



RHETT LASHLEE

HEAD COACH
ARKANSAS, 2006



Head Coach Rhett Lashlee continued to build on the success of the program in his third season in charge in 2024.

Lashlee has a career head coaching record of 29-12 (.707), the second-most wins for a head coach in his first three years in program history.

The fourth-year coach has been the driving force in leading the Mustangs' return to prominence, illustrated by the program making its first appearance in the College Football Playoff (CFP) in 2024 as the No. 11 seed, continuing a program-record run of being bowl-eligible for a sixth straight season.

Lashlee's rise to national prominence continued in 2024, leading SMU to a mark of 11-3 and 8-0 record in conference play in its inaugural season in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), which resulted in an appearance in the ACC Championship. For his success, he was named the ACC Coach of the Year, while also seeing 19 Mustangs garner All-ACC accolades.

The Arkansas native was also selected as a finalist for the second straight year for the Eddie Robinson National Coach of the Year Award and the Paul "Bear" Bryant National Coach of the Year Award, while also being named a semi-finalist for the George Munger National Coach of the Year Award for a second straight season.

Lashlee also took home Texas Football Coach of the Year honors from Dave Campbell's Texas Football publication, an award he shared with Texas' Steve Sarkisian in 2023, and ACC Coach of the Year by the Associated Press (AP).

The 11 wins in 2024 marked back-to-back 11-win seasons for the first time in program history, which led to the Mustangs climbing as high as seventh in the Coaches Poll and eighth in the AP Poll in the regular season. SMU finished the year ranked 12th, the highest they have been since the final poll of the 1984 season when they finished eighth.

SMU also became just the sixth program in ACC history to post an unblemished conference record at 8-0 since the conference went to an eight-game schedule format in 1992. The 8-0 record in conference play pushed the Mustangs' program record to 17 straight wins in conference play for the regular season.

SMU was the first team in history to record an undefeated conference record for a team jumping into a Power-4/5 conference from a Group of Five in its first season since 1978. Of those teams, only Louisville (2014) finished with a winning conference record, going 5-3 in ACC play.

Again, Lashlee's teams delivered on the road in 2024, going 5-0 during the regular season, part of a 10-game road winning streak that dated back to 2023, which ranked as second longest in school history.

The Mustangs continued to be dominant in year three under Lashlee on both sides of the ball, a key trend that has happened with the third-year coach at the helm. SMU ranked in the top 25 in FBS in 14 different categories, highlighted by top-10 rankings in defensive touchdowns (5th), rushing defense (7th), scoring offense (9th) and team sacks (10th).

Despite the step up into a power conference, the Mustangs continued to produce on offense at an elite level, averaging 36.5 points a game on the year, the seventh highest average for a season in program history. The 511 points scored in 2024 were third most in program history.

The development of quarterback Kevin Jennings under Lashlee in 2024 played a major role

LASHLEE COACHING EXPERIENCE

2006	Arkansas (Graduate Assistant)
2009-10	Auburn (Graduate Assistant)
2011	Samford (Offensive Coordinator)
2012	Arkansas State (Offensive Coordinator)
2013-16	Auburn (Offensive Coordinator)
2017	Connecticut (Offensive Coordinator)
2018-19	SMU (Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks)
2020-21	Miami (Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks)
2022-	SMU (Head Coach)

in securing the first-ever CFP berth for the Mustangs. Under Lashlee, Jennings became one of the most electric and efficient quarterbacks in all of college football, throwing for 3,245 yards and 23 touchdowns and while rushing for 354 yards and five scores on the ground. After Jennings was made the starter in Week 3, he posted an offensive grade of 87.5 by PFF, the third highest for any ACC player during that stretch.

With Jennings running the offense, the Mustangs were 9-2 and averaged 37.1 points per game. During his time as the starter, SMU posted a nine-game winning streak, matching 2023's run as the second longest in program history. For his play, Jennings was First Team All-Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football, All-ACC Third Team by the conference and a finalist for the Earl Campbell Tyler Rose Award.

Brashard Smith was another factor in the historical success in 2024, converting the Miami transfer, whom he recruited while the offensive coordinator there, into a full-time running back.

The conversion led to a breakout season for the senior, who gave SMU an explosive option coming out of the backfield. Smith recorded 1,977 all-purpose yards, the most in a single season in SMU history. He also became the 12th Mustang to eclipse the 1,000-yard rushing mark and finished fourth in the single-season record books with 1,332.





The senior earned many accolades during and following his breakout season, including earning All-America status by four major publications (Associated Press, AFCA, Sporting News, Phil Steele) while also being named to the All-ACC First Team by the conference. The elusive back was also named First Team All-Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football publication.

Defensively, the Mustangs put together another stout year, ranking in the top 25 in FBS rankings in eight different categories. SMU allowed just 100.2 rushing yards per game, which was third lowest average for a single season in program history. The 43 sacks ranked as the third most in program history. The Mustangs held six teams to 20 points or less, the second straight season accomplishing the feat.

The success on defense led to All-America Honorable Mention honors for Isaiah Nwokobia and Kobe Wilson by the Phil Steele publication.

Lashlee delivered a conference championship in his second year, going 11-3 and undefeated in AAC play (8-0).

SMU's 11 wins and nine-game winning streak in 2023 were the most since the 1982 National Championship team. The Mustangs also finished out the year ranked 22nd in the AP Top 25 Poll, the first time appearing in the final poll since 1984. SMU made a bowl game for a fifth straight season, making an appearance in the Wasabi Fenway Bowl against Boston College.

Lashlee made history on Dec. 2, 2023 with a 26-14 victory over No. 22 Tulane in the AAC Championship game, giving the Mustangs their first conference championship since 1984 and 12th overall as a program. It was the first outright conference title won by the school since 1982.

The superior campaign led to a fifth straight year of being bowl-eligible, the longest stretch in program history.

The success of the season has resulted in various accolades for the team and coach himself, including a record-tying 18 AAC All-Conference selections. Lashlee was also named a finalist for the prestigious Paul "Bear" Bryant Coach of the Year Award, handed out the nation's top coach as voted on by the National Sports Media Association, the Bryant Awards' Executive Leadership Team, and the Bryant Family.

The Arkansas native was also named Co-Coach of the Year by the Dave Campbell's Texas Football publication, a finalist of the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Award, and a semi-finalist for the George Munger National Coach of the Year Award.

SMU was dominant all season long in 2023 on both sides of the ball, ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in numerous categories including: third down defense (4th), defensive touchdowns (1st), fewest penalties per game (18th), first down offense (6th), passing offense (22nd), passing yards allowed (13th), passing yards per completion (12th), red zone defense (25th), red zone offense (8th), sacks allowed (13th), scoring defense (11th), scoring offense (8th), tackles for loss allowed (9th), team passing efficiency defense (9th), team sacks (3rd), team tackles for loss (16th), total defense (12th) and total offense (16th).

On offense, the 542 points ranked second highest in program history. The 29 rushing touchdowns were the third most in program history. The Mustangs scored at least 55 points four times in 2023, the most in program history for a single season. Lashlee's offense also finished top five in program history in first downs (1st), passing touchdowns (5th), passing yards (5th) and total yards (tied for 1st).

Quarterback Preston Stone led the attack for Lashlee's offense, posting career highs in passing yards (3,197) and passing touchdowns (28). Stone's 161.3 passing efficiency rating led all quarterbacks in the AAC. For his great play, Stone earned All-AAC Third Team honors in his first year starting under Lashlee.

Defensively, the Mustangs were one of the elite teams in the country. The 47 sacks rank second in program history for a single year. SMU took it to the conference position this past season, posting an average margin of victory of 28.9 points (45.9-17.0) in conference games on the year, the largest margin for any FBS team in conference play in 2023. SMU also finished first in all of FBS in defensive touchdowns with five. The Mustangs' two shutouts during the regular season were the most by the team since 2012.

Lashlee completed his first season (2022) as head coach on the Hilltop with a 7-5



regular season record, and an appearance in the New Mexico Bowl against BYU. Under his leadership, the Mustangs ranked 14th in the nation in total offense, 12th in scoring offense, and seventh in both red zone offense and passing offense. Furthermore, the Mustangs were among the best-disciplined teams in the nation, committing the 11th fewest penalties across FBS teams.

The appearance in the New Mexico Bowl made the Mustangs bowl eligible for the fourth straight season. The streak is the longest since SMU went to four bowls from 2009-12 and made the Mustangs bowl eligible in five of the past six seasons. The program has won at least seven games each season dating back to 2019, making it the longest stretch with at least seven wins since the 2009-12 seasons. It was also the first season the Mustangs have won five conference games since going 6-2 in league play in 2019.

Rashee Rice was named a second-team All-American by multiple organizations, Collin Rogers and RJ Maryland were among freshman All-America mentions and four Mustangs earned All-American Athletic Conference honors led by first-team selection Rice.

Lashlee, who served as offensive coordinator for the Mustangs for two seasons (2018-19), also served as the offensive coordinator at Miami in 2020 and 2021. A one-time finalist (2013) and two-time semifinalist (2019, 2020) for the Broyles Award, Lashlee has the distinction of being the only coach ever nominated for the Broyles Award four different times at four different schools (Arkansas State, Auburn, SMU, Miami).

During his time at Miami, Lashlee's first season saw the Hurricanes jump to No. 32 in the FBS in total offense (from No. 98), No. 29 in passing offense (from No. 52), No. 26 in scoring offense (from No. 90), No. 17 in red zone offense (from No. 122) and No. 20 in first downs gained (from No. 84). In 2021, Miami again ranked 26th in scoring average, improving to 34.1 PPG, and jumped up to 22nd in total offense at 448.8 yards per game.

Under his watch, QB D'Eriq King was a semifinalist for the Maxwell Award, Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award and Davey O'Brien Award. Several offensive players enjoyed career years under his tutelage, including Michael Harley, who became the school's all-time leading wide receiver, and TE Brevin Jordan, who was a Mackey Award semifinalist and an eventual 2021 NFL Draft pick of the Houston Texans. In 2021, freshman Tyler Van Dyke was named the ACC Rookie of the Year, and Charleston Rambo broke the Miami single-season receiving yards and receptions record.

Prior to heading to Coral Gables, Lashlee helped lead the Mustangs to a 10-3 finish in 2019, guiding an offense that ranked No. 7 in FBS in scoring (41.8 points per game), No. 13 in passing offense (309 yards per game), No. 9 in total offense (489.8 yards per game) and No. 12 in first downs gained (322). SMU's 10 wins were the school's most since the 1984 season, and its 35 rushing touchdowns set a school record.

The Mustangs were ranked No. 3 nationally in plays per game, averaging 80.9 – a testament to Lashlee's up-tempo offensive style. SMU was one of only 34 teams in FBS to average more than six yards per play in 2019. Quarterback Shane Buechele threw



for 3,929 yards with 34 touchdowns and just 10 interceptions, completing 63 percent of his passes. Running back Xavier Jones rushed for 1,276 yards and 23 touchdowns, averaging 5.2 yards per carry. His 23 TDs led the nation. James Proche led the nation with 111 catches. All three were first-team All-AAC selections.

In his first season at SMU, the Mustang offense ranked 27th nationally in passing offense at 271.7 yards per game. Quarterback Ben Hicks registered 2,582 yards and 19 touchdowns to finish his SMU career as the all-time leader in passing yards (9,081), total offense (8,977), TD passes (71), TDs responsible for (74), completions (718) and 300-yard games (12). His season passing yards ranked 11th at SMU, while his 19 touchdowns tied him for eighth. Wide receiver Proche was named a first-team All-AAC selection, and finished the season ranked fifth nationally in receptions per game (7.8), seventh in receiving touchdowns (12) and ninth in receiving yards (1,199).

Prior to joining SMU's staff, Lashlee served as an offensive coordinator for seven seasons, spending 2017 at UConn, 2013-16 at Auburn, 2012 at Arkansas State and 2011 at Samford.

In his only season in Storrs, Lashlee improved the Huskies' offense significantly, as UConn jumped from 122nd to 49th in the nation in total offense and from 94th to 34th in passing offense.

Prior to UConn, Lashlee helped Auburn to the 2013 SEC Championship, a BCS Championship berth and the 2016 Sugar Bowl, managing one of the more prolific offenses in college football during his tenure. The 2013-14 seasons were the best back-to-back offensively in Auburn history, and the 2014 squad set an Auburn record for total offense. Lashlee also served as the quarterbacks coach and demonstrated impressive ability to develop talent. In 2013, Auburn had the second biggest turnaround in college football history. Starting QB Nick Marshall did not practice until August, but Lashlee tutored the junior college transfer to 3,044 yards of total offense (1,976 passing, 1,068 rushing), 14 TD passes and 12 rushing TDs.

Lashlee was the offensive coordinator at Arkansas State (2012), helping the Red Wolves to a Sun Belt Championship and quarterback Ryan Aplin to Conference Player of the Year honors, and at Samford (2011), after having served as a graduate assistant at Auburn (2009-10) and Arkansas (2006). While at Auburn as an offensive graduate assistant during the 2009-10 seasons, Lashlee assisted Gus Malzahn with all aspects of the offense and coached the quarterbacks and slot receivers in 2010. In 2009, the Tigers finished 8-5 winning the Outback Bowl. During the 2010 season, he helped the Tigers finish 14-0, winning the SEC title and the BCS National Championship behind Heisman Trophy winning quarterback Cam Newton. Lashlee coached at Springdale (Ark.) High School in 2004-05, working with the quarterbacks and 2005 National Player of the Year Mitch Mustain.

Lashlee graduated from Arkansas in 2006 with a degree in marketing and business administration. He received his master's degree in higher education from Auburn in 2009.

He is married to the former Lauren Lee. They have twin sons, Thomas and Hudson, and twin daughters, Rowyn and Scarlet.

LASHLEE HEAD COACH RECORD AGAINST OPPONENTS

Boston College	1-1
BYU	0-2
Cal	1-0
Central Florida	0-1
Charlotte	1-0
Cincinnati	0-1
Clemson	0-1
Duke	1-0
ECU	1-0
Florida State	1-0
HCU	1-0
Houston	1-0
Lamar	1-0
Louisiana Tech	1-0
Louisville	1-0
Maryland	0-1
Memphis	2-0
Navy	2-0
Nevada	1-0
North Texas	2-0
Oklahoma	0-1
Penn State	0-1
Pittsburgh	1-0
Prairie View A&M	1-0
Rice	1-0
South Florida	1-0
Stanford	1-0
TCU	1-2
Temple	1-0
Tulane	1-1
Tulsa	2-0
Virginia	1-0
Overall:	29-12
Conference:	21-3
Home:	16-3
Away:	13-6
Neutral:	0-3
Top 25:	3-4
CFP:	0-1



SCOTT SYMONS

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR / SAFETIES

LINDENWOOD, 2008

COACHSYMONS

Scott Symons enters his fourth season on the Hilltop in 2025, continuing his role as the defensive coordinator while also coaching the safeties.

Symons was hired as SMU's Defensive Coordinator in December 2021 after spending three seasons as the defensive coordinator at Liberty, while also working with safeties and linebackers.

Symons' defense helped the Mustangs reach new heights in 2024, advancing to the program's first CFP berth along with an undefeated mark in the first season in the ACC.

SMU became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

The Mustangs were elite defensively once again in 2024. For the second straight season they finished in the top five in defensive touchdowns with four. The mark was also the best in the ACC. SMU posted the second-best rushing defense in program history, allowing just 100.2 yards per game on the ground. The mark was good for seventh best in the FBS and tops in the conference.

Under Symons, the Mustang defense got to the quarterback at a high clip again in 2024, earning 43 sacks, the third most in program history.

Symons' defense was elite in all three facets during the historic season, ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in multiple different categories including: defensive touchdowns (5th, 4), rushing defense (7th, 100.2), team sacks (10th, 3.07), passes intercepted (14th, 16), fourth down conversion pct. Defense (17th, .415), tackles for loss (18th, 7.1), third down conversion pct. defense (19th, .332) and red zone defense (24th, .767).

Thanks to the success during the season, Symons was named a semifinalist for the prestigious Broyles Award.

Jared Harrison-Hunte and Isaiah Nwokobia earned First Team All-ACC accolades, and Kobe Wilson picked up Second Team accolades. Six Mustangs on the defensive side of the ball picked up Honorable Mention All-ACC, with Elijah Roberts, Kori Roberson Jr., Ahmad Walker, Brandon Crossley, Ahmaad Moses and Jonathan McGill earning the nod.

Wilson and Nwokobia added to the list of accolades after picking up All-America Honorable Mention accolades by Phil Steele. Roberts, Harrison-Hunte and Nwokobia also earned First Team All-Texas honors by DCTF, while Wilson landed on the Second Team All-Texas.

The second-year coach's defense was among the nation's elite in 2023, helping the Mustangs roll to an 11-3 mark, resulting in the first conference championship in program history since 1984, while posting an undefeated record in conference play (8-0).

