

# Former Cougar Student-Athlete Marcus Evans Returns To Alma Mater To Coach SIUE Track and Field/Cross Country Team

by Joe Pott

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EDWARDSVILLE – Former Cougar student-athlete Marcus Evans is returning to his alma mater as the new Head Coach for SIUE's Track and Field and Cross Country programs as announced by SIUE Director of Athletics Tim Hall.

"Marcus checked all of the boxes," Hall said. "His intricate and intimate knowledge of our university and its relational culture, his commitment to the Metro East and our service region as well as his training and temperament made it clear he was the right choice."

"I can't fully explain how happy and excited I am to come home," Evans said. "I am thankful to Tim Hall and to the search committee for the faith they have put in me. I thank our student-athletes at SIUE for being patient. They had to miss out on an outdoor season (due to the pandemic) and then had to wait through the unknown. I want them to know that I am here for them. I am thankful to the entire SIUE community and for the chance to be able to step back in.

"It's always been a dream to come back to rock the red," Evans added.

Evans returns to Edwardsville after spending the past nine years at Lipscomb University, first as a graduate assistant, then as an assistant coach before rising to the position of Associate Head Coach. Evans' work centered primarily on sprinters, hurdlers, relays, jumpers, and multi-event athletes.

Under Evans' direction, Bison athletes won 17 Atlantic Sun Conference individual titles. During his tenure, Evans has helped athletes break 36 school records including the men's and women's 4x400m relays, the men's 4x100m, 110m Hurdles, 400 hurdles, 100m, 200m, and 400m.

"I have been given a lot of responsibility (at Lipscomb) to make decisions," Evans said. "I have had two head coaches that put a lot on my plate. They have given me guidance but also the freedom to do things on my own."

Also serving as the program's academic coordinator, Evans oversaw study hall hours, academic progress reports and the assigning of tutors. Lipscomb's track and field program finished with the second-highest grade point average as ranked by the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association following the 2018-19 school year.

"It was important to hire someone who had the comprehensive welfare of our student-athletes as a priority," Hall continued. "Additionally, Marcus is an individual committed to academic success and building a more successful, winning culture."

After running for the Cougars from 2007-2010, Evans began his coaching career at Adrian College, an NCAA Division III institution in Adrian, Michigan. Evans oversaw the sprinters, hurdlers and jumpers while also assisting in the management of the intramural program.

From Adrian, Evans moved to Lipscomb.

As a student-athlete at SIUE, Evans competed as a sprinter, hurdler and relay team member as the Cougars' transitioned from NCAA Division II to NCAA Division I. He was a two-time All-Great Lakes Valley Conference performer, a two-time NCAA Division II Provisional Qualifier and a two-time NCAA Division I Regional Qualifier.

"I ran for Coach (Ben) Beyers and for Coach (Dave) Astrauskas and for Coach (Kareem) Jackson at SIUE," Evans added. "I learned as much from them as I did from the coaches I worked for at Adrian and at Lipscomb."

Originally from Skokie, Illinois, Evans earned his bachelor's degree from SIUE in 2010 and his master's from Lipscomb in 2013. Evans is a USATF Level 1 certified coach. He also holds certifications in Track and Field Coaching and Strength and Conditioning and as a Sprint, Hurdle, and Relay Specialist.

"Our expectation is that he will take our program to a higher level of competitive success, while educating the future leaders of our society," Hall added.

Evans is married to Megan (Dennis) Evans, who was a member of SIUE's track and field team from 2007-2010. They couple has a son, Asher.

"We are excited to be back in the Midwest and back in Illinois," Evans said. "Megan and I want to raise our son closer to home in Illinois."