



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT**

Kevin Cooper

1-888-506-2632

***National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches  
Officially Launches the Coalition Academy***

**FULTON, MD** – The National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches (NCMFC) proudly announces the creation of the “Coalition Academy” – a first of its kind mentorship program pairing influential athletic