



Eddie Griffin To Retire

TAHLEQUAH – Eddie Griffin, director of athletics at Northeastern State University, has announced his retirement, effective Oct. 1, 2008. Griffin has accepted the position of Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at the Jim Thorpe Association and Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame.

One of only four athletic directors in school history, Griffin came to NSU in 2000. In 2003, the same year Northeastern State won the NCAA Division II Men's Basketball championship, he and several members of the NSU and Tahlequah communities spearheaded a sales tax initiative that raised \$2 million for improvements to Doc Wadley Stadium at Gable Field. By 2006 nearly \$4.5 million in new construction and other renovations to athletic facilities were completed, including an indoor practice facility that is the only one of its kind in the Lone Star Conference. It also is the only building on the NSU campus to be constructed solely from private donations. Other facility improvements included a Hall of Honor, locker room renovations and court redesign in Dobbins Field House and a new locker room at the NSU Soccer Complex.



"On behalf of the entire institution, I want to congratulate Eddie Griffin on achieving the level of success at Northeastern that prepared him for this outstanding career opportunity," said Dr. Don Betz, NSU president. "Although I have only worked with Eddie a short time, it is clear that his invaluable service as athletic director will benefit our student athletes and all of NSU well into the future. He deserves our heartfelt thanks for his work here and our congratulations as he moves on to the next step in a highly successful career."

Under Griffin's leadership Northeastern has enjoyed a student-athlete graduation rate that ranks among the best in the Lone Star Conference. NSU's academic success rate for student-athletes is nearly 73 percent.

Griffin also began the NSU Athletic Association five years ago. This group has reconnected with hundreds of letter winners, other NSU graduates and is well on its way of achieving its goal of raising \$1 million for NSU Athletics over a 10-year period.

"We have had a great run at Northeastern State University," said Griffin. "The Athletic Department is in great shape because of our quality staff and dedicated coaches who care about student-athletes. I will certainly miss working with our coaches and interacting with our student-athletes as they prepare themselves to be productive members of society."

"Northeastern State is a great institution, steeped with heritage and tradition, with the promise of a brighter future. I want to thank everyone there, including President Don Betz and members of his administrative cabinet, for the opportunity to serve as athletic director. I have a high respect for Dr. Betz and the Northeastern family."

Griffin's ties to the Thorpe Association have deep roots. He was responsible for implementing the Jim Thorpe All-Star football games in Oklahoma City and Tulsa in the early 1990s and has served on its executive council for many years.

"This is a 'once-in-a-lifetime' opportunity for Shirley and me," said Griffin, who came to NSU after serving as director of athletics for the Oklahoma City Public Schools. "I am looking forward to continuing to work for the benefit of student-athletes in my new role with Lynne Draper and the great staff at the Jim Thorpe Association."

A native of Oklahoma City and an Oklahoma State graduate, Griffin was a highly successful wrestling coach at Central Oklahoma and Clemson University. He coached teams to three national titles at UCO and was the NAIA Coach of the Year three times. He also coached Clemson to the ACC title in 1991 when his team posted an undefeated duals record. In April

2002 he was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. Griffin also has served as a member of the ranking committee for the Southwest Region in football and the PROP (Playing Rules Oversight Panel) Committee for the NCAA.

"Eddie's accomplishments bring long term benefits to our athletic programs," Betz said. "As we begin the search for our next athletic director, Eddie's leadership during the past eight years will continue to inspire staff, coaches, and students. In leaving us, he joins the ranks of an outstanding group of athletic directors during the past century, and has set the stage for the next chapter in Northeastern athletics."

Northeastern State University Athletic Directors

- • D.M. "Doc" Wadley (1949-1969)
- • Dr. Jack Dobbins (1969-1993)
- • Gil Cloud (1994-2000)
- • Eddie Griffin (2000-2008)

8/11/2008

[Go back to News Central](#)