our sport. Forrest has been an athletic director at hockey playing universities for nearly 20 years and in the interview process, he impressed our committee with his passion for our sport. Over the next year, Forrest will work directly with Joe Bertagna to learn the Executive Director position and will be in a fantastic position to lead our body in the future. We could not be more excited with the process of Forrest becoming our next Executive Director."

Bertagna will stay on in a new role as AHCA Media Relations Director and assist Karr in the transition. In this capacity, Bertagna will serve as AHCA historian and continue to edit the AHCA newsletter "Stops & Starts."

"I am honored to have been selected to serve as AHCA executive director and look forward to working alongside the AHCA board of governors, staff, and the entire AHCA membership to pay tribute to the past and help shape the future of American hockey," said Karr. "As the landscape of intercollegiate athletics continues to evolve, it will be very important for coaches to have a unified voice in promoting and protecting the sport. I would like to thank Chancellor McMillan for encouraging me to pursue this passion, the AHCA board of governors and secretary-treasurer Brett Petersen for leading the search process, and Joe Bertagna for helping with this transition and decades of service on behalf of coaches and athletes throughout the country."

In addition to his work as an AD, Karr has also served in a variety of conference leadership positions. From 2020-22, he chaired the Central Collegiate Hockey Association (CCHA) Management Council and led writing the CCHA Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. From 2016-18, he co-chaired a Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) men's league and women's league joint committee that developed a new governance structure for the association and rewrote the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

From 2013-17, Karr served on the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports. As committee chair from 2015-17, Karr led some of the most important health care initiatives in the association's history, including successful efforts to develop, propose and advocate for the adoption of Independent Medical Care legislation, which was passed by Division I in 2016 and Divisions II and III in 2017, and established the Athletics Health Care Administrator designation. In addition, Karr chaired the NCAA Ice Hockey Rules Committee from 2008-10 after serving on the committee from 2006-08.

Since 2008, Karr has been teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses, including Business Law, Cyber Law, Managing Employment Relations, and The Intersection of Sports, Antitrust, and Labor and Employment Law, among others. He has also taught as a visiting faculty member for the prestigious Sports Management Institute executive education program.

Karr previously served as Director of Athletics at Northern Michigan University (NMU). During his tenure, 272 student-athletes earned All-America and Honorary All-America honors and five individual NCAA championships. Prior to NMU, Karr served as Director of Athletics for the University of Alaska Fairbanks and Nanook student-athletes won three team NCAA championships and three individual NCAA championships.



- Continued on Page Two -

**JOE BERTAGNA**  
**Executive Director**  
7 Concord Street  
Gloucester, MA 01930  
(978) 376-5494  
j2b2hockey@gmail.com

**GRANT POTULNY**  
**President**  
Northern Michigan University  
Marquette, MI 49855  
(906) 227-2109  
gpotulny@nmu.edu

**BRETT PETERSEN**  
**Secretary-Treasurer**  
Gustavus Adolphus College  
St. Peter, MN 56082  
(507) 327-5905  
bpeters4@gustavus.edu

Karr previously clerked for the NCAA Office of Legal Affairs under current Senior Vice President and General Counsel Scott Bearby, and also clerked at Garvey & Stoddard, S.C. under former National Football League Players Association (NFLPA) Executive Director Ed Garvey.

“I have known Forrest Karr since his playing days at Notre Dame and I am so happy to be able to pass the AHCA torch over to him,” said Bertagna. “The Board did a great job in landing Forrest and I look forward to helping him as he adds this position to his impressive resume. And, I have to add, it’s great that the job is remaining in the hands of a former goaltender.”

Karr is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School and is a member of the State Bar of Wisconsin, the American Bar Association (ABA) and the Sports Lawyers Association (SLA). He is also a graduate of the Sports Management Institute’s executive education program.

Karr played hockey at the University of Notre Dame and graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) in Finance and Business Economics from the Mendoza College of Business along with a Concentration in Peace Studies from the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies. He earned the team’s most valuable player honor as a senior and was named a member of the Academic All-America second team.

After his collegiate career, Karr played one year of minor league (ECHL) professional hockey and then coached with the USA Hockey National Team Development Program and the University of Wisconsin Women’s Hockey Team. Karr is a certified Level 5 coach through USA Hockey’s Coaching Education Program and previously served as a youth coach in Marquette, MI.

Karr and his wife Cara have two daughters, Callia and Colette.