SMU's 11 wins and nine-game winning streak in 2023 were the most since the 1982 National Championship team. The Mustangs also finished out the year ranked 22nd in the AP Top 25 Poll, the first time appearing in the final poll since 1984.

Defensively, the Mustangs were one of the elite teams in the country. The 47 sacks rank second in program history for a single year. SMU took it to the conference opposition this past season, posting an average margin of victory of 28.9 points (45.9-17.0) in conference games on the year, the largest margin for any FBS team in conference play in 2023. SMU also finished first in all of FBS in defensive touchdowns with five. The Mustangs' two shutouts during the regular season were the most by the team since 2012.

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2008-11	Harding (Co-Defensive Coordinator/Recruiting Coordinator)
2012	Arkansas State (Defensive Quality Control Analyst)
2013	Arkansas Tech (Defensive Coordinator)
2014-17	West Georgia (Defensive Coordinator/Safeties)
2018	Memphis (Inside Linebackers)
2019-21	Liberty (Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers/Safeties)
2022-	SMU (Defensive Coordinator/Safeties)

Symons' defense dominated its opposition on all three levels, ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in several categories including: defensive touchdowns (1st, 5), sacks (3rd, 47) third down defense (4th, .281), team passing efficiency defense (9th, 115.28), scoring defense (11th, 17.8), total defense (12th, 304.1), passing yards allowed (13th, 182.2), TFLs per game (16th, 7.1), blocked kicks (21st, 2) and red zone defense (25th, .778)

The success of the defense saw the selection seven SMU players earning All-AAC honors and five making Dave Campbell's Texas Football All-Texas Teams.

Under Symons, safety Isaiah Nwokobia was named MVP of the AAC Championship, first defensive player to win the award. He also was named the Best Defensive Back in the state of Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football.

Elijah Roberts enjoyed a career year in 2023 in Symons' defense, registering 10.0 sacks and being named to the Action Network All-America First Team.

Elijah Chatman (New York Giants), DeVere Levelston (Seattle Seahawks), Jordan Miller (Denver Broncos) and Charles Woods (Los Angeles Rams) each signed with NFL teams in the spring following the 2024 NFL Draft.

Symons completed his first year as Defensive Coordinator with the Mustangs in 2022. SMU went 7-5 in the regular season, and faced BYU in the New Mexico Bowl. The Mustangs made 964 total tackles across their 13 games, including 28.5 sacks and 76.0 tackles for loss. SMU picked off 10 passes in the 2022 season, as well as forcing 12 fumbles, eight of which were recovered by the Mustangs. Symons' defense held North Texas to a season-low 10 points in the season opener on September 3.

Symons helped mentor All-American Athletic Conference second-team selection Elijah





Chatman, who was also member of the Bronko Nagurski, Outland Trophy and Rotary Lombardi Award Watch Lists, Chatman finished the regular season with 37 tackles, including four for loss and three sacks. He added one fumble recovery for a touchdown and a blocked PAT.

Prior to the 2022 season, Symons was named to Dave Campbell's Texas Football 40 Under 40 List.

Liberty closed out the 2021 season with a win in the Lending Tree Bowl and finished in the top 20 in passing yards allowed (9th, 180.3), red zone defense (10th, .725), total defense (15th, 320.2) and tackles for loss (16th, 7.1), while also ranking 26th in sacks (2.85) and 27th in scoring defense (21.5).

In 2020, Symons helped the Flames to a 10-1 season and a No. 17 final ranking in the AP Poll, their highest in program history. He was named to the Broyles Award Watch List and led the defense to a top-20 ranking in total defense (No. 11, 317.7). Liberty also ranked No. 12 in passing yards allowed (184.0) and No. 22 in scoring defense (20.5). The 2019 season saw Liberty finish 28th nationally in sacks (2.69/game) and 31st in interceptions (12).

During his time with the Flames, Symons mentored NFL free agent signees Solomon Ajayi, Elijah Benton, Jessie Lemonier and Bejour Wilson. Liberty also won back-to-back FBC Mortgage Cure Bowl titles in 2019 and 2020.

He spent the 2018 season as inside linebackers coach at Memphis, where he helped the Tigers to an 8-6 record and appearances in the American Athletic Conference Championship game and the Birmingham Bowl.

From 2014-17, Symons served as Defensive Coordinator and safeties coach at West Georgia, where he helped the Wolves to three NCAA Division II playoff appearances, as well as back-to-back 12-win seasons, two NCAA Division II Super Region 2 titles and a Gulf South Conference Championship. Two players were drafted during his time at West Georgia in Alex Armah and Dylan Donhue, while Tyrell Adams and Marcus Sayles signed as free agents.

Symons spent the 2013 season at Arkansas Tech as Defensive Coordinator, after serving in a variety of roles, including working with wide receivers, defensive backs and as co-Defensive Coordinator and recruiting coordinator at Harding from 2008-11.

Lashlee and Symons spent the 2012 season together at Arkansas State, where Symons was a defensive quality control analyst.

Symons earned his bachelor's degree in history from Lindenwood in 2008 and went on to earn a master's in kinesiology from Harding in 2010. Originally from Hurst, Texas, he and wife Kristen have four children – Peyton, Hudson, Rhett and Logan.





CASEY WOODS

**OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR / TIGHT ENDS / CHIEF OF STAFF
TENNESSEE, 2006**

COACHCASEYWOODS

Casey Woods enters his fourth season on the hilltop in 2025 as Chief of Staff / Offensive Coordinator. He also coaches the tight ends on offense.

Woods joined the Mustangs as Offensive Coordinator in December 2021. Woods came to the Hilltop after two seasons at Missouri, serving as tight ends coach and recruiting coordinator for the SEC school. Woods-led teams have won five conference championships across four different conferences (SEC, Conference USA, Sun Belt, American).

The Mustangs offense was again one of the best in all of college football in 2024 with Woods playing a critical role the continued dominance on that side of the field, which resulted in the schools first-ever appearance in the College Football Playoff (CFP) as the No. 11 seed.

The 11 wins in 2024 marked back-to-back 11-win seasons for the first time in program history, which led to the Mustangs climbing as high as seventh in the Coaches Poll and eighth in the AP Poll, the highest they have been since 1985.

Despite the step up into a power conference, the Mustangs continued to produce on offense at an elite level, averaging 36.5 points a game on the year, the seventh highest average for a season in program history. The 511 points scored in 2024 were third most in program history.

Woods' group of tight ends was one of the better units in all of FBS, led by RJ Maryland and newcomer Matthew Hibner. Maryland, despite missing second half of the season due to injury, was one of the best at his position in the country, finishing with 24 receptions for 354 yards and four touchdowns in seven games. Maryland still earned All-ACC Honorable Mention despite the limited amount of games he played, but was the first Mustang in program history to earn ACC Receiver of the Week honors with his career-best eight receptions for 162 yards and a touchdown in the comeback win at Nevada to open the year.

Hibner took over after Maryland went down and continued to produce at a high level, resulting in a career year for the newcomer. He finished the year with 24 receptions for 368 yards and four touchdowns, with almost all of it coming from the Duke game and beyond once he took over as the starter.

Woods played a pivotal role for the Mustangs in year two in 2023. The Mississippi native was part of crafting an offensive game plan that led SMU to posting an 11-3 record while capturing its first conference championship since 1984. The 11 wins were tied for the second most in a single season in the program's prestigious history.

The Mustangs also finished ranked 22nd in the final Associated Press (AP) poll for the first time since 1984.

The second-year coordinator's offense delivered one of the most prolific seasons in Mustang history, finishing with numbers that ranked in the top five in program history in multiple categories including: total yards (1st, 6,368), first downs (1st, 334) points (2nd, 542), rushing touchdowns (3rd, 29), passing touchdowns (5th, 33), passing yards (5th, 3,897).

SMU's dominance on the offensive end was among the best the country, ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in numerous categories including: first down offense (6th, 334), scoring offense (8th, 38.7), red zone offense (8th, .931), passing yards per completion (12th, 14.22), sacks allowed (13th, 16), total offense (16th, 454.3) and passing offense (22nd, 278.4).

The high-scoring offense scored at least 55 points four times in 2023, another program record for a single season.

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2008	Tennessee (Graduate Assistant)
2009-11	Auburn (Offensive Quality Control)
2012	Arkansas State (Wide Receivers)
2013-15	Auburn (Director of Player Development)
2017-19	UAB (Tight Ends)
2020-21	Missouri (Tight ends/Recruiting Coordinator)
2022-	SMU (Offensive Coordinator/Tight Ends/Chief of Staff)

RJ Maryland continued to flourish under Woods' guidance, earning First Team AAC All-Conference honors as a sophomore. Maryland posted career bests in yards (518), receptions (34) and touchdowns (7) from the tight end position.

In his first season as Offensive Coordinator, Woods led the Mustang offense to an average of 37.2 points per game, fifth in a season for the program, as SMU scored 63 touchdowns in thirteen games. SMU's offense averaged over six yards per play (6th SMU) under Woods, and 472.8 ypg (4th SMU). The Mustang' 4,117 passing yards and 331 first downs set program marks, while the 36 passing TDs and total plays (1,005) rank second. The 2022 squad also posted top-three program marks in scoring (3rd, 484), passing ypg (3rd, 316.7), completion % (3rd, 64.9), completions (2nd, 333), total offense - yards (3rd, 6,147) and first downs - passing (3rd, 174).

Among the FBS ranks, the Mustangs ranked 14th in the nation in total offense, 12th in scoring offense and seventh in both red zone offense and passing offense.

Woods led the tight ends rooms where Ben Redding and Maryland combined for over 400 yards and 10 touchdowns between them. Maryland went on to earn Freshman All-America honors. In all, three offensive players earned All-American Athletic Conference honors, including Rashee Rice, who was named a second-team All-American by multiple outlets.





Woods helped Mizzou to back-to-back bowl appearances during his time in Columbia, and off the field, his recruiting classes set back-to-back program highs, with the class of 2022 finishing No. 10 nationally.

Prior to arriving at Mizzou, Woods spent three seasons at UAB as tight ends coach, run game coordinator and recruiting coordinator, joining the program as it was reestablished in 2016. Woods helped the Blazers set 21 school records in 2018, including total points (418), total yards (5,680), rushing yards (2,818), total touchdowns (53), rushing touchdowns (32), single-game total yards (668 vs. UTSA) and single-game rushing yards (419 vs. UTSA). UAB posted an 11-3 record and a Conference USA title in 2018, and went to three straight bowl games from 2017-19. He also helped construct the three highest-ranked recruiting classes in school history in Birmingham.

Woods spent the 2013-15 and 2009-11 seasons with Lashlee at Auburn, and the 2012 season at Arkansas State.

During his three seasons as the Tigers' Director of Player Development (2013-15) and three seasons as offensive quality control (2009-11), he was part of the 2010 National Championship team that finished 14-0 and won the BCS Championship Game, as well as the 2013 team which also reached the BCS title game, and won two SEC Championships. As Director of Player Personnel, he led Auburn to three straight top-10 recruiting classes.

As wide receivers coach at Arkansas State, Woods led the unit and served as recruiting coordinator. In his season in Jonesboro, the Red Wolves won the Sun Belt Championship and went 10-3 with a victory over No. 25 Kent State in the GoDaddy.com Bowl.

Woods spent 2008 as a graduate assistant at his alma mater, Tennessee. As a student-athlete, he played in 41 games from 2003-07 as a wide receiver and holder. He was named a team captain as a senior in 2007. In five seasons in Knoxville, the Vols went 44-20 with three 10-win seasons. Woods was a four-time All-SEC academic selection.

He earned his undergraduate degree from Tennessee in 2006, and went on to earn his graduate degree from UT as well in 2008. Woods and wife Lauren have five children – Waverly Grace, Sawyer Davis, Adaline Leigh, Amelia Ann and Savannah Claire.





KYLE COOPER

SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR / RUNNING BACKS

ROBERT MORRIS, 2013

 **COACHKYLECOOPER**

Kyle Cooper enters his third season back at the Hilltop in 2024, serving as the special teams coordinator and running backs coach.

During his third season in Dallas, Cooper's units played a big role during the Mustangs' historic first year in the conference. SMU's running backs and special teams played a major part in lifting the program to its first-ever College Football Playoff appearance.

Under Cooper's leadership, transfer Brashard Smith flourished in his new role in the backfield, the first time playing the position since Pop Warner. In 2024, Smith recorded 1,977 all-purpose yards, the most in a single season in SMU history. He also became the 12th Mustang to eclipse the 1,000-yard rushing mark and finished fourth in the single-season record books with 1,332. The senior earned many accolades during and following his breakout season, including earning All-America status by four major publications (Associated Press, AFCA, Sporting News, Phil Steele) while also being named to the All-ACC First Team by the conference. The elusive back was also named First Team All-Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football publication.

Smith was all over the top 25 in major FBS statistics, finishing ranked eighth in the country in all-purpose yards with 141.2 per game, 12th in total touchdowns (18) 20th in total points scored (112), and 25th in rushing yards per game (95.1). The 112 points scored were the fifth most in program history. The Miami native notched six games with at least 100 yards on the ground and had over 100 all-purpose yards in eight contests in the season. As a team, the Mustangs rushed for 29 touchdowns on the year, which ranked tied for third most in school history.

The special teams' unit was a strong suit for the Mustangs during their historic campaign. SMU finished in the top-25 nationally in Punt Returns (13th), Kickoff Returns (15th) and Kickoff Return Defense (22nd). The Mustangs also finished ranked in the top 20 (19th) in the FEI Special Teams Ratings by BC Toys.

Kicker Collin Rogers also shined in his junior season, earning a spot at the top of the Mustangs record book for points scored with 356. Rogers also nailed seven field goals of 50-or-more yards, one shy of the NCAA record for a single season.

For his success, Rogers earned First Team All-America honors by the FWAA and Sports Illustrated as well All-America Honorable Mention by Phil Steele. The junior was also named First Team All-Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football publication as well. His 124 points scored ranked 12th in FBS on the year and were the third most in program history for a single season.

Prior to the 2023 season, Cooper was named to Dave Campbell's Texas Football 40 Under 40 List. He was also recognized by 247Sports in its 30under30 List back in 2021.

Cooper finished up year two on the Hilltop in 2023, resulting in one of the better special teams units in the country. Under the second-year coach's guidance, the Mustangs special teams thrived in all three areas, resulting in a first-team all-conference selection in kicker Collin Rogers, a second-team selection in returner Roderick Daniels Jr. and a third-team selection in punter Ryan Bujcevski. SMU finished the year with Daniels ranking in the top 15 in the country in punt return touchdowns (2) and punt return average (14th).

Rogers set the set program record in a single season for field goals made (20) and PATs (66) in 2023, while Bujcevski was recognized with his punting, being named on the Ray Guy Watch List.

Cooper completed his first season serving as the Mustangs' linebackers coach in 2022, helping the Mustangs to a 7-5 regular season and an appearance in the New Mexico

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2015-16	Westminster College (Graduate Assistant)
2017	UConn (Graduate Assistant)
2018-19	SMU (Graduate Assistant)
2020-21	Miami (Senior Offensive Quality Control Analyst)
2022-	SMU (Linebackers/Recruiting Coord. '22, Safeties/Special Teams Coord '23, Running Backs/Special Teams Coord '24)



Bowl. The room was led by senior Jimmy Phillips Jr., who had 85 total tackles throughout the season and tied the SMU record for career games played at 59.

Cooper returned to the Hilltop as an assistant coach in December 2021, working with outside linebackers while serving as recruiting coordinator. In February 2023, Cooper took over the role of special teams coordinator and leads the safeties room.

Cooper spent the 2020 and 2021 seasons at Miami under Lashlee, after spending two seasons with Lashlee at SMU (2018-19), serving as senior offensive quality control analyst for the Hurricanes.

He was part of a record-setting offense in 2019 that helped the Mustangs to an historic season, going 10-3 winning the most games since 1984 and earning their highest national ranking since 1985 of No. 15/14. SMU set season records in scoring (544), scoring average (41.8), total yards (6,368), total yards per game (489.8), total plays (1,037), rushing TDS (35), total first downs (322) and total TDs (73), while tying the then-passing TDs record (35). The Mustangs finished in the top 15 of the national rankings in scoring offense (7th, 41.8), total offense (9th, 489.8) and passing offense (13th, 309.0). SMU hadn't cracked the top 25 in any of the three categories in 2018, finishing just outside the top 25 in passing



offense at No. 27.

During his first season at Miami, the Hurricanes jumped to No. 32 in FBS in total offense (from No. 98), No. 29 in passing offense (from No. 52), No. 26 in scoring offense (from No. 90), No. 17 in red zone offense (from No. 122) and No. 20 in first downs gained (from No. 84). Miami finished second in the AAC Coastal standings in 2021 after a 7-5 regular season, and were in the top 25 for fourth down conversion % (10th, .714), passing offense (10th, 321.2), first down offense (14th, 293) and total offense (23rd, 448.8).

Cooper joined the Mustangs for the first time in 2018 after serving as a graduate assistant at UConn, where he worked with the offense.

Prior to his time with the Huskies, he was a graduate assistant coach for two years at Westminster College (New Wilmington, Pa.) working with the defensive line.

Cooper was a two-time team captain at Robert Morris and a two-year starting linebacker. The team won the 2010 Northeast Conference championship and earned a spot in the FCS playoffs. He is a 2013 graduate of Robert Morris with a degree in sport management and has a master's of business administration from the school as well. Cooper was named a Capital One Academic All-District pick as a senior and named to the NEC Fall Academic Honor Roll.





ROB LIKENS

**ASSOC. HEAD COACH / CO-OFFENSIVE COORD. / WIDE RECEIVERS
MISSISSIPPI STATE, 1990**

COACHROBLIKENS

Arriving with 30 years of coaching experience, Rob Likens was named assistant head coach, wide receivers coach and pass game coordinator in December 2021, and was elevated to associate head coach/Co-Offensive Coordinator/wide receivers in February 2023. Likens came to the Hilltop after two seasons at Miami, where he served under Lashlee and worked with Mustang assistants Kyle Cooper and Garin Justice.

Likens' receiving core continued to show development in year two at SMU in 2023, helping power an offense that was one of the most elite in all of FBS on the season. The Mustangs were the only team in all of the FBS with eight players with at least 300 yards receiving on the year. The offense finished top five in program history in first downs (1st), passing touchdowns (5th), passing yards (5th) and total yards (tied for 1st). The dynamic offense also finished second in program history in points scored with 542 en route to capturing its first conference title since 1984.

In Likens' first season at SMU, he successfully mentored one of the nation's leading receivers in Rashee Rice. Rice finished the season first in the FBS in yards per game (112.9), while ranking third in receiving yards (1,355, 1st SMU) and fifth in receptions per game (8.0). Rice's 10 receiving TDs were 13th. Rice was a Biletnikoff Award and Earl Campbell Tyler Rose Award Semifinalist and named a second-team All-American by multiple organizations, and led four Mustangs as a first-team All-American Athletic Conference selection.

As pass game coordinator, Likens was also responsible for helping craft the seventh best passing offense in the country, and helped the Mustangs rank 12th in the nation in scoring offense (37.2). Likens' receiving room combined for over 3,300 receiving yards, and 26 receiving touchdowns, and averaged more than 115 more receiving yards per game than their opponents. The Mustangs' 4,117 passing yards and 331 first downs set program marks, while the 36 passing TDs and total plays (1,005) rank second. The 2022 squad also posted top-three program marks in scoring (3rd, 484), passing ypg (3rd, 316.7), completion % (3rd, 64.9), completions (2nd, 333), total offense (3rd, 6147) and first downs - passing (3rd, 174).

The 2020 season at Miami saw the Hurricanes jump to No. 32 in the FBS in total offense (from No. 98), No. 29 in passing offense (from No. 52), No. 26 in scoring offense (from No. 90), No. 17 in red zone offense (from No. 122) and No. 20 in first downs gained (from No. 84). In 2021, Miami again ranked 26th in scoring averaging, improving to 34.1 PPG, and jumped up to 22nd in total offense at 448.8 yards per game.

While at Miami, Likens mentored Michael Hawley, Jr., and Charleston Rambo. Hawley, Jr., broke program records for career receptions and single-game receptions, while Rambo became the all-time leader in season receptions and single-season receiving yards.

Prior to his time in Coral Gables, Likens spent three seasons (2017-19) at Arizona State where he served from 2018-19 as Offensive Coordinator and quarterbacks coach where he mentored true freshman quarterback Jayden Daniels. Daniels completed the 2019 season just south of 3,000 yards to go with 17 touchdowns and only two interceptions. Running back Eno Benjamin and wide receiver Brandon Aiyuk also had 1,000-yard seasons, earning first-team All-Pac-12 honors.

The Sun Devils were the only P5 program to have a 3,000-yard passer, 1,500-yard rusher and 1,000-yard receiver in 2018. Wide receiver N'Keal Harry was selected by the Patriots in the first round of the 2019 NFL Draft.

In 2017, Likens served as co-Offensive Coordinator and wide receivers coach, leading the Sun Devils to the 10th highest-graded passing attack in the nation according to Pro Football Focus after being graded 86th in 2016.

Likens served as Offensive Coordinator at Kansas from 2015-16, and from 2013-14 was Cal's assistant head and outside receivers coach, adding passing game coordinator to his title as well (2014). His 2014 squad, led by future NFL top overall draft pick Jared Goff, ranked sixth nationally in passing yards per game (346.0) and broke the school's single-season passing yardage record with 4,152 yards. Additionally, three of Cal's top four receivers were Biletnikoff Award candidates in Chris Harper, Kenny Lawler and Bryce Treggs.

During the 2013 season, Cal set single-season school record for passing yards (3,977), completions (368) and attempts (622), while also establishing new single-game marks for passing yards (521 vs. Washington State) and attempts (65 vs. Northwestern).

Prior to his time at Cal, Likens served as assistant head coach and wide receivers coach at Louisiana Tech (2010-12). The Bulldogs posted a 9-3 record and led the nation in scoring offense (51.5) and total offense (577.9) in 2012, putting up 40 points in 11 of 12 games and 50+ eight times. Wide receiver

COACHING EXPERIENCE

1992-97	North Alabama (Running Backs/Wide Receivers)
1998-03	Temple (Wide Receivers)
2004-05	Southeast Missouri State (Offensive Coordinator)
2006-09	Central Connecticut State (Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks)
2010-12	Louisiana Tech (Assistant Head Coach/Wide Receivers)
2013-14	Cal (Assistant Head Coach/Outside Receivers/ Pass Game Coordinator)
2015-16	Kansas (Offensive Coordinator)
2017-19	Arizona State (Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks)
2020-21	Miami (Passing Game Coordinator/Wide Receivers)
2022-	SMU (Asst. Head Coach/Wide Receivers/Pass Game Coord. '22, Assoc. Head Coach/Co-Offensive Coord./Wide Receivers '23-'24)



Quinton Patton was named a second-team AP All-American as well as a Biletnikoff Award semifinalist. Likens' 2011 receiving corps registered 3,200+ yards and helped the Bulldogs to the WAC title.

Likens served as Offensive Coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Central Connecticut State from 2006-09, helping CCSU to the winningest four-year stretch in program history, including a 9-3 season and Northeast Conference title in 2009. The Blue Devils led the conference in scoring offense twice during his tenure, as he coached a pair of 1,000-yard rushers, Walter Payton Award finalists, All-American running backs and NEC Offensive Players of the Year in Justise Hairston and James Mallory.

CCSU averaged 239.2 yards per game on the ground in 2008 to rank seventh in the FCS. In 2007, the Blue Devils led the NEC in both total offense (387.7) and rushing offense (257.6). The Blue Devil offense set numerous school records in 2006, including single-season total yards (4,271), rushing yards (3,150), rushing touchdowns (42) and total touchdowns (51). CCSU led the nation in rushing yards per game (284.9) and finished 10th in total offense.



Likens spent two seasons as the Offensive Coordinator at Southeast Missouri State (2004-05), and served six seasons at Temple (1998-2003) and North Alabama (1992-97). His North Alabama team became the first program in NCAA scholarship football to win three consecutive national championships.

While at Temple, Likens mentored All-Big East receiver Sean Dillard, who set the Owl's all-time career receptions record, and first-team All-Big East selection Zamir Cobb, who set program records for career receptions and single-season receptions.

At Northern Alabama, he coached Michael Edwards to several program records, including career and season receptions, career and season reception yards and career TDs.

Likens played wide receiver at Mississippi State where he earned his bachelor's degree, graduating cum laude, in math education in 1990 before going on to earn his master's degree in math education from North Alabama in 1995.

Likens and his wife, Soni, have one son, Cutter.





RICKEY HUNLEY, JR.

CORNERBACKS / CO-DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR

DRAKE, 2005

COACHHUN_SMU

Rickey Hunley, Jr. enters his fourth season at SMU in 2025 as cornerbacks coach and co-defensive coordinator.

Hunley, Jr., joined the Mustang coaching staff as pass game coordinator and cornerbacks coach in December 2021. Hunley came to the Hilltop after spending three seasons (2019-21) as cornerbacks coach at Liberty under the direction of SMU Defensive Coordinator Scott Symons.

Hunley's unit played a large role in the Mustangs' historic first season in the ACC in 2024, advancing to the program's first CFP berth along with an undefeated mark in the first season in the conference.

SMU became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

The secondary played a large role in the defense finishing in the top 25 in the FBS in multiple categories including: defensive touchdowns (5th, 4), passes intercepted (14th, 16), fourth down conversion pct. defense (17th, .415), third down conversion pct. defense (19th, .332) and red zone defense (24th, .767).

Thanks to their success during the season, Brandon Crossley and Jonathan McGill picked up All-ACC Honorable Mention accolades during the 2024 season.

The Mustangs' secondary wreaked havoc on the opposition in 2023, helping lead to the program's first conference championship since 1984 with an 11-3 record and going undefeated in conference play (8-0).

Hunley's unit played a major role in the defense finishing in the top 25 in several key statistical areas including: defensive touchdowns (1st, 5), third down defense (4th, .281), team passing efficiency defense (9th, 115.28), scoring defense (11th, 17.8), total defense (12th, 304.1), passing yards allowed (13th, 182.2) and red zone defense (25th, .778). The secondary saw multiple players achieve high-level and accolades during and after the season, highlighted by Charles Woods and Isaiah Nwokobia.

Woods excelled under the second-year coach's guidance, earning the All-AAC Third Team while leading the team in pass breakups with 11, and blocked a kick in the Mustang victory in the conference championship. For his great play, Woods signed with Los Angeles Rams immediately following the 2024 NFL Draft.

Nwokobia flourished under Hunley during the season, being named MVP of the AAC Championship, first defensive player to win the award, he also was named Best Defensive Back by Dave Campbell's Texas Football for his play.

In his debut season, Hunley and the Mustangs went 7-5 in the regular season, and closed the year with an appearance in the New Mexico Bowl, against BYU. Hunley's unit contributed to the Mustangs' 42 pass breakups, as well as helping intercept 10 passes across the season including a pair from Jahari Rogers.

In year one with the Flames, Hunley helped the program to its first bowl game in school history before going on to win back-to-back FBC Mortgage Cure Bowl titles (2019, 2020).

Liberty closed out the 2021 season with a win in the Lending Tree Bowl and finished in the top 20 in passing yards allowed (9th, 180.3), red zone defense (10th, .725) and total defense (15th, 320.2).

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2007	Drake (Safeties)
2008	Iowa State (Athletics Academic Coordinator)
2012	Lindenwood (Safeties)
2013-14	Southwest Baptist (Defensive Backs/Special Teams Coordinator/ Recruiting Coordinator)
2015-17	West Georgia (Special Teams Coordinator/Linebackers)
2018	UIW (Safeties/Recruiting Coordinator)
2019-21	Liberty (Cornerbacks)
2022-	SMU (Cornerbacks/Pass Game Coordinator '21-23), (Cornerbacks/ Co-Defensive Coordinator '24)

Liberty went 10-1 in 2020 and ranked No. 17 in the final AP Poll. The defense ranked 11th nationally in total defense (317.7), 12th in passing yards allowed (184.0), 22nd in scoring defense (20.5) and 23rd in interceptions (11). Hunley mentored cornerback Bejour Wilson, who signed a free agent contract with the Arizona Cardinals. The 2019 season saw the Flames rank 28th in sacks (2.69) and 31st in interceptions (12).

Hunley arrived at Liberty after spending one season at UIW (2018) as safeties coach and recruiting coordinator. The Cardinals reached the NCAA FCS Playoffs during its second year of postseason eligibility, posting a 6-2 record in conference play and winning the Southland Conference title. UIW led the Southland and ranked fourth nationally in turnovers gained (30).





From 2015-17 Hunley served as special teams coordinator and linebackers coach at West Georgia, where he also worked alongside Symons. The Wolves made two NCAA Division II playoff appearances, posted a 12-win season and won the Gulf South Conference as well as the NCAA Division II Super Regional title (2015).

He also made coaching stops at Southwest Baptist (2013-14), Lindenwood (2012), Grandview HS (Mo., 2010-11), Drake (2007) and Theodore Roosevelt HS (Iowa, 2004-06), while also serving as an athletics academic coordinator at Iowa State in 2008.

Hunley earned his degree in social sciences from Drake in 2005. He and wife, Nakisha, have three children – Taylor, Raegan and Kamryn.





GARIN JUSTICE

ASST. HEAD COACH / OFFENSIVE LINE / CO-OFFENSIVE COORD.
WEST VIRGINIA, 2006

✕ GARINJUSTICE

Garin Justice was hired as the Mustangs' offensive line coach and run game coordinator in December 2021, and was elevated to assistant head coach in February 2023, and then co-offensive coordinator in the spring of 2024.

Justice arrived on the Hilltop after spending the 2020 and 2021 seasons at Miami with Mustang Head Coach Rhett Lashlee.

Justice's offensive line anchored another powerful offensive attack in 2024, with the Mustangs at an elite level, averaging 36.5 points a game on the year, the seventh highest average for a season in program history despite moving up to a power conference.

The 511 points scored in 2024 were third most in program history. The line also opened up the running game, finishing with eight games with at least 150 yards rushing on the year. SMU's 29 rushing touchdowns tied for third most in program history for a single season.

SMU again ranked in the top 25 in FBS in scoring offense (9th), first downs offense (10th), team passing efficiency (20th) and sacks allowed (24th). The Mustangs had several members along the line earn accolades for their play, with Jakai Clark (first team), Logan Parr (third team), PJ Williams (third team), and Justin Osborne (honorable mention) earning All-ACC honors from the conference.

He was responsible for an SMU offensive line that was dominant in 2023, resulting in the Mustangs capturing their first conference championship since 1984 and 12th overall as a program. It was the first outright conference title won by the school since 1982. SMU rolled to a record of 11-3, highlighted by going undefeated in its final season in the American Athletic Conference (AAC) with an 8-0 mark.

The Mustangs earned their fifth straight year of bowl eligibility, the longest stretch in program history and finished ranked 22nd in the AP Poll, the first time finishing in the final poll since 1984.

Justice's unit played a crucial part in the offense being one of the most explosive in all of college football, finishing ranked in the top in the FBS in first down offense (6th), passing offense (22nd), passing yards, passing yards per completion (12th), red zone offense (8th), sacks allowed (13th), scoring offense (8th), tackles for loss allowed (9th) and total offense (16th).

The West Virginia native's coaching style led to numerous accolades for his linemen, highlighted by the entire starting offensive line of Marcus Bryant (first team), Justin Osborne (first team), Logan Parr (first team), Branson Hickman (second team) and Hyrin White (honorable mention), all earning AAC All-Conference honors. Osborne was also selected to the first team with Dave Campbell's Texas Football All-Texas Team, while Bryant, Hickman and Parr notched second-team honors.

SMU's 542 points were second most points scored in program history, with the 29 rushing touchdowns ranking third most ever for a single season and the 33 passing touchdowns place fifth all-time for a single season in program history.

Justice led an offensive line that helped the Mustangs rank among the top FBS teams in passing and red zone offense (7th), scoring offense (12th) and total offense (14th). Justice's group enabled starting QB Tanner Mordecai to average over 293 passing yards per game, good enough for 11th in the nation. On the ground, the blocking up front allowed SMU to rush for more than 156 yards per game, and at a rate of over four yards per attempt. The Mustang rushing attack contributed 26 rushing touchdowns, and over 2,000 yards on the ground.

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2006	West Virginia (Graduate Assistant)
2007-08	Florida State (Graduate Assistant)
2011-15	Concord University (Head Coach)
2016-17	FAU (Offensive Line)
2018-19	UNLV (Offensive Coordinator/Offensive Line/Run Game)
2020-21	Miami (Offensive Line)
2022-	SMU (Offensive Line/Run Game Coord. '22, Asst. HC/Offensive Line '23)



SMU's 4,117 passing yards and 331 first downs set program marks, while the 36 passing TDs and total plays (1,005) rank second. The 2022 squad also posted top-three program marks in scoring (3rd, 484), passing ypg (3rd, 316.7), completion % (3rd, 64.9), completions (2nd, 333), total offense (3rd, 6147) and first downs - passing (3rd, 174).

A pair of Mustangs earned All-American Athletic Conference as Justin Osborne was as second-team selection and Jaylon Thomas earned honorable mention accolades.

In 2020, the Hurricanes jumped to No. 32 in FBS in total offense (from No. 98), No. 29 in passing offense (from No. 52), No. 26 in scoring offense (from No. 90), No. 17 in red zone offense (from No. 122) and No. 20 in first downs gained offense (from No. 84). The 2021 season saw a pair of Justice's offensive linemen earn All-ACC honors.

