

It's A Family Tradition: Nicholas Colona Is Hired As Blackburn Assistant Men's Cross Country Coach

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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CARLINVILLE - When it comes to coaching cross country and track and field, for the Colona family it is a family tradition. Nicholas Colona, the son of famed East Alton-Wood River cross country and track and field coach Russ Colona, has accepted an invitation to join the Blackburn College men's cross country team as a volunteer assistant coach.

Nicholas graduated from Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin, in 2011 with a major in geography and meteorology. During his four years at Carthage, Nicholas competed at the NCAA Division III level as a member of both the cross country and track & field teams.

Nicholas is originally from East Alton, Illinois, and was coached by his father at East Alton-Wood River (EA-WR) High School where he graduated with high honors. After college, he was honored to move back to his hometown and start his coaching career serving as an assistant coach to his father at EAWR.

During his athletic and coaching career, he has been a part of Madison County championship teams, and conference championship teams, as well as coaching Jayden Ulrich, a multiple state champion and All-American at EA-WR High School. Ulrich is now starring in the weights at Indiana University.

“I am so pleased to welcome Coach Nick and his experience both as a college athlete and as an assistant coach,” said Coach Al Sturgeon, head coach of the Blackburn cross country teams. “Nick will relate well to our student-athletes and provide value in all aspects of our program.”

Nick said he was excited to coach at the college level.

“I’m ready to learn and help build a successful cross country program at Blackburn,” he said.