

Arizona Western College Names Tom Minnick Head Football Coach

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Yuma, Arizona - Arizona Western College is proud to announce that Tom Minnick has been named as the new Matadors' Head Football Coach. Minnick was officially introduced to the media earlier this afternoon in a press conference on the AWC campus. The announcement of Minnick ends a national month-long search to fill the position.

Minnick brings with him a resume' as impressive as any current community college football coach. Minnick has spent the last 10 years of his life helping the Joliet Junior College Wolves in Illinois become one of the most successful community college football programs around. Minnick's coaching career began as an assistant under Bob McDougall at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. Minnick was with McDougall at DuPage for 7 seasons, and during that time, the Chaparrals compiled a stellar 62-9 record with 7 straight bowl appearances (4 bowl wins). In 1998, Minnick took what he learned from the legendary McDougall and headed 35 miles south to Joliet JC as an assistant. McDougall made the same trip 2 years later as Joliet's head coach, making Minnick his top assistant, and the Wolves' program took off. The Wolves lost their first game of the 2001 season, then didn't lose again for two years, defeating Iowa Area Community College in the Pepsi-Cola/Siglet Printing Bowl to become NJCAA Non-Scholarship Champions in 2001; then running the table for a perfect 11-0 record in 2002, capping the season with a 24-14 upset of perennial football power Georgia Military to win the 2002 NJCAA National Championship. McDougall retired in 2006, and Joliet finally gave Minnick his first chance to be a head coach. Minnick didn't disappoint, taking the 2006 Wolves to a 7-4 record, a Midwest Football Conference East Division title, a trip to the Graphic Edge Printing Bowl, and a #19 national ranking. Last season, Minnick returned JJC to the high level they had achieved in the early part of the decade, winning the last 9 games of the 2007 season to finish with a 10-2 record and earning their 2nd straight MFC East Division crown. Their 28-21 win over North Iowa Area Community College last November in the Graphic Edge Printing Bowl in Cedar Falls, Iowa, gave them the #10 ranking in the final NJCAA Football Poll-their highest national ranking in 5 years. For Minnick, 2007 also earned him the honors of MFC East Division Coach of the Year and Region IV Coach of the Year.

As a player, Minnick was a highly touted quarterback who first led Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana to the 1985 Class 2A Indiana State Football Championship before becoming an All-Conference QB at the College of DuPage (his head coach at DuPage? You guessed it: Bob McDougall). Minnick finished his playing career with 2 very successful seasons as starting quarterback for NJCAA Division II's University of Missouri-Rolla. As evidenced by his staying power at 2 top college programs in 17 years, there is one word that permeates Minnick's resume' and dedication which impressed the Matadors' brain trust. "From the beginning, Tom stressed the word 'loyalty' for success in every aspect of the football program," said AWC Athletic Director Jerry Smith. "He was loyal to Coach McDougall, passing up several earlier chances to become a head coach. When Tom became a head coach, he was loyal to the assistants that were with him. He has continued to be loyal to his student-athletes, making sure they put their academics first, got an opportunity to get a 4-year degree, and put those principles of loyalty and dedication to work in their own lives. We saw the integrity that Tom has in his life and think it's a perfect fit for the student-athletes here at Arizona Western College. We look forward to Tom and his family becoming valued members of our campus community and the Yuma community as a whole."

Minnick takes over the reins of the football program a little less than 3 months before the AWC Football team kicks off its 2008 regular season against American Sports University at Veterans Memorial Stadium on Saturday, September 6th. Kickoff is scheduled for 7PM.