Prior to his time with the Hurricanes, Justice spent two seasons at UNLV responsible for the offensive line and run game before being promoted to Offensive Coordinator/offensive line coach. The 2019 season saw two offensive linemen (Julio Garcia, Justin Polu) earn All-Mountain West Conference recognition while running back Charles Williams, Jr., was named first-team All-Mountain West.

Justice spent two seasons as offensive line coach at FAU (2016-17) where he helped lead the 2017 team to top-10 national rankings for scoring offense (40.6) and rushing offense (285.3), while ranking 12th for fewest sacks allowed (16). They finished the season with an 11-3 record, a Conference USA Championship and a win at the Boca Raton Bowl. Three of his linemen earned All-C-USA first-team honors in 2017, blocking for Devin Singletary, who became the program's first AP All-American and set the Owls' single-season rushing record with 1,920 yards. In 2016, the Owls had a record-setting rushing attack under Justice



despite losing four projected starters in the first three weeks of the season.

Justice served as head coach at Concord University (West Virginia) from 2011-15, going 40-17, including a 13-1 record in 2014. He led the program to a pair of conference championships and two NCAA Division II playoff appearances. During his five seasons, 84 student-athletes earned all-conference honors, eight picked up All-America accolades, two were named defensive WVIAC Players of the Year and 18 were named to all-region teams.

He began his coaching career as a student assistant and graduate assistant at West Virginia working with the offensive line. He also spent two seasons as an offensive graduate assistant at Florida State.

Justice earned his Regents Bachelor of Arts degree at West Virginia in 2006, and went on to earn a Master's of Sports Administration from Florida State in 2008. He was a three-year starter on the Mountaineers' offensive line and served as team captain for the 11-1 2005 squad that won the Sugar Bowl and earned a No. 5 ranking to close the season. Justice earned All-Big East honors and was a Sporting News Second-Team All-American.

He and wife, Casie Coughlin Justice, have one daughter, Juliet.





CALVIN THIBODEAUX

DEFENSIVE LINE
OKLAHOMA, 2006
COACH THIBBS

Calvin Thibodeaux was named defensive line coach in December 2021. Thibodeaux came to the Hilltop after six seasons at Oklahoma.

The defensive line helped the Mustangs reach new heights in 2024, advancing to the program's first CFP berth along with an undefeated mark in the first season in the ACC.

SMU became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

The Mustangs were elite defensively once again in 2024. For the second straight season they finished in the top five in defensive touchdowns with four. The mark was also the best in the ACC. SMU posted the second-best rushing defense in program history, allowing just 100.2 yards per game on the ground. The mark was good for seventh best in the FBS and tops in the conference.

SMU got to the quarterback at a high clip again in 2024, earning 43 sacks, the third most in program history.

The unit helped the Mustangs defense be elite in all three facets during the historic season, ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in multiple different categories including: defensive touchdowns (5th, 4), rushing defense (7th, 100.2), team sacks (10th, 3.07), fourth down conversion pct. defense (17th, .415), tackles for loss (18th, 7.1), third down conversion pct. defense (19th, .332) and red zone defense (24th, .767).

Jared Harrison-Hunte earned First Team All-ACC accolades, and Elijah Roberts and Kori Roberson Jr. picked up Honorable Mention All-ACC honors.

Roberts and Harrison-Hunte also earned First Team All-Texas honors by DCTF.

Roberts, despite missing a game due to injury, ranked sixth in the country in quarterback hurries with 44, while Harrison-Hunte finished tied for 13th with with 36.

The Mustangs took their game up a notch in year two in 2023, posting an 11-3 mark, resulting in the first conference championship in program history since 1984, while posting an undefeated record in conference play (8-0).

SMU's 11 wins and nine-game winning streak in 2023 were the most since the 1982 National Championship team. The Mustangs also finished out the year ranked 22nd in the AP Top 25 Poll, the first time appearing in the final poll since 1984.

Thibodeaux's work on the defensive line was some of the best in the entire country, resulting in the team finishing with 47 sacks, second most in program and third highest in all of FBS for the year. The unit was led by Elijah Roberts, who earned All-America First Team honors by the Action Network after recording a career-best 10.0 sacks.

Roberts was one of five SMU players to record at least four sacks in 2023 under Thibodeaux's watch.

The second-year coach saw both Elijah Chatman and Roberts earn All-Conference honors from the AAC with Chatman being a first-team selection.

The dominance up front from the Mustangs played a critical role in the whole defense's elite-level play all year, with the team ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in several categories including: defensive touchdowns (1st, 5), sacks (3rd, 47) third down defense (4th, .281), team passing efficiency defense (9th, 115.28), scoring defense (11th, 17.8), total defense

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2008-09	Houston (Graduate Assistant)
2010	Navarro (Defensive Line)
2011	Dartmouth (Defensive Line)
2012-14	Tulsa (Defensive Tackles)
2015	Kansas (Defensive Line)
2016-21	Oklahoma (Defensive Line)
2022-	SMU (Defensive Line)



(12th, 304.1), passing yards allowed (13th, 182.2), TFLs per game (16th, 7.1), blocked kicks (21st, 2) and red zone defense (25th, .778).

The success up front saw three Thibodeaux's players sign with NFL teams shortly after the 2024 NFL Draft in Elijah Chatman (New York Giants), DeVere Levelston (Seattle Seahawks) and Jordan Miller (Denver Broncos).

In Thibodeaux's first season at SMU, the Mustangs posted a 7-5 regular season record, and the season culminated with a trip to the New Mexico Bowl, to face BYU. Under Thibodeaux's leadership, Elijah Chatman earned All-American Athletic Conference second-team honors and was a member of the Bronko Nagurski, Outland Trophy and Rotary Lombardi Award Watch Lists. Chatman finished the regular season with 37 tackles, including four for loss and three sacks. He added one fumble recovery for a touchdown and a blocked PAT. DeVere Levelston also ranked sixth nationally in blocked kicks with a pair.

Thibodeaux was named one of Rivals' top-25 recruiters of 2018 and 2019.

The 2021 Sooners finished the regular season 10-2, ranking in the top 25 nationally in tackles for loss (7th, 7.6), turnovers gained (18th, 22) and rushing defense (24th, 123.8), while a pair of Thibodeaux's linemen, Isaiah Thomas and Perrion Winfrey, earned second-team All-Big 12 honors.

Thibodeaux's 2020 line helped the Sooners to rankings of seventh nationally in sacks per game (3.4), ninth in rushing defense (105.1 ypg), 22nd in TFLs (7.4) and 29th in total defense (350.6 ypg).

The 2019 season saw OU improve to 38th in total defense (356.4), up from 114th in 2018,



and to 32nd in rushing defense (134.1), up from 59th. The line was led by AP first-team All-Big 12 selection Neville Gallimore, second-team all-league pick Ronnie Perkins and Big 12 Defensive Newcomer of the Year LaRon Stokes. Gallimore went on to be a third-round draft pick by the Dallas Cowboys in 2020.

Thibodeaux took over the full defensive line in 2018 after previously working with defensive ends. Amani Bledsoe, Gallimore and Kenneth Mann were named honorable mention All-Big 12 picks, and Perkins was named an ESPN Freshman All-American.

His 2017 group featured Walter Camp First-Team All-American and Co-Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year Ogbonna Okoronkwo, who ranked second in the Big 12 with 17.5 tackles for loss and third with 8.0 sacks, as well as D.J. Ward, who earned second-team all-league accolades.

He arrived in Norman after stints at Kansas (2015), Tulsa (2012-14) and Dartmouth (2011).

At Kansas, he led defensive end Ben Goodman to honorable mention All-Big 12 honors after totaling 51 tackles, 9.5 TFLs and 5.5 sacks.

He helped the Golden Hurricane to an 11-3 record in 2012 and a win over Iowa State in the Liberty Bowl. That same season, he coached Derrick Jackson to All-C-USA honors after Jackson combined with Daeshon Bufford 17.5 tackles for loss and 8.5 sacks. His 2012 squad registered 53 sacks on the season, compared to only 27 the season prior to his arrival.

At Dartmouth, the Big Green posted its first winning season in Ivy League play in seven years. The Bulldogs registered 41 sacks while ranking 11th nationally in rushing defense and 12th in total defense. He tutored NJCAA All-American and Championship Game Defensive MVP Toby Jackson and coached first-team All-Ivy League and first-team All-New England defensive tackle Eddie Smith.

Thibodeaux spent the 2010 season at Navarro Junior College where he helped the Bulldogs to an 11-1 record and the 2010 NJCAA National Championship. As a graduate assistant at Houston (2008-09), he coached defensive end Phillip Hunt to Conference USA Defensive Player of the Year honors.

As a student-athlete, Thibodeaux was part of three Big 12 Championship teams and helped the Sooners to appearances in a pair of BCS National Championship Games (2003, 2004), as well as the 2003 Rose Bowl, 2005 Holiday Bowl and 2007 Fiesta Bowl. An All-Big 12 selection in 2005, he registered 44 tackles, 17.0 TFLs and a league-high 10.0 sacks, the sixth most in school history. He finished his career with 90 tackles, 28.5 TFLs and 13.0 sacks.

He went on to sign with the Calgary Stampeders of the Canadian Football League in 2007.

A 2006 graduate of OU, he and wife, Terrika, have three kids – Kamiah, Camar and Camsen.





MAURICE CRUM JR.

LINEBACKERS / CO-DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR

NOTRE DAME, 2009

 COACHMOCRUM

Maurice Crum Jr. joined the SMU staff in January of 2023 and serves as the Mustangs' linebackers coach and co-defensive coordinator for the 2024 season.

Crum's unit played a large role in helping the Mustangs reach new heights in 2024, advancing to the program's first CFP berth along with an undefeated mark in the first season in the ACC.

SMU became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

The Mustangs were elite defensively once again in 2024, due in large part to the linebackers room. For the second straight season they finished in the top five in defensive touchdowns with four, including one by standout LB Kobe Wilson. The mark was also the best in the ACC. SMU posted the second-best rushing defense in program history, allowing just 100.2 yards per game on the ground. The mark was good for seventh best in the FBS and tops in the conference.

SMU also got to the quarterback at a high clip in 2024, earning 43 sacks, the third most in program history. The defense was also elite in all three facets during the historic season, with the linebackers playing a large role in the unit ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in multiple different categories including: defensive touchdowns (5th, 4), rushing defense (7th, 100.2), team sacks (10th, 3.07), passes intercepted (14th, 16), fourth down conversion pct. Defense (17th, .415), tackles for loss (18th, 7.1), third down conversion pct. defense (19th, .332) and red zone defense (24th, .767).

Due to the success in the season, Kobe Wilson was added to the Second Team All-ACC. Wilson also picked up All-American Honorable Mention accolades by Phil Steele.

In his first season with the Mustangs in 2023, Crum's linebackers made their mark immediately, as newcomers Ahmad Walker, Kobe Wilson, and Alexander Kilgore all found success on the field, with Wilson and Walker earning all-conference accolades by various publications. The trio powered a Mustang defense that was among the nation's elite in 2023, helping the Mustangs roll to an 11-3 mark, resulting in the first conference championship since 1984, while posting an undefeated record in conference play (8-0).

The defense dominated its opposition on all three levels, ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in several categories including: defensive touchdowns (1st, 5), sacks (3rd, 47) third down defense (4th, .281), team passing efficiency defense (9th, 115.28), scoring defense (11th, 17.8), total defense (12th, 304.1), passing yards allowed (13th, 182.2), TFLs per game (16th, 7.1), blocked kicks (21st, 2) and red zone defense (25th, .778).

Wilson (80) and Walker (65) finished the year as the top two tacklers on the team. Walker also had 6.5 TFLs and five pass breakups.

Kilgore showed promise in his debut collegiate season under Crum Jr., finishing with 36 tackles and 6.5 TFLs.

Crum was recognized for the job he did with his unit, being named to Dave Campbell's Texas Football's prestigious 40 Under 40 list in the summer of 2024.

Crum arrived on the Hilltop after one season at Ole Miss, where he served as co-defensive coordinator and linebackers coach. He helped the Rebels to an 8-5 record and an appearance in the TaxAct Texas Bowl. Ole Miss ranked 13th in the FBS and

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2012-14	Kansas (Graduate Assistant '12, Assistant Director of Operations '13, Director of High School Relations '14)
2015	Notre Dame (Graduate Assistant)
2016	Indiana State (Corners/Nicelbacks)
2017-21	Western Kentucky (Co-Defensive Coord./Linebackers 17-'20', Defensive Coord. '21)
2022	Ole Miss (Co-Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers)
2023-	SMU (Linebackers/Co-Defensive Coordinator)



second in the SEC in fumbles recovered (12) and was 27th nationally and third in the league in sacks (2.69).

Prior to his time in Oxford, Crum spent five seasons at Western Kentucky, where he served as Defensive Coordinator in 2021. The Hilltopper defense held opponents to 21 points or less in seven of their last eight regular season games in 2021.

In 2020, Crum served as Co-Defensive Coordinator and linebackers coach, helping the defense to national rankings of eighth in passing yards allowed (177.3), 28th in total yards allowed (348.7) and 41st in points allowed (25.3) per game.

A top-25 defense in 2019, WKU allowed only 20.1 points per game, ranking No. 22 in the FBS and setting the best mark in program history, and held opponents to a 29.7% third down conversion percentage, sixth nationally. The Hilltoppers ranked third in FBS with only 82 missed tackles all season long.

In 2018, Crum mentored linebacker Ben Holt who set WKU's FBS-era record for tackles per game (9.67) with 116 tackles in 12 games. He also served as Co-Special Teams Coordinator. In 2017, Crum helped Joel Iyiegbuniwe to All-Conference USA First-Team honors. He led the Hilltoppers in tackles with 116, the third-most in a single



season in the FBS era, and tackles for loss with 11.5. The junior declared for the NFL Draft was selected in the fourth round by the Chicago Bears.

Crum spent the 2016 season at Indiana State, where he coached corners and nickelbacks, and during the 2015 season he served as a defensive graduate assistant at Notre Dame, helping the Fighting Irish to an appearance in the Fiesta Bowl.

In three seasons at Kansas, Crum started as a graduate assistant (2012), before being elevated to the assistant director of operations (2013) and eventually the director of high school relations (2014).

A four-year letterwinner at Notre Dame (2005-08), Crum appeared in 50 games, making 42 consecutive starts. He registered 306 tackles, including 23 TFLs and eight sacks. His 306 career tackles ranked 11th in program history. Crum served as a two-time team captain (2007 & 2008), making him one of only 17 players in school history to have accomplished the feat.

Following his collegiate career, Crum had a three-year stint in the UFL (2009-11).

Crum graduated in 2009 with a degree in Sociology and is married to the former Crysta Swayzer. The couple has three sons, Maurice III, Allen and Noah. Crum's father, Maurice Sr., was a consensus All-American at Miami in 1990.

Footer





D'ERIQ KING

QUARTERBACKS

MIAMI, 2021



D'Eriq King enters his third season with the Mustangs in 2025, his second as quarterbacks coach.

King was named one of the upcoming young coaches in the country, being selected to 247Sports 30Under30 List in August of 2024.

In 2024, King played a pivotal role in the development of Kevin Jennings, resulting in the Mustangs earning their first berth in the College Football Playoff. His work with the redshirt sophomore helped unlock a potent Mustang offense that caused opposing teams issues all season.

With Jennings running the offense, the Mustangs were 9-2 and averaged 37.1 points per game. During his time as the starter, SMU posted a nine-game winning streak, matching 2023's run as the second longest in program history. For his play, Jennings was First Team All-Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football, All-ACC Third Team and a finalist for the Earl Campbell Tyler Rose Award, an award King was a two-time finalist for.

SMU continued to produce on offense at an elite level in their first year competing as a member of the ACC, averaging 36.5 points a game on the year, the seventh highest average for a season in program history. The 511 points scored in 2024 were the third most in program history.

Under King's guidance, Jennings found his groove after taking over as the starter in week 4, leading the ACC in passer efficiency rating at 171.53 in conference play. He also ranked fourth in conference games in total offense, averaging 309.25.

King served as an offensive analyst for a majority of 2023 before being promoted to quarterbacks coach on Dec. 20. He played a role in the development of quarterbacks Preston Stone and Kevin Jennings during the season, which saw The Mustangs score at least 55 points four times in 2023, the most in program history for a single season. SMU's offense also finished top five in program history in first downs (first), passing touchdowns (fifth), passing yards (fifth) and total yards (tied for first). Stone went on to become an All-AAC Third-Team selection and Pro Football Focus All-AAC selection that year, posting career highs in passing yards and touchdowns.

A native of Manvel, King has a wealth of experience already at the position, having starred collegiately at Houston (2016-19) and Miami (2020-21), with the final two years coming with Lashlee as the offensive coordinator for the Hurricanes.

