

UNK athletic director has Gothenburg ties

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The family of new University of Nebraska at Kearney athletic director Paul Plinske has ties to Gothenburg.

Plinske's wife, Elizabeth, is the daughter of two Gothenburg natives. Her father, Randall Kampfe, was born and raised in Gothenburg, the son of the late Reuben and Dorothea Kampfe. Her mother, Patricia, was born in Detroit, IL, and moved with her family to Gothenburg when she was 1. She is the daughter of the late Dr. Samuel and Patricia Perry.

Elizabeth was raised in Decatur, IL. The Plinskes have two daughters, Allison and Lauren.

Plinske, currently director of athletics at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, has led the Division III school since 2004. UW-Whitewater is a 20-sport NCAA Division III athletics program that includes 700 student athletes and 50 coaches and staff members.

"Paul brings vision and a wealth of experience and noteworthy accomplishments to UNK," UNK chancellor Doug Kristensen said. "He is the best fit for moving our athletic program forward in a time of rapid change, challenges and opportunities in collegiate athletics."

Under Plinske's leadership UW-Whitewater won nine national championships, had seven national runner-up finishes, won 42 conference titles and secured more than \$12 million through fundraising to support facility enhancements, including an \$8 million outdoor athletic complex renovation. He also recently concluded a three-year term as chair of the NCAA Division I, II and III Women's Gymnastics Committee.

"It is an honor to be selected as the next director of athletics at the University of Nebraska at

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Kearney,” Plinske said. “I am genuinely excited to be in a position to collaborate with the campus and community to further advance the mission of the university and Loper athletics.

During Plinske’s tenure, UW-Whitewater experienced tremendous financial growth to support its programming and operations. Corporate sponsorships and ticket revenue quadrupled the past four years, a major reason being an increase in Warhawk football attendance. For the past nine seasons UW-Whitewater was among the top three in Division III attendance, averaging 7,552 spectators per game.

A native of Minneapolis, Plinske received his doctorate in sports administration from the University of Minnesota. His master’s is from the University of Illinois, and his undergraduate degree is from Bethel University. He and his wife, Elizabeth, have two daughters, Allison and Lauren.

Previously, Plinske was associate director of athletics at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse from 1999-2004 and involved in athletics administration at the University of Illinois and University of Minnesota.