FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 6, 2020

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National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches
Announces Official Launch and Board of Directors

FULTON, MD — Amidst a generational change in American history, some of the most prominent names in football at the professional and collegiate levels have formed the National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches, Inc. (“NCMFC”).

The brainchild of University of Maryland head football coach Michael Locksley, the NCMFC is officially launching its multi-pronged effort to remove roadblocks, increase awareness and spur action toward fair and equitable hiring at all levels of football.

These transformative times moved Locksley—the recipient of the 2018 Broyles Award honoring the best assistant coach in college football—to take action. He utilized his resources, years of experience and impressive network to put together a formidable coalition to spur change in one of football’s toughest problems: the lack of meaningful diversity in coaching.

“I have dedicated the better part of my 25-year coaching career to leveling the playing field for minority coaches everywhere,” Locksley said. “I worked hard to create opportunities in my career, sometimes with assistance from others, but more often through my own perseverance. I have learned many things. I have benefited from those who have gone before me so I feel a sense of obligation to help others.”

The NCMFC’s goals are simple: prepare, promote and produce qualified minority coaches to ascend in the ranks of college and professional football. “All we want is a chance to succeed or fail based on the merits and our God-given abilities,” Locksley continued. “Many of us are denied that chance despite our qualifications.”

The NCMFC’s board of directors contains some of the most well-respected names in football, including Super Bowl-winning Mike Tomlin; six-time national title winner Nick Saban; and pro football and college Hall of Famer Ozzie Newsome, who is the first African American general manager in the NFL and who constructed two Super Bowl championships. The NCMFC board
also includes the first African American QB Super Bowl MVP and former collegiate coach Doug Williams; South Carolina State head coach Buddy Pough; and the first African American NCAA Division 1A head coach Willie Jeffries. Rounding out the NCMFC’s Board are prominent front office executives including former NFL GM and two-time Super Bowl winner Rick Smith; Super Bowl winning former GM Bill Polian; pioneering athletic director Debbie Yow; the first Hispanic female athletic director (UNLV) Desiree Reed-Francois; and Miami Dolphins GM Chris Grier.

“When Locks called me about the NCMFC, told me about his vision and asked me to be part of it, I said sign me up,” Pittsburgh Steelers head coach Mike Tomlin said. “It’s a no brainer.”

This highly influential group, rallied around Locksley’s vision to prepare, promote and produce minority football coaches at all levels of football.

“In this moment in history, we cannot be silent: we must speak up for our brothers and sisters and our sons and daughters,” University of Alabama head coach Nick Saban said. “In agreeing to serve on the NCMFC’s board, I want to contribute to the effort to make sure the playing field is balanced for all, including minorities who seek leadership positions as coaches.”

Issues of equity and diversity are not new to the business of football. Professional sports are re-examining how to move inclusiveness past a talking point and produce results with minorities meaningfully participating in leadership roles as football coaches. By all measures and key indicators of equity and inclusion, it is clear just how far football has to go to correct the systemic condition of inequity.

Studies demonstrate that minorities have not been afforded the same opportunities for NFL coaching jobs. In its annual Diversity and Inclusion report, the NFL conceded that it managed only “a marginal change with respect to improving leadership diversity and inclusion at the NFL team level” from 2019 to 2020 for hiring general managers, head coaches, and offensive and defensive coordinators. The same is true for college football—a key pipeline for professional coaches.

In a 2019 working paper out of the Global Sport Institute at Arizona State University, the data revealed that at least 77% of offensive coordinators – a favored position when considering head coach candidates – hired each season over the last ten seasons were white. In today’s college game, like in the NFL, the number of minority head coaches is paltry. Out of 130 FBS eligible schools, only 14 head coaches are minorities. The offensive and defensive coordinator positions fare no better on a percentage basis. And the decision makers in college, athletic directors, presidents, conference commissioners, like their pro counterparts, lack meaningful diversity.

Knowing this history and data, Locksley formed the NCMFC. The NCMFC Board members will utilize their years of insight from the field and front office operations and platform not only to advocate for minority coaches, but also to provide analytics demonstrating the business case for diversity. The NCMFC also will offer educational, professional development, networking opportunities to refine and develop all who are interested in coaching and promoting those coaches who are ready to take that next step. The end goal will be producing coaching candidates who are worthy for and deserving of vacant coaching position.

For more information about the National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches, please visit: http://ncmfc.com/.