He passed for 8,378 yards and 76 touchdowns in five seasons between the two schools, recording at least 2,500 yards passing and 500 rushing yards twice in his collegiate career.

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2023- SMU (Offensive Analyst '23, Quarterbacks '24)





SAM DUNNAM

EDGES
OUACHITA BAPTIST, 2013
SAM_DUNNAM

Sam Dunnam arrived on the Hilltop in 2022 and serves as the senior defensive analyst for the Mustangs. Dunnam was promoted to Defensive Assistant and coaches the edge players for the 2024 season.

Dunnam had his edge unit deliver in its debut season in the ACC in 2024, resulting in the team posting an 11-3 record and going undefeated in conference play and making the College Football Playoff as an 11 seed.

The development on Isaiah Smith was on full display in 2024, who finished with a career-high 6.5 sacks. Smith's success was part of a defensive line unit that got to the quarterback at a high clip earning 43 sacks, the third most in program history.

Also making an impact was Cameron Robertson, who finished with a career-best 4.0 sacks on the year.

SMU posted the second-best rushing defense in program history, allowing just 100.2 yards per game on the ground. The mark was good for seventh best in the FBS and tops in the conference.

The Mustangs became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

He helped play a key role in the Mustangs' dominance on the defensive end in 2023, resulting in the first conference championship for the program since 1984.

Defensively, the Mustangs were one of the elite teams in the country in 2023. The 47 sacks rank second in program history for a single season. SMU took it to the conference opposition, posting an average margin of victory of 28.9 points (45.9-17.0) in conference games on the year, the largest margin for any FBS team in conference play in 2023. SMU also finished first in all of FBS in defensive touchdowns with five. The Mustangs' two shutouts during the regular season were the most by the team since 2012.

Dunnam served as a graduate assistant at North Carolina in 2018 and in quality control in 2019, where he helped the Tar Heels to the 2019 Military Bowl Championship. He was also a graduate assistant (2013-14) and defensive line coach (2014-18) at his alma mater, Ouachita Baptist.

While at Ouachita Baptist, Dunnam helped the Tigers to an undefeated regular season and GAC Championship in 2014 and the No. 1 seed in the regional rankings, as well as a second-round appearance in the NCAA Division II playoffs. In 2014, three of the top-10 conference sack leaders came from OBU, and a pair of student-athletes earned all-conference honors. In 2016, Dunnam mentored a pair of all-conference selections, and in 2017 OBU won another GAC Championship, advanced to the DII playoffs and produced a pair of all-conference defensive line selections.

Dunnam also previously served as defensive line coach at Trinity Christian Academy (2021), where he helped TCA to the TAPPS League State Championship, and at Bishop Lynch (2020).

A four-year letterwinner at Ouachita Baptist, Dunnam was part of the 2011 GAC Championship team and was a two-time team captain.

COACHING EXPERIENCE

2013-14	Ouachita Baptist (Graduate Assistant)
2014-18	Ouachita Baptist (Defensive Line)
2018	North Carolina (Graduate Assistant)
2019	North Carolina (Quality Control)
2020	Bishop Lynch (Defensive Line)
2021	Trinity Christian Academy (Defensive Line)
2022-	SMU (Defensive Line, Edge)





Coch Sam Hullender enters his fourth season on the Mustang staff in 2025, serving as the Assistant Quarterbacks Coach and Head Coach Analyst.

Hullender will be in his fifth year working under Head Coach Rhett Lashlee. Prior to SMU, Hullender worked with Lashlee at the University of Miami for a season (2021) as an offensive assistant.

This 2025 season will be Hullender's third season working with the quarterbacks.

The 2024 season saw Hullender play a role in the development of Kevin Jennings, resulting in the Mustangs earning their first berth to the College Football Playoff. The redshirt sophomore's growth helped unlock a potent Mustang offense that caused opposing teams issues all season.

With Jennings running the offense, the Mustangs were 9-2 and averaged 37.1 points per game. During his time as the starter, SMU posted a nine-game winning streak, matching 2023's run as the second longest in program history. For his play, Jennings was First Team All-Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football, All-ACC Third Team by the conference and a finalist for the Earl Campbell Tyler Rose Award.

SMU continued to produce at an elite level on offense in its first year competing as a member of the ACC, averaging 36.5 points per game on the year, the seventh-highest average for a season in program history. The 511 points scored in 2024 were the third most in program history.

Jennings found his groove after taking over as the starter in week 3, leading the ACC in passer efficiency rating at 171.53. He also ranked third in conference games in total offense, averaging 309.25.

In 2023, Hullender moved to the quarterback room, working with quarterback Preston Stone who garnered third-team nods during his first year as the Mustangs' starter. Stone completed 206-of-344 pass attempts for 3,197 yards with 28 touchdowns against six interceptions and was tabbed a three-time AAC Offensive Player of the Week selection. Stone ranked 10th nationally in passing touchdowns, 15th in passing efficiency (161.3), 21st in passing yards, and 23rd in passing yards per game (266.4) and total offense (282.9).

Hullender joined the Mustang coaching staff in December 2021 as an Offensive Graduate Assistant working with the tight ends.

Additionally, during the 2023 season, SMU ranked in the top-25 in 11 major categories – fifth in first down offense (312), sixth in scoring offense (40.6) and passing yards per completion (14.82), ninth in red zone offense (.929) and tackles for loss allowed (3.77), 13th in sacks allowed (1.15), 14th in total offense (465.5), 16th in team passing efficiency (156.09), 19th in passing offense (285.1), 20th in turnovers lost (13) and 24th in fumbles lost (5). The Mustangs also ranked third in the country in scoring offense in the first half, trailing just Oregon and Oklahoma. The 542 points ranked second highest in program history. The 29 rushing touchdowns were the third most in program history.

The Mustangs scored at least 55 points four times in 2023, the most in program history for a single season. The offense also finished top five in program history in first downs (1st), passing touchdowns (5th), passing yards (5th), and total yards (tied for 1st), while also making history on Dec. 2 with a 26-14 victory over No. 22 Tulane in the AAC Championship game, giving the Mustangs their first conference championship since 1984 and 12th overall as a program. It was the first outright conference title won by the school since 1982.

During the 2022 season, tight ends Ben Redding and RJ Maryland combined for over 400 yards and 10 touchdowns combined. Maryland went on to earn Freshman All-American honors, he registered 28 receptions for 296 yards and 6 touchdowns, the touchdown total was the second most in a single season for a Mustang tight end in program history.

Before SMU, Hullender spent the 2021 season working under former Offensive Coordinator Rhett Lashlee as a quarterback offensive assistant at the University of Miami. Miami finished second in the AAC Coastal standings after a 7-5 regular season and were in the top 25 for fourth down conversion percentage (10th, .714), passing offense (10th, 321.2), first down offense (14th, 293) and total offense (23rd, 448.8). Freshman quarterback Tyler Van Dyke was named the ACC Rookie of the Year, and

Charleston Rambo broke the Miami single-season receiving yards and receptions record.

Hullender started his coaching career in 2019 as a student coach at the University of Texas. In 2019, he worked with Special Teams, where the Longhorns punt coverage team ranked 12th in FBS, allowing just 3.3 yards per return. Kicker Cameron Dicker converted 77.8 percent of his field goals, the best percentage for a Texas placekicker in seven seasons, to earn All-Big 12 honorable mention honors to go along with All-Big 12 first-team honors as a punter.

Prior to the 2020 season, Hullender moved to the offensive side of the ball to work with the Wide Receivers and Offensive Line. During the 2020 season, the Longhorns ranked eighth in FBS in scoring offense (42.7 ppg), 16th in passing efficiency (156.2) and 19th in total offense (475.4 ypg). Texas also finished in the top 40 in the country in passing offense (27th; 280.1 ypg) and rushing offense (37th; 195.3 ypg). The 42.7 points per game ranks second in Texas history. The Longhorns had 17 different players catch at least one pass during the 2020 season and nine with at least 10 catches. Additionally, the Longhorns had 12 different players record a touchdown catch in that season.

Hullender graduated from the University of Texas in 2021 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Applied Learning and Development. He received his Master's Degree in Liberal Studies from SMU in December 2023.



Hussam Ouri enters his fourth season on the Hilltop in 2025, serving as the Assistant Linebackers Coach.

Ouri worked with the linebackers under Maurice Crum Jr. in 2024, with the unit playing a large role in helping the Mustangs reach new heights, advancing to the programs first CFP along with an undefeated mark in the first season in the ACC.

SMU became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

The Mustangs were elite defensively once again in 2024, due in large part to the linebackers room. For the second straight season they finished in the top five in defensive touchdowns with four, including one by standout LB Kobe Wilson. The mark was also the best in the ACC. SMU posted the second-best rushing defense in program history, allowing just 100.2 yards per game on the ground. The mark was good for seventh best in the FBS and tops in the conference.

SMU also got to the quarterback at a high clip in 2024, earning 43 sacks, the third most in program history. The defense was also elite in all three facets during the historic season, with the linebackers playing a large role in the unit ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in multiple different categories including: defensive touchdowns (5th, 4), rushing defense (7th, 100.2), team sacks (10th, 3.07), passes intercepted (14th, 16), fourth down conversion pct. Defense (17th, .415), tackles for loss (18th, 7.1), third down conversion pct. defense (19th, .332) and red zone defense (24th, .767).

Due to the success in the season, Kobe Wilson was added to the Second Team All-ACC. Wilson also picked up All-American Honorable Mention accolades by Phil Steele.

Ouri spent the 2023 season working with the offensive line unit under Garin Justice. Ouri played an instrumental part in helping shape a unit that was one of the best in all of college football in 2023, with the Mustangs ranking 13th in FBS in sacks allowed with just 16 over a 14-game season.

The great play along the line allowed for SMU to be explosive on offense, ranking in the top 25 in the FBS in numerous categories including: first down offense (6th, 334), scoring offense (8th, 38.7), red zone offense (8th, .931), passing yards per completion



(12th, 14.22), sacks allowed (13th, 16), total offense (16th, 454.3) and passing offense (22nd, 278.4).

The high-scoring offense scored at least 55 points four times in 2023, another program record for a single season.

Ouri joined the SMU football staff in January of 2022.

Prior to arriving on the Hilltop, he served in the same capacity at Louisiana Tech (2021).

Ouri spent six seasons as offensive line coach at his alma mater, Shepherd University (January 2015-July 2021), and was promoted to full time in 2018 and to run game coordinator in 2021. He helped Shepherd to a pair of seasons averaging 500+ yards (2019, 2017) and in 2019, Shepherd averaged 45+ PPG. The 2019 season also saw the Rams rank No. 1 in the nation in tackles for loss allowed (3.23) and No. 6 in sacks allowed (11 on 508 pass attempts). Ouri coached eight all-conference offensive line performers, two all-region selections and three All-Americans from 2015-18. He also mentored 2018 NFL Camp invitee Lavonte Hights (Chicago Bears). Shepherd made an appearance in the 2015 Division II National Title game and won three MEC Championships, a pair of Super Region 1 Championships and posted a 36-3 record from 2015-17. From February 2017 to July 2021, he served as head football strength and conditioning coordinator, while also working with baseball, men's and women's basketball, softball and women's lacrosse.

He has also served as Offensive Coordinator for The Podyum Bowl and coached the offensive line for the 2017 USA Football Team.

Ouri was a four-year starter at center for Shepherd and was named a three-time WVIAC/MEC All-Conference selection. He was also named a third-team All-American and an all-region selection. Ouri served as a team captain in 2014 and helped lead Shepherd to three conference championships. A member of the National Football Foundation's Hampshire Honor Society, he served two years as Student-Athlete Advisory Council president and one as vice president.

Ouri earned a pair of degrees from Shepherd, completing an undergraduate degree in exercise science and an MBA in project management. He also spent two years as a professor at his alma mater, teaching essentials of strength and conditioning. Ouri is a USSCC Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist and is USAW Level 1 Olympic and American Red Cross CPR and First Aid certified.

Ouri is married and resides in Allen, Texas.



Tyler Foster is entering his third season with the Mustangs and currently serves as the Assistant Running Backs Coach.

Foster worked under Kyle Cooper with the running backs in his first year on the Hilltop in 2024. SMU's running backs played a major part in lifting the program to its first-ever College Football Playoff appearance.

Transfer Brashard Smith flourished in his new role in the backfield, the first time playing the position since Pop Warner. In 2024, Smith recorded 1,977 all-purpose yards, the most in a single season in SMU history. He also became the 12th Mustang to eclipse the 1,000-yard rushing mark and finished fourth in the single-season record books with 1,332. The senior earned many accolades during and following his breakout season, including earning All-America status by four major publications (Associated Press, AFCA, Sporting News, Phil Steele) while also being named to the All-ACC First Team by the conference. The elusive back was also named First Team All-Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football publication.

Smith was all over the top 25 in major FBS statistics, finishing ranked eighth in the country in all-purpose yards with 141.2 per game, 12th in total touchdowns (18) 20th in total points scored (112), and 25th in rushing yards per game (95.1). The 112 points scored were the fifth most in program history. The Miami native notched six games with at least 100 yards on the ground and had over 100 all-purpose yards in eight contests in the season.

As a team, the Mustangs rushed for 29 touchdowns on the year, which ranked tied for third most in school history.

Prior to SMU, Foster spent a season as the Associate Director of Player Personnel at Baylor and served as a recruiting assistant at Oklahoma State.

He also was the run-game coordinator at Kimball High School in Dallas following a stint as a graduate assistant at Prairie View A&M.

The Dallas native played at Kilgore College and UTSA, where he received a master's degree in 2017.



Ryan Jenkins enters his second season at SMU in 2025 as the Assistant Wide Receivers Coach.

Jenkins worked with the wide receivers under Rob Likins in 2024, where the unit showcased its depth once again as the passing game was on of the best in the country. The Mustangs had four receivers record at least 350 yards receiving on the season along with 20 receptions.

SMU's offense was explosive once again, finishing the year ranked ninth in scoring at 36.5 points per game, the seventh highest average in program history. The passing game ranked 31st in the country and was efficient, ranking 20th in team passing efficiency in 2024.

Roderick Daniels Jr. led the receiving core with a breakout year, finishing with a career high in receptions (42), yards (663) and touchdowns (4). Also joining Smith in a breakout campaign with Key'Shawn Smith, who posted career bests in receptions, yards and touchdowns. Both earned All-ACC Honorable Mention honors on the year.

Jenkins previously spent the 2023 year at Arizona State as a graduate assistant with the Sun Devils.



JOHN BONNEY

ASSISTANT SAFETIES COACH
SECOND SEASON

JBONNEY4

John Bonney enters his second season at SMU in 2025 as the Assistant Safeties Coach.

In 2024 Bonney worked under Scott Symons with the safeties. The unit helped the Mustangs to reach historic heights, making the ACC Championship game and the College Football Playoff.

SMU became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

The Mustangs were elite defensively in 2024, thanks in part to the safeties room. SMU ranked top 25 in the FBS in defensive touchdowns (5th, 4), passes intercepted (14th, 16), fourth down conversion pct. Defense (17th, .415), third down conversion pct. defense (19th, .332) and red zone defense (24th, .767), all of which the unit played a large part in.

Isaiah Nwokobia earned First Team All-ACC accolades, while Ahmaad Moses and Jonathan McGill earned Honorable Mention All-ACC.

Bonney joins the Mustangs after spending 2023 season as defensive quality control analyst at Coastal Carolina.

Bonney was named a defensive quality control analyst at USC in March of 2021. He spent 2019 and 2020 as a graduate assistant at Texas Southern.

Bonney played cornerback and nickelback for three seasons (2015-17) at Texas, seeing action in every game. As a 2017 junior (he started twice), he had 19 tackles (including four versus USC), an interception (off of Oklahoma's Baker Mayfield), 2 fumble recoveries and three deflections. He started seven games as a 2016 sophomore, getting 39 tackles, nine deflections and a forced fumble. He had 29 tackles (two for a loss, with a sack), a deflection and a forced fumble as a 2015 redshirt freshman backup. He was a four-time member of the Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll and made the 2015 Academic All-Big 12 first team.

He spent 2018 as a graduate transfer at Texas Tech, appearing in all 12 games at safety and starting eight times. He had 32 tackles, a deflection and two forced fumbles.

He was a four-year starting safety at Lamar High in Houston (Tex.)

He earned his bachelor's degree in corporate communications from Texas in 2018.



CASEY HORNY

ASST. SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR
SECOND SEASON

COACH_HORNY

Casey Horny is in his second season with SMU in 2025 as the Assistant Special Teams Coordinator.

In 2024, the Mustangs reached historic heights, making the ACC Championship game and the College Football Playoff.

SMU became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

The special teams' unit was a strong suit for the Mustangs during their historic campaign in 2024. SMU finished in the top-25 nationally in Punt Returns (13th), Kickoff Returns

(15th) and Kickoff Return Defense (22nd). The Mustangs also finished ranked in the top 20 (19th) in the FEI Special Teams Ratings by BC Toys.

