

Ohio State Athletic Director Ross Bjork Named NACDA President



Bjork's busy start to his Ohio State tenure continued on Wednesday when he was officially appointed to serve as president of the National Association of College Directors of Athletics, or NACDA, for the 2024-25 academic year.

Bjork, who took over as Ohio State's athletic director on July 1 following Gene Smith's retirement, had served as an NACDA officer since 2021 and was also a NACDA Executive Committee member from 2015-19. Before that, he was president of the National Association of Athletic Development Directors, or NAADD, from 2006-07.

The 51-year-old Bjork replaces former Ohio State executive associate athletic director and current Washington AD Pat Chun, whose tenure as president concluded after the 2024 NACDA & Affiliates Convention in Las Vegas earlier this summer.

Bjork will work alongside first vice president Heather Lyke — another former Smith disciple and current athletic director at Pittsburgh — along with second and third VPs Sean T. Frazier of Northern Illinois and Pennie Parker of Rollins College.

"Simply put, I am a product of NACDA - that's why I'm here," Bjork said in a statement. "As we go into 2024-25, we're going to remember that we are the leading educational platform in college athletics, and we're going to continue to provide best practices and lessons learned. In all of this uncertainty and chaos that may be going on inside our walls, how do we capitalize on the momentum that we have outside of our walls? College athletics has never been more popular - that's our job. We can always make sure that we remember why we are here, and that is for the student-athletes."

"As NACDA has continued to grow and develop over the last several decades, so has Ross as a trusted voice and thought leader in our industry," said NACDA Chief Executive Officer Pat Manak. "Ross has grown in his career beginning with NAADD, to leading the Senior Administrators Mentoring Institute, to becoming a NACDA Officer and serving as a mentor to many along his journey. NACDA & Affiliates members will continue to learn from him this year as he embarks on his new roles both at Ohio State

and within the Association.”

Bjork leads the NACDA in its 60th year of operation. The organization serves as the professional and educational association for more than 23,000 college athletics administrators at more than 2,200 schools throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico, where it aims to offer educational opportunities and act as a vehicle for networking and the exchange of information to those working in athletic administration.

Bjork is the third sitting Ohio State athletic director to lead the NACDA, joining Dick Larkins, who was the association’s second-ever president from 1966-67, and Jim Jones, who served from 1992-93. Smith was the NACDA’s first black president from 1994-95 while he was athletic director at Iowa State.