Kicker Collin Rogers also shined in his junior season, earning a spot at the top of the Mustangs record book for points scored with 356. Rogers also nailed seven field goals of 50-or-more yards, one shy of the NCAA record for a single season.

For his success, Rogers earned First Team All-America honors by the FWA and Sports Illustrated as well All-America Honorable Mention by Phil Steele. The junior was also named First Team All-Texas by Dave Campbell's Texas Football publication as well. His 124 points scored ranked 12th in FBS on the year and were the third most in program history for a single season.

Horny spent the 2023 year as the defensive coordinator at Westwood High School.

He spent nine seasons on the Baylor staff as the assistant director of football operations in charge of defensive quality control.

Horny joined the Baylor staff from Texas State, where he served as the Bobcats' co-defensive coordinator and safeties coach in 2007. Prior to that, he spent two seasons (2005 and 2006) as defensive backs coach at Trinity University in San Antonio and two as cornerbacks coach (2003 and 2004) at Sam Houston State.

A native of Goliad, Texas, Horny spent three seasons as a graduate assistant at Texas, where he worked with the Longhorns' defensive backs. Texas posted a 31-7 record during his three seasons at the school, twice finished among the nation's top 10 and won two bowl games. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Texas in 2000 and 2002, respectively.



PARKER STONE

ASSISTANT TIGHT ENDS COACH
FOURTH SEASON

_PARKERSTONE

Parker Stone currently serves as an assistant tight ends coach. Stone is a Dallas native who joined the SMU football team as a wide receiver after graduating from Parish Episcopal in 2019.

Stone was promoted to the title prior to the 2025 season after serving as a graduate assistant the previous years.

In 2024, the Mustangs reached historic heights, making the ACC Championship game and the College Football Playoff.

SMU became the first team to go 8-0 in conference play after moving to a Power 4/5 conference from a Group of Five conference. The 2024 season also marked the first time the Mustangs went undefeated and untied in conference play in conference play in back-to-back seasons.

The Mustang group of tight ends was one of the better units in all of FBS in 2024, led by RJ Maryland and newcomer Matthew Hibner. Maryland, despite missing second half of the season due to injury, was one of the best at his position in the country, finishing with 24 receptions for 354 yards and four touchdowns in seven games. Maryland still earned All-ACC Honorable Mention despite the limited amount of games he played, but was the first Mustang in program history to earn ACC Receiver of the Week honors with his career-best eight receptions for 162 yards and a touchdown in the comeback win at Nevada to open the year.

Hibner took over after Maryland went down and continued to produce at a high level, resulting in a career year for the newcomer. He finished the year with 24 receptions for 368 yards and four touchdowns, with almost all of it coming from the Duke game and beyond once he took over as the starter.

For the 2023 season, he continued as a student assistant coach but transitioned to working with the running backs. In the 2023 season, SMU was once again a top 20 offense averaging 454.3 YDS/GAME (16th) and 38.7 PPG (8TH) aided by a strong running attack that contributed 176.6 rushing yards per game.

In the 2022 season, Stone helped lead SMU to a top 20 offense averaging 479.8 YDS/GAME (10TH) and 37.2 PPG (12TH). He also helped Rashee Rice break the SMU single



season receiving yards record, lead the nation in receiving yards per game (112.9), and finish 5th in the nation in receptions (96). After two seasons of playing, he decided to medically retire and join the SMU staff in the



Demerick Gary joined the SMU Football staff as an assistant defensive ends coach in 2025.

Gary was previously a defensive lines coach at North Texas since 2023. Prior to the 2023 season, Gary was selected to Dave Campbell's Texas Football 40 Under 40 list, honoring 40 rising coaches in the state of Texas under the age of 40.

Gary spent the 2022 season as a graduate assistant and assistant defensive line coach at Houston. The Cougars defense had 30 sacks and led The American with 94 tackles for loss.

Senior defensive lineman D'Anthony Jones was named first team All-American Athletic Conference. The senior was graded as the nation's third-best edge defender (90.8) by PFF.

Gary was a graduate assistant at Arkansas in 2021 and served on the coaching staff at North Crowley High School in 2020. He was named one of On3 Sports' Rising Stars in college football in 2022.



Reggie Bain enters his first season with SMU in 2025 in the role of graduate assistant for the offense.

He previously spent the past three years as a graduate assistant at Miami, where he worked with the offensive line.

Prior to Miami, Bain spent the 2021 season at Illinois as an offensive graduate assistant, where he helped the Fighting Illini to a pair of road ranked wins in 2021. The Illini won at #7 Penn State in nine overtimes, the longest game in college football history, and won at #20 Minnesota, the program's first ever win over a College Football Playoff ranked opponent.

Before coaching, Bain played in 50 games at FAU from from 2014-18. He was a 247Sports Freshman All-American and Conference-USA All-Freshman Team pick as a true freshman in 2014, All-Conference USA second team honoree as a sophomore, then had back-to-back All-Conference USA first team seasons as a junior and senior.

After Bain's sophomore season in 2015, he missed the following year due to a broken hip suffered in a motor scooter accident. Bain watched many of the Owls' 2016 games from an outpatient rehabilitation center, before working all the way back to all-conference form in 2017 and 2018.



Colyn Givens joined the SMU football team as an assistant defensive line coach in the spring of 2025.

Prior to joining the Hilltop, Givens spent two seasons coaching at UTSA.

Givens coached one year for his Alma mater, Southern, in 2022 as a graduate assistant. He played for the Jaguars from 2018-21, playing in 11 games at defensive tackle.



Carson Morris enters his second season with the Mustangs

In 2024, Morris served as an offensive assistant, assisting with the quarterbacks.

He was previously the quarterbacks coach at Butler Junior College in Kansas.

Morris began his coaching journey at the University of Mississippi as a video student in 2020. He was a graduate assistant in 2023 before becoming one of the youngest position coaches in Division 1 football at Morehead State as the tight ends coach.

Morris earned his bachelor's degree in business marketing from Ole Miss (2022) and his Master's in sports and business administration (2023)

He also played quarterback at Frisco Liberty from 2017-18.



SHAWN GRISWOLD

HEAD FOOTBALL STRENGTH COACH/ASST. AD FOR HUMAN PERFORMANCE
UTAH STATE, 1996
FOURTH SEASON
COACHGRIZ91

Shawn Griswold was hired as Head Football Strength Coach/Assistant A.D. for Human Performance in January 2022.

Since taking over in 2022, the Mustangs have seen a transformational change in the program, resulting in a 2023 AAC Championship, the first in nearly 40 years, and the inaugural berth in the College Football Playoff (CFP) in 2024.

Griswold has crucial in the development of several key players during his time on Lashlee's staff, including Rashee Rice, Elijah Chatman, Jordan Miller, Charles Woods, Elijah Roberts, Brashard Smith and Jared Harrison-Hunte.

Griswold arrived on the Hilltop after four seasons at Virginia, where he served as the Director of Football Development and Performance. He helped the Cavaliers to three bowl appearances, including the 2018 Belk Bowl Championship, and the ACC Coastal Division title in 2019.

Prior to his time at Virginia, Griswold served as Head Coach for Sports Performance at Arizona State from 2012-17 and was the Director of Strength and Conditioning at Pittsburgh in 2011 and Tulsa from 2008-10. During that 10-year stretch, he helped teams to eight bowl games and four 10-win seasons. The Sun Devils made five bowl appearances, won the Pac-12 South Division in 2013 and finished No. 12 in the final AP Poll in 2014, while Pitt earned a berth in the BBVA Compass Bowl. The 2008-10 stint at Tulsa was the second for Griswold, who also led strength and conditioning efforts for the Golden Hurricane from 2004-06. TU earned four bowl berths in that time and won the 2005 Conference USA Championship. In 2007, Griswold was Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach at Louisville. Griswold spent five years as Head Strength and Conditioning Coordinator at his alma mater, Utah State, where he oversaw athletic development for 16 varsity sports and worked with football, basketball and volleyball.



MEGAN FERRAGUTI

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HEAD COACH OPERATIONS
AUBURN, 2015
FOURTH SEASON
MEGANACORNELL

Megan Ferraguti is an experienced sports management professional with a strong background in football operations, corporate partnerships, and client services. She joined SMU at the start of the Rhett Lashlee era in 2022 and has served as the Executive Director of Head Coach Operations since 2025, overseeing key aspects of the football program's daily operations. In this role, Megan manages Coach Lashlee's scheduling and day-to-day engagements, coordinates with football staff families, builds and maintains relationships with internal and external key stakeholders, and ensures the seamless execution of daily office operations.

Before joining SMU, Megan worked in the NFL with the Las Vegas Raiders (2018-2022) and in the MLB with the Texas Rangers Baseball Club (2016-2018), specializing in corporate partnerships activation.

Megan earned her Bachelor's degree in Public Relations with a minor in Business from Auburn University in 2015 and went on to complete her Master's in Sport Management from SMU in 2016.



JOSH NASH

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, 2017
FOURTH SEASON
JDNASH33

Josh Nash arrived on the Hilltop in 2022 as the assistant director of football operations at SMU after spending the previous three seasons as the director of football operations at UC Davis.

Nash was promoted to Executive Director of Football Operations in the spring of 2025.

He was elevated to Senior Director of Football Operations prior to the 2023 season.

Nash also made stops at Drake University serving as assistant offensive line coach and in operations, and at Washington as a director of basketball operations graduate assistant.

He has also worked operations for the Crossover Class (2020) and Baha Mar Showdown (2019) with Complete Sports Management, served as a football operations assistant at Kirby Smart Football Camps (2018) and was a director of football operations intern with ESPN for the Bahamas Bowl.

Nash graduated from Concordia University of Chicago in 2017, and majored in business communications with a sports management minor. He was a four-year letterwinner, special teams captain and a member of the Academic Honor Roll all four seasons. Named the Cougar Challenge team captain, Nash led a team of 10 with community service and academic achievement. He also created a scholarship fund with Northwestern Mutual to be given to a Student-Athlete at Concordia. Nash went on to earn a Masters of Education in intercollegiate athletic leadership from the University of Washington in 2018.



KINSEY LANDRY

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL RELATIONS
SECOND SEASON
LANDRYKINSEY

Kinsey Landry is in her third season with the SMU Mustangs Football Program, serving as the Director of Player Relations. In this role, she builds strong relationships with players and their families, manages the onboarding of incoming student-athletes, and provides ongoing support to current players throughout their college experience.

Prior to this role, Kinsey was the Assistant Director of Football Relations when she joined the SMU football staff in 2023, where she helped alleviate daily challenges in operations and scheduling for coaches, staff, families, former players, and donors.

Kinsey earned her undergraduate degree in Supply Chain Management and Organizational Leadership from the University of Arkansas in 2023 and is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Management at the SMU Cox School of Business. Operations Megan Cornell in helping organize and execute multiple tasks in an efficient manner throughout the historic season for the Mustangs.



HANNAH CESARIO

DIRECTOR OF INTERNAL OPERATIONS
OREGON STATE
FOURTH SEASON
 N/A

Hannah Cesario arrived on the Hilltop in February 2023.

Cesario serves as the Director of Internal Football Operations, managing the behind-the-scenes logistics and administrative support in the football office. In her role, she oversees all aspects of team travel, including hotels, charter flights, buses, and police escorts, and coordinates coaching conventions and major team events. She leads the football business department, handling purchases, invoicing, purchase orders, and financial reconciliations. She also organizes the daily schedules for coaches and players through Teamworks.

In addition to her operational duties, she currently serves as the former player liaison, maintaining communication with football alumni. Cesario also assists with community engagement through clinics and special events.

Before her current role, she spent four seasons as the Director of Football Operations and Video Coordinator at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, California. There, she managed a wide range of responsibilities including team travel, videography, film exchange, budget oversight, recruiting operations, official visits, meals, scheduling, game day logistics, and more.

Her football career began at Oregon State University, where she worked for four years in the Beavers' football video department. During that time, she also collaborated with the Pac-12 Network as part of their video production crew, providing multi-sport broadcast support.

She earned her degree in Digital Communications from Oregon State University in 2019.



ANNE-CLAIRE TINGLE

GRADUATE ASSISTANT / FOOTBALL OPERATIONS
FIRST SEASON
 -

Annie-Claire Tingle joined the Hilltop as a graduate assistant for football operations in 2025.



BRITNEY DOAN

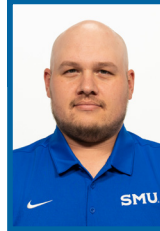
GRADUATE ASSISTANT / FOOTBALL RELATIONS
FIRST SEASON
BRITNEYDOAN

Britney Doan is entering her third season overall with SMU Football, first as a graduate assistant.

Currently, she serves as the Football Relations Graduate Assistant, a position she began in 2025, where she supports key areas of the program, including player development, staff and family engagement, official visits, community outreach, and onboarding for incoming student-athletes. She began working with the Mustangs in the spring of 2023 as a Recruiting Assistant before transitioning into this position.

During her time in recruiting, she helped enhance SMU's on-campus experience for prospective student-athletes. She contributed to the planning of official and unofficial visits, recruiting events, and game days. She also assisted with recruiting travel, camp logistics, and worked alongside external partners to support the recruiting effort.

Britney graduated with a BBA in Marketing from SMU in December 2024 and is currently pursuing her master's degree in Management from SMU's Cox School of Business.



DEVON KLEICH

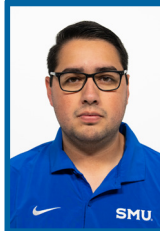
DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL VIDEO SERVICES
NEBRASKA
FOURTH SEASON
DEVONKLEICH

Devon Kleich joined the SMU football staff in spring of 2022 and serves as director of football video services.

Kleich arrived on the Hilltop after three seasons at UAB, where he served as video coordinator. Prior to that, he served collegiate stints at Miami as an assistant video producer (2017-19) and at Kansas as a video assistant (2017).

Kleich spent the 2016 season in the NFL as a video intern for the Minnesota Vikings.

A graduate of Nebraska, Kleich earned a degree in journalism and served as a student video coordinator for the football program.



MARCELO URIBE HERNANDEZ

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF VIDEO SERVICES
SECOND SEASON
 -

Marcelo Uribe Hernandez joined the SMU football staff in the summer of 2024 and serves as the Assistant Director of Video Services.

Uribe arrived at the Hilltop after one season at Texas Tech, where he served as Assistant Video Coordinator. Prior to that, he served as a Video Graduate assistant at SMU (2022-2023). He started his career as a student video assistant at Texas Tech (2019-2022).



COOPER LINDSEY

GRADUATE ASSISTANT / VIDEO SERVICES
FIRST SEASON
 -

Cooper Lindsey joined the SMU football staff in the summer of 2025 and serves as the Graduate Assistant for Football Video Services.

Lindsey arrived at the Hilltop after three seasons at Appalachian State, where he served as a Coaches' Video Assistant.

Lindsey earned a degree in Commercial Recreation Management with a minor in Sports Science from Appalachian State University in 2025 and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Sport Management from SMU.



CARTER STANTON

DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE STRATEGY
SECOND SEASON

 CARTERSTANTON

Carter Stanton enters his second season with the Mustangs, joining SMU in June of 2024 in the role of Director of Creative Strategy. In this role, he oversees the overall branding, strategy and execution of all creative content for the SMU football program.

Stanton's efforts helped lead to transformational growth for the SMU Football social media platforms in 2024. The Mustangs ranked 3rd in the country with a 245% engagement increase from 2023. Across all platforms, the SMU Football accounts totaled over 6 million engagements and 125 million impressions, leading to a total social media valuation of \$3.49 million from July 2024 to December 2024.

Stanton arrived at SMU after becoming the youngest social media coordinator in the four major US professional sports leagues, joining the Pittsburgh Pirates in April of 2023. During his time there, he devised, created and posted content for an audience of over two million followers.

Prior to the Pirates, Stanton worked as a student intern for the Oklahoma State athletic department in Stillwater, Oklahoma, where he captured and created photo, video and graphic design content and helped oversee the football team's social media publishing efforts.

Stanton graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in Sports Media in May of 2023. He is originally from Butler, Pennsylvania. His family resides in Parrish, Florida.



EMILIO TERRAZAS

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE CONTENT
SECOND SEASON

 MILLTI_

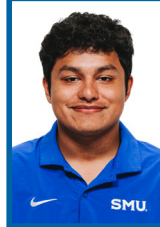
Emilio Terrazas enters his second season with the Mustangs, joining SMU in May of 2024 in the role of Assistant Director of Creative Content.

His responsibilities include producing, developing and posting recruiting and social content for the football program.

Terrazas' efforts helped lead to transformational growth for the SMU Football social media platforms in 2024. The Mustangs ranked 3rd in the country with a 245% engagement increase from 2023. Across all platforms, the SMU Football accounts totaled over 6 million engagements and 125 million impressions, leading to a total social media valuation of \$3.49 million from July 2024 to December 2024.

Terrazas previously worked with football at Arizona State from 2020-23, where he helped with recruiting content, internal content, uniform reveals, and gameday content. During his time there, he also worked with the women's basketball team from 2021-24. He was exclusively with the team for the 2023-24 season, helping with all recruiting and social content.

Terrazas graduated in May 2024 from Arizona State University with a degree in Sports Business and is originally from Los Angeles, Calif.



ROBERT FRANCO

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE VIDEO
FIRST SEASON

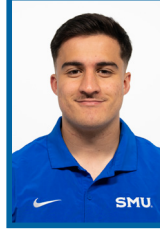
 RFURANKO

Franco is a 2022 graduate of Murray State University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in Finance while actively developing his passion for sports media. His journey in athletics began behind the camera, blending creative storytelling with a deep understanding of the student-athlete experience.

While at Murray State, Franco served as a videographer intern for both the football and basketball programs. In that role, he captured practice footage, game day content, and player features, while also assisting with post-production editing and social media content delivery — helping enhance the programs' digital presence and recruiting outreach.

Following his time at Murray State, Franco joined the University of Kentucky as the Visual Media Coordinator for UK Football, a role he held for three years. At Kentucky, he led creative video initiatives across multiple platforms, producing high-impact content including hype videos, in-depth player profiles, and cinematic recap pieces. He played a key role in elevating the program's brand through storytelling that resonated with fans, recruits, and the broader college football community.

Now at SMU, Franco serves as the Assistant Director of Creative Video, where he continues to bring energy and innovation to digital content creation. With a foundation in finance and a creative eye for film, Franco blends strategy with style — capturing the essence of Mustang athletics through a lens that highlights culture, emotion, and excellence.



ZEKE ARMIJO

GRADUATE ASSISTANT / CREATIVE CONTENT
FIRST SEASON

 ZEKEARMIJO

Zeke Armijo enters his first season with the Mustangs, joining SMU in May 2025 as a Creative Graduate Assistant.

In this role, he is responsible for designing and producing visual content including graphics and photography to support SMU football's recruiting efforts and social media presence.

Before arriving at SMU, Armijo served as the Graphic Designer and Photographer for Clemson men's basketball. During the 2024-25 season, he played a key role in shaping the team's creative direction, contributing to a historic campaign that featured a school-record 27 wins and an NCAA Tournament appearance. He also contributed to creative efforts for various other teams, capturing and producing content during media days, practices, and gamedays.

Before attending Clemson, he played defensive back in his hometown at Bakersfield College in California from 2020-2022, where he earned associate degrees in Communication Studies and Liberal Arts. He then transferred to Clemson University, graduating in May 2025 with a bachelor's degree in Graphic Communications.

He is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Advertising from the Temerlin Advertising Institute at SMU.



JR SANDLIN

ASSISTANT A.D. & GENERAL MANAGER
SECOND SEASON

✕ JR_SANDLIN

J.R. Sandlin enters his second year with the SMU Mustangs as the Assistant Athletic Director and General Manager for SMU Football. In his first season, the Mustangs posted a historic 2024 campaign, finishing 11-3 overall and 8-0 record in conference play while advancing to the ACC championship game. SMU earned its first-ever berth in the College Football Playoff as the No. 11 seed and signed the highest-ranked recruiting class in program history.

Sandlin brings 15 years of experience in college football and has been part of two national championships, seven conference championships, 13 postseason appearances, and 11 top-10 nationally ranked recruiting classes over the course of his career.

Before joining SMU, Sandlin spent two seasons at the University of Oklahoma as the Director of Player Personnel and Recruiting. In that role, he oversaw all aspects of roster management, recruiting operations, and player evaluation. During his time in Norman, he played a central role in building the Sooners' roster and supporting head coach Brent Venables' first two seasons. Under his direction, Oklahoma signed back-to-back consensus top-10 recruiting classes, recognized by multiple national outlets.

Before his time at Oklahoma, Sandlin spent eight seasons at Jacksonville State University, serving as the Gamecocks' Tight Ends coach while also holding leadership roles, including Senior Executive Head Coach, Recruiting Coordinator, and NFL Liaison. During his eight years coaching at JSU, the program won six Ohio Valley Conference championships, made seven postseason appearances, and advanced to the FCS National Championship Game in 2015. Throughout his tenure, Sandlin developed multiple All-Conference and All-American tight ends and played a key role in the Gamecocks' recruiting, player development, and NFL relations efforts.

Earlier in his career, Sandlin worked in recruiting departments at the University of Alabama, the University of Tennessee, and the University of Notre Dame. While at Alabama, he was part of two national championship teams in 2011 and 2012 and helped support the program's top-ranked recruiting classes during those years.

Sandlin began his career in coaching and football operations at the high school level, serving in various roles, including offensive coordinator, tight ends coach, director of player personnel, and football administrator.

A former student-athlete, Sandlin played tight end at the University of Central Florida, where he was a member of the 2005 Conference USA Championship team. He earned his bachelor's degree in Sports and Fitness from UCF in 2009 and a master's degree in Sport Management from the University of Alabama in 2012.



SCOTT X. NADY

EXEC. DIRECTOR OF ACQUISITION & PROGRAMMING,
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE HEAD COACH
NINTH SEASON

✕ COACHNADY

Scott Nady is in his ninth season (2025) on the Hilltop and serves as the senior assistant for player development and Dallas recruiting relations. He was born and raised in Dallas.

Nady has played a major role in the rise of the program during his time on the Hilltop, having helped rebuild the pipeline to talented players in the Metroplex.

Coach Nady built the accomplished football program at Parish Episcopal in Dallas, Texas from scratch as the head coach for 13 years. After starting the program, he served as the architect of Parish's two state championships—in 2010 and 2014. The team took its first snap in 2007 and was State Champs in 2010, the fastest from first snap to champions in Texas state history. Prior to taking over the Parish Episcopal football team, Nady worked with Coach Dan Calcagno to resurrect the San Leandro High School football program in California. He spent a total of six years on the sidelines at San Leandro in which the last four seasons the team dominated the competition with an impressive 48-4 record.

Nady played football at Cal, helping the team to appearances in the Copper Bowl, Alamo Bowl and Citrus Bowl. Coach Nady is also a former Golden Glove Champion.



DANNY WESLEY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PLAYER ENGAGEMENT,
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE HEAD COACH
FOURTH SEASON

✕ COACHOWES



CHRIS WOOD

DIRECTOR OF HIGH SCHOOL RELATIONS
FIRST SEASON

✕ CHRISWOOD72

Chris Wood joined the Mustangs in the summer of 2025 as Director of High School Relations.

Wood brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from the high school world to the Mustangs. He has spent multiple decades coaching in Arkansas, resulting in elite success and numerous state championships. Over 21 years as a head coach, he made eight state semi-final appearances, four state championship games, and won two state titles.

Wood also coached Lashlee in both junior high and high school. He also spent time as the offensive coordinator under famed head coach Mickey Moss at Austin High School, playing an instrumental role in turning the program around before returning to Arkansas in his coaching journey. Moss, who spent 25 seasons as a head coach, recorded 180 career wins and made the playoffs 16 times while also capturing six district titles, noticed Wood's coaching ability immediately from his early days coaching in Arkansas.



CONNOR MORGAN

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL
SECOND SEASON

CONNORMFB

Connor Morgan joined the Hilltop in 2024 as Director of Player Personnel.

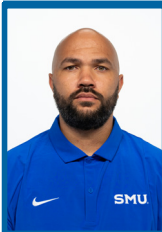
At SMU, Morgan is responsible for overseeing high school and transfer prospect identification, prospect game film evaluations and coaches recruiting travel. He also manages staff and operations of the personnel department along with running offense and defense prospect recruiting meetings. Morgan also handles prospect analytical recruiting research reports.

Morgan joined Baylor and coach Dave Aranda's staff in March of 2021, serving as a personnel assistant for the football team. He was promoted to Coordinator for Player Personnel in February of 2022.

In April of 2023, he was promoted to Associate Director of Player Personnel. At Baylor he oversaw maintenance of all recruiting databases, maintain and update current and future roster big board; conduct recruiting research and prepare statistical reports; analyze national trends in recruiting; assist with management of the Transfer Portal; compile daily list of names that entered the Transfer Portal; conduct recruiting research and prepare statistical reports; assist with management of graduate assistant and student assistants; create weekly informational reports relative to the recruitment process for prospective student-athletes. Assist with all Official/Unofficial visits, Junior Days, Camps and all Game Day recruiting.

Morgan previously served as a recruiting specialist for Alabama football from August 2017 to February 2021. He was tasked with acquiring film on high school prospects and assisting his assigned assistant coach with any and all recruiting tasks.

The Monroeville, Alabama, native graduated from the University of Alabama in 2020 with his bachelor's in education with a concentration in kinesiology. He then graduated with his master's in environmental sciences with a concentration in sport management.



MATTHEW MCHUGH

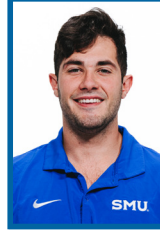
DIRECTOR OF OFFENSIVE PLAYER PERSONNEL
FIRST SEASON

COACH_MCHUGH

Matthew McHugh joined the Mustangs in the summer of 2025 as the Director of Offensive Player Personnel.

Before SMU, He spent time as an offensive coordinator at Crowley High School in Texas. He has also been at Corpus Christi Miller, Lubbock Estacado and Brownfield on the high school level.

He also spent time at North Texas on staff in the director of recruiting role. He has been considered one of the fastest-rising coaches coming up through the ranks by various publications.



JEREMIAH WAIT

DIRECTOR OF DEFENSIVE PLAYER PERSONNEL & NFL
LIAISON
FOURTH SEASON

MRFOOTBALLWAIT

Jeremiah Wait is entering his fourth season at SMU and his first as Director of Defensive Personnel & NFL Liaison.

He was elevated to his current role following the Mustangs' historic 2024 season, which featured a Top-12 national finish, the program's first-ever College Football Playoff appearance, and the signing of the No. 1 ranked high school recruiting class in the country for 2025.

Wait has played a key role in building and sustaining SMU's momentum—enhancing recruiting efforts on both the high school and transfer portal fronts, while forging a strong pipeline to elite talent across the Dallas-Fort Worth area. He previously served as Assistant Director of College Scouting and College Scouting Assistant during his first two years on the Hilltop.

Before arriving at SMU, Wait worked as a football scouting assistant at West Virginia, where he earned his master's degree and learned under Matt Jansen (now Director of Scouting at Notre Dame), a former NFL scout with the Texans and Ravens, and Alex Brown at SMU (now Director of Player Personnel at Ole Miss), one of the most respected evaluators in the industry.

He also completed a ticket sales and member services internship with the Jacksonville Jaguars.

A former running back and cornerback at Wisconsin-La Crosse, Wait transitioned into coaching as a student assistant following a career-ending injury. He has further



KENDAL LAMBERT

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF RECRUITING
SECOND SEASON

KENDALLAMBERT13

Kendal Lambert is currently the Senior Director of Recruiting and Events at SMU, where she oversees football recruiting operations and manages all related special events.

In 2023, she was the Assistant Director of Recruiting at LSU, handling day-to-day operations, supervising student staff, coordinating visits, and supporting head coach communications. LSU signed a top 5 recruiting class during her time there.

She previously worked at Auburn University as a Recruiting Coordinator starting in 2022, where she assisted with recruiting efforts and organized visits and events. Auburn signed a top 20 class during her tenure.

Kendal holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Relations (2021) and a Master's in Sports Hospitality (2022) from the University of Alabama, where she interned in recruiting and logistics, contributing to multiple top-ranked recruiting classes.



JAKE LANGI

SENIOR PERSONEL ANALYST
FIRST SEASON
✕ JAKELANGI

Jake Langi embarks on his first season at the Hilltop as Senior Personnel Analyst, where he plays a critical role in both player evaluation and recruitment. With 15 years of experience spanning the FCS, Group of Five, and Power Four levels, Langi brings significant knowledge to the Mustang program.

Before joining SMU, Langi spent three years in the private sector following a five-year tenure with the University of Texas. He initially worked as a Recruiting Assistant during the 2017 and 2018 seasons before his promotion to Player Personnel Analyst in 2019, the first in this role in program history. From 2021 to 2022, Langi also served as Junior College Liaison, managing Special Projects, while overseeing the recruitment and player assessments for the EDGE position.

His contributions were instrumental to Texas' achievement of three Top 10 signing classes over five years. Notably, Langi played a substantial part in the evaluation and/or recruitment of prominent athletes such as Junior Angilau, a three-year starter, and several eventual NFL players including Moro Ojomo, Jaylan Ford, Christian Jones, Alfred Collins, Vernon Broughton, David Gbenda, and Jake Majors. Additionally, he aided in the recruitment of Liona Lefau, who became the first-ever football recruit from Hawaii to sign with the Longhorns in 2023.

During Langi's time in Austin, the Longhorns captured four consecutive bowl victories including the 2018 Sugar Bowl win over fifth-ranked Georgia, culminating in a No. 8 national ranking and the institution's first 10-win season in a decade. Other highlights include triumphs in the 2017 Texas Bowl vs. Missouri, 2019 Alamo Bowl vs. 11th-ranked Utah, and 2020 Alamo Bowl vs. Colorado.

Langi's career began at Texas State University serving in diverse roles under three different head coaches. He was Offensive Line Assistant and the program's first Recruiting Assistant from 2008-2010, contributing to the Bobcats' 2008 Southland Conference Championship and NCAA Division I FCS quarterfinal appearance.



ETHAN HOUSER

GRADUATE ASSISTANT / PERSONNEL
FIRST SEASON

✕ ETHAN_HOUSERI

Ethan Houser joined SMU's football staff in January 2025 as a Player Personnel Specialist and was promoted five months later to his current role as a Player Personnel Graduate Assistant.

His responsibilities include evaluating high school and transfer portal prospects, maintaining the recruiting pipeline and database, and assisting with the execution of all recruiting events and visits.

Prior to his time at SMU, Houser worked in the player personnel department at Baylor from 2021 to 2022. While there, he contributed to prospect evaluation, database management, and the coordination of on-campus recruiting events.

Following his time at Baylor, Houser spent nearly two years as a Senior Financial Analyst at AT&T, where he was responsible for managing material expenses across national operations.

A native of Boerne, Texas, Houser earned a bachelor's degree in Finance and Management from Baylor University in 2023.

He is currently pursuing a Master's in Management from the Cox School of Business at SMU.



BRYAN FILKER

DIRECTOR OF RECRUITING OPERATIONS
FOURTH SEASON

✕ BRYANFILKER

Entering his fourth year at the Hilltop in 2025, Bryan Filker assumes a new role as the Director of Recruiting Operations, marking his fourth consecutive position within the institution.

His journey began as a College Scouting Assistant in 2022, followed by a role as a Player Personnel GA in 2023, and then Assistant Director of Recruiting Operations in 2024.

Prior to his transition to collegiate athletics, Filker gained valuable experience as a scouting and analytics intern with The 33rd Team, a distinguished football think tank, comprising of current and former NFL coaches, players, and scouts. In this capacity, he assessed NFL Draft prospects through film study, play charting, statistical analysis, and live evaluations. Additionally, Filker contributed to professional football as a Texas area scout for the CFL's Winnipeg Blue Bombers and served as a NFL liaison for the East West Shrine Bowl. Filker served with distinction in the United States Air Force for four years, specializing in F-22 intelligence with the 525 Fighter Squadron in JBER Alaska.

Filker's academic achievements are equally impressive, with multiple degrees under his belt. He recently graduated from American Military University with a Master of Science in Sports Administration in 2024. Prior to this, he earned a Master of Science in Sport Management from SMU in 2023. His undergraduate studies culminated in a Bachelor of Science in Sport Management, also from American Military University, where he graduated summa cum laude in 2022. Filker's educational journey began with an Associate of Applied Science in Intelligence Studies and Technology from the Community College of the Air Force, completed in 2020.



PAIGE SMITH

DIRECTOR OF ON-CAMPUS RECRUITING
SECOND SEASON

✕ PAIGENSMITH_

Paige Smith is entering her second season back on the Hilltop as the Director of On-Campus Recruiting.

She previously was had the assistant director position before a promotion after the historic 2024 season which saw the Mustangs make their first CFP appearance.

She previously served two seasons at Houston, serving as an on-campus recruiting coordinator during her final season. Prior to Houston, she was on the staff at SMU for a season as a recruiting assistant.

Smith worked in multiple capacities at her alma mater Texas Tech after receiving her bachelor's degree in 2019. While a student, she worked in recruiting and compliance with the Red Raiders.



BAYLEE BENNETT

GRADUATE ASSISTANT / RECRUITING
SECOND SEASON

✕ BAYLEEBENNETTFB

Baylee Bennett enters her second season with SMU in 2025 in the role of graduate assistant for recruiting.

Bennett came to the Hilltop from Oklahoma, where she spent four seasons as a recruiting specialist for the Sooners. During her time in Norman, OU landed four top-10 consensus classes by multiple publications during that time.

She graduated from Oklahoma with a Bachelor's of Business Administration in Sports Business & Marketing in 2023.



DWAYNE CHANDLER

ASSISTANT HEAD STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH
FOURTH SEASON

✕ N/A

Dwayne Chandler was named SMU's assistant head strength & conditioning coach in January 2022. Chandler came to the Hilltop after four seasons at Virginia, where he helped the Cavaliers to three bowl appearances, including the 2018 Belk Bowl Championship, and the ACC Coastal Division title in 2019.

Prior to his time in Charlottesville, Chandler spent a season as the head S&C coach at Georgia Southern, and before that he was the associate director of athletic performance at Memphis (2014-16). In year one with Memphis, he helped the Tigers to an American Athletic Conference Championship. In 2015, Memphis equaled a school record for victories, going 10-3, capped off by a win over BYU in the Miami Beach Bowl.

Chandler arrived in Memphis after spending the 2012-13 seasons as the assistant athletic director for sports enhancement at UAB, where he oversaw strength and conditioning efforts with direct oversight of the Blazers' football performance programs. Prior to that, he was on staff at his alma mater, Oklahoma, from 2009-11, and was an assistant strength and conditioning coach with the Denver Broncos during the 2007 and 2008 seasons where he worked with Jay Cutler, Brandon Marshall and Champ Bailey.

Before moving to the NFL, Chandler was on staff at Minnesota (2001-06) starting as a strength and conditioning and speed coach before being elevated to co-head strength and conditioning coach in 2003. In 2004, he was named head strength and conditioning coach. While with the Gophers, he mentored 12 NFL Draft picks, including 2006 first rounder Laurence Maroney and 2005 fourth-round selection Marion Barber III. Chandler's efforts also helped Minnesota to bowl games in each of his last five seasons.

Prior to his time in the Twin Cities, he spent a season with the Dallas Cowboys as a strength and conditioning intern.

Chandler is Strength and Conditioning Coach Certified (SCCC) by the Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches Association. He is also USA Weightlifting Certified.

He was a four-year letterwinner (1992-96) at fullback and led the Oklahoma in touchdowns (12) in 1993. He earned his bachelor's degree in communication/sociology from Oklahoma in 2000.



NOLAN DARBY

ASSISTANT STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH
FOURTH SEASON

✕ N/A

Nolan Darby joined the Hilltop in 2022 and is the Assistant Strength & Conditioning Coach



CAMERON PRATER

ASSISTANT STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH
FOURTH SEASON

✕ N/A

Cameron Prater joined the Hilltop in 2022 and is the Assistant Strength & Conditioning Coach



GARY CHAMBERS

ASSISTANT STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH
SECOND SEASON

✕ COACHGCHAMBERS

Gary Chambers II is entering his second year with SMU as the Assistant Director of Strength and Conditioning in 2025.

He played a key role in the team's development in the weight room and in conditioning in 2024, which ultimately led to an appearance in the College Football Playoff.

Chambers came to the Hilltop after working as a performance specialist at Exos, a sports performance and training organization that offers its services to a variety of businesses and athletes in Frisco.

While earning his master's degree in sport and fitness administration at Eastern Michigan, he served as a strength and conditioning coach for the Eagles for two years.

The Glendale, Arizona, native played collegiately at Arizona State, seeing action in 34 games with seven starts. During his career with the Sun Devils, Chambers tallied 690 receiving yards with four touchdowns on 36 receptions. Following his four years at ASU, he was signed as an undrafted free agent with the Buffalo Bills.



CHRISTY SCHULD

ASSISTANT A.D. OF NUTRITION
FIRST SEASON



Christy Schuld enters her second season with SMU in 2025, first with football.

She joined the Mustangs as Director of Sports Nutrition for Olympic sports prior to the start of the 2024 year before being promoted to Football in the spring of 2025.

She previously work at USC from 2021 to 2024 as the Sports Dietitian for the Baseball, Lacrosse, Soccer, and Tennis programs.

Prior to USC, Schuld participated in the Gatorade Sports Nutrition Immersion Program (SNIP) as a Fellow at the Utah Jazz (2020-2021).

She received a Master of Science in Nutrition, Healthspan and Longevity at USC in 2020. While a student in the Coordinated Program, Schuld held dietetic internships with USC Athletics, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Keck Hospital, and Verdugo Hills Hospital.



STEVE PLOURDE

HEAD FOOTBALL ATHLETIC TRAINER
THIRD SEASON



Steve Plourde joined SMU's Sports Medicine Staff in February of 2023 and serves as the Head Football Athletic Trainer for the Mustangs. In this role, he will lead all aspects of sports medicine efforts for the football team, including year-round preventative care, immediate care for injured student-athletes and reconditioning of injured student-athletes. He is very familiar with SMU, having served as an Assistant Athletic Trainer from 2017-2021, assisting with football and overseeing the healthcare for men's golf.

Prior to returning to SMU, Plourde was the Head Football Athletic Trainer for The University of New Mexico. While at UNM, Plourde was responsible for the healthcare of the Lobo football team, including prevention and treatment of injuries and working with the UNM sports medicine team on prevention, diagnosis, and best practices.

Prior to Plourde's first stint at SMU, he spent two years as an intern athletic trainer for the Oakland Raiders from 2015-2017. He received his bachelor's degree in athletic training from the University of Nebraska in 2013. He also earned his master's degree in sports administration from the University of New Mexico in 2015, while serving as a graduate assistant athletic trainer for the football team. He also assisted with UNM golf, skiing, baseball, men's basketball and track and field.

Plourde holds two certifications from the National Academy of Sports Medicine as a corrective exercise specialist and performance enhancement specialist. He holds a certification in applied functional science from the Gray Institute. He has an advanced certification for dry needling for orthopedic rehabilitation and sport performance. He also holds certifications in CPR and AED from the American Red Cross.

He and his wife, Amanda, have four daughters and one dog.



FRANK HAIGHT

DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL EQUIPMENT
FOURTH SEASON



Frank Haight enters his fourth season as Director of Football Equipment in 2025.

Haight joined the Mustangs in 2022. He has also worked for the Dallas Cowboys for several seasons.



MIKE MORTON

ASSOC. A.D./STUDENT HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
PURDUE, 1996
28TH SEASON

Mike Morton is in his 28th season (2025-26) at SMU, having joined the Mustang staff in the fall of 1998. As the Associate Athletic Director of Student Health and Well-Being, Mike is responsible for managing both the physical and mental health care that is provided to SMU's 17 Varsity Intercollegiate Sports. Morton serves as the primary health care administrator for SMU Sports Medicine, he is the primary liaison to the medical community, he is responsible for managing a staff of 12 full-time and 4 intern certified athletic trainers.

In May 2020, Morton completed a 2 year term as President for Sports Medicine for the American Athletic Conference. He is a member of the Executive Board for the Alliance of Intercollegiate Sports Medicine (The AISM), and he works with the National Football League as an Injury Spotter at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas. In 2014, Morton was awarded the SMU President's Award for Continuing Excellence for his service and contributions to SMU.

Morton began his education as a student athletic trainer at Purdue University. He was awarded the Newell-Combs Scholarship for excellence in athletic training his senior year and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Athletic Training in May 1996. As part of his undergraduate study, Morton completed an internship with the Indianapolis Colts during the 1995 season.

Following his time at Purdue, Morton moved on to Auburn, where he earned a Masters of Education in Higher Education Administration and Sports Administration. While completing his degree, Morton served as the graduate assistant athletic trainer for a Tiger baseball team that advanced to the 1997 College World Series and won the 1998 SEC Championship.

A native of Churubusco, Ind., Morton is married to the former Michelle Gilbert and the couple has two daughters, Carys and Violet, and a son, Michael. Mike and his family currently reside in Flower Mound, Texas.



SMU ADMINISTRATION



JAY HARTZELL

PRESIDENT

Jay C. Hartzell proudly serves as the 11th president of SMU. A nationally recognized university leader with deep expertise in business education and research, President Hartzell was appointed by the SMU Board of Trustees, beginning his tenure June 1, 2025. He leads the University during an unprecedented era of opportunity and momentum, inspiring the future direction of SMU.

President Hartzell is charting the course for SMU, building on a generation of remarkable success for the University that includes recognition among Research One institutions in the Carnegie Classification with the highest level of research productivity, membership in the Atlantic Coast Conference and the successful conclusion of a multi-year \$1.64 billion comprehensive campaign. The University continues to dramatically expand its reach and reputation both nationally and internationally, attracting excellent faculty and enrolling increasingly high-achieving students from all 50 states and 86 countries.

His bold vision for the future will further cement and expand SMU's position as a premier student-centered University while elevating its national and global influence. He is powering new paths for education, research and community while enhancing the University's relationship with, and dynamic impact on, the vibrant Dallas economy.

A respected scholar, his research centers on corporate finance, corporate governance, and real estate. He has published articles in top journals, such as the Journal of Finance, Journal of Financial Economics, The Review of Economics and Statistics, and Real Estate Economics.

Before joining SMU, President Hartzell served as president of The University of Texas at Austin, where he oversaw all-time highs in applications, enrollment, graduation rates, research expenditures and philanthropic support. Prior to that, he served as dean of the McCombs School of Business, one of the nation's largest and most prestigious business schools, where he served as a faculty member for more than 20 years. He started his academic career as an assistant professor of finance at New York University's Stern School of Business.

Beyond campus, President Hartzell serves on the board of MGIC Investment Corporation. He has been a board member for Austin Habitat for Humanity and the American Real Estate and Urban Economics Association. President Hartzell brings professional experience outside of academia as a former consultant with Hewitt Associates.

He earned a Bachelor of Science in business administration and economics (cum laude) from Trinity University and a Ph.D. in finance from UT Austin. He is married to Kara Hartzell, a licensed clinical social worker with a private practice, and they have two adult children. The Hartzells are proud to call Dallas home.



MICHAEL HARRIS

FACULTY ATHLETIC REPRESENTATIVE

Michael S. Harris is the interim dean of the Simmons School of Education and Human Development and a professor of higher education in the Department of Education Policy and Leadership. He is also the University's faculty athletics representative and helps represent SMU to the Atlantic Coast Conference and the NCAA. His primary research interests consider the culture, strategy, and behavior of higher education institutions. Harris has taught graduate courses in organization and governance, academic leadership, organizational theory, and the history of American higher education. Currently, he is working on a book on higher education leadership under contract with Harvard Education Press.

Harris was a 2024-2025 fellow of the American Council on Education where he studied leadership and strategy at the University of Utah. At SMU, he has held leadership roles as Chair of the Department of Education Policy and Leadership and Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence. He is a past president of the Faculty Senate and served as Faculty Trustee during the 2023-2024 academic year.

His work has been published in leading higher education journals such as The Journal of Higher Education, Research in Higher Education, Higher Education, Innovative Higher Education, and Higher Education Policy. He has published four books, Teaching for Learning: 101 Intentionally-Designed Educational Activities to Put Students on the Path to Success 2nd Edition (Routledge, 2021) with co-authors Claire H. Major and Todd Zakrajsek, The Qualitative Dissertation in Education: A Guide for Integrating Research and Practice (Routledge, 2019) with coauthor Karri Holley, How to Get Tenure: Strategies for Successfully Navigating the Process (Routledge, 2019), and Understanding Institutional Diversity in American Higher Education (Jossey-Bass, 2013).

Harris is a frequent observer of higher education, and his expertise has been quoted by The Associated Press, The Atlantic, The Boston Globe, The Houston Chronicle, The Dallas Morning News, Texas Tribune, Texas Capital Tonight, Propublica, Marketwatch, The Chronicle of Higher Education, and InsideHigherEd, among others.

He holds a B.A. from the University of North Carolina in American History, a M.Ed. and Ed.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in higher education administration. In 2004, he received the AERA Division J Dissertation of the Year award.



DAMON EVANS

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS
AD_DAMONEVANS

Damon Evans began his tenure as SMU's Director of Athletics on March 31, 2025. Before coming to the Hilltop, Evans served as the top athletics administrator at two Power Four programs, Maryland and Georgia.

"Our goal was to find a leader who shared our vision for the future of SMU Athletics - one of continued and even greater national prominence. We found that in a world-class athletic director with experience leading in both the Big Ten and SEC conferences, and who will bring bold, innovative ideas to our campus," said search committee co-chair and Board of Trustees Chair David B. Miller '72, '73, a former SMU student-athlete. "Damon has led two top-tier athletics programs, and now he will lead a third. Damon's knowledge, experience and extensive contacts in intercollegiate athletics will be invaluable in leading our Athletics program to even greater success in the ACC while strategically navigating the evolving NIL landscape."

Evans was named the Barry P. Gossett Director of Athletics at the University of Maryland in June 2018. Under his leadership, the Terrapins won 49 Big Ten championships and tournament titles. The program earned seven national championships while he was in College Park. There, he oversaw a department with 20 varsity sports, 500 student-athletes, a full-time staff of over 200 and an annual budget exceeding \$120 million.

Before Maryland, Evans held several management roles in the private sector, including as managing partner at Evolution Sports Partners in New Jersey, vice president of fundraising at IMG College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina – where he was tasked with developing the company's fundraising arm – and vice president of business development at the Markley Group in Boston, Massachusetts.

As the University of Georgia's athletics director from 2004 to 2010, Evans oversaw a program with 600 student-athletes, a staff of 250, and an \$85 million budget. During his tenure, the Bulldogs won 13 national championships and 19 SEC titles. Under his leadership, Georgia consistently ranked in the top 10 of the Learfield Director's Cup and grew its athletic department reserve fund by more than \$56 million, reaching \$65 million in just six years. In 2009, Evans was named the Under Armour Athletic Director of the Year for the Division I Southeast Region. He earned the Sports Business Journal's "Forty Under 40" award in 2004, 2005 and 2007.

Evans was a four-year starter on Georgia's football team, playing in three bowl games under the legendary Coach Vince Dooley. He earned a bachelor's degree in finance and a master's degree in sport management, both from Georgia. He and his wife, Kerri, have two children, Cameron and Kennedy.

The SMU Athletics Department has great momentum as Evans' tenure begins. In 2023–24, SMU set a program record with eight championship teams, including a second straight National Equestrian Championship and seven conference titles. Mustang student-athletes won 28 individual or event conference championships and earned more than 100 all-conference honors across 17 programs.

In 2023–24, SMU had 15 teams compete in the postseason, with nine finishing in the NCAA or national top 35. The fall of 2024 saw Mustang football reach the College Football Playoff and ACC Championship Game, while volleyball and men's soccer earned top-10 rankings. SMU also achieved its highest-ever ranking – 18th nationally – in the Learfield Directors' Cup Division I Fall Standings. These successes come alongside record fundraising and attendance milestones during the Mustangs' inaugural season in the ACC.

SMU Athletics is entering a new era, distinguished by excellence in academics and competition, and bringing top-tier collegiate sports to Dallas, recently recognized as the No. 1 city for sports business by Sports Business Journal.

Since 2013, all 17 programs have reached the postseason, with 16 winning conference titles. As Dallas' only NCAA FBS program, SMU has achieved 10 national championships, more than 200 team conference titles, over 100 individual national championships, more than 150 NCAA Top 10 finishes, nearly 2,000 All-American honors and more than 150 Olympians.



BRIAN ULLMANN

EXECUTIVE DEPUTY ATHLETICS DIRECTOR
ULLMANTERP

Brian Ullmann was named Executive Deputy Athletic Director for SMU Athletics by Director of Athletics Damon Evans on April 24, 2025. In this role, Ullmann is responsible for the strategy and administration of marketing, communications, development, institutional partnerships, ticket operations, premium seating and hospitality. Additionally, he assists the Director of Athletics with the day-to-day management of the department.

Ullmann joins the Mustangs after serving as Deputy Athletic Director and Chief Strategy Officer at Maryland since 2019. In that role, he was responsible for all external units, including marketing, communications, sponsorships, video, strategic partnerships and ticket operations. Ullmann also managed the creation of the One Maryland Collective and a new revenue-sharing management department, which he oversaw.

From 2020-2024, he simultaneously served as the Vice President of Marketing and Communications for the University, where he managed a 50+ unit including communications, marketing, creative services, editorial (including Terp, the alumni magazine), and web services. It was a role he also held from 2010-2017.

Outside of Maryland, Ullmann has also worked as the Director of Marketing for the Washington, DC Convention and Tourism Corporation, Director of Marketing and Development for Special Olympics DC (where he also served as a volunteer basketball coach), and as Vice President of Marketing and Communications for Rare, a global conservation organization.

"We are excited to have Brian join us on the Hilltop," said Evans. "His unique set of skills and experiences from the highest levels of athletics and university administration will make him a great asset as we strategically elevate the Mustangs' brand in the national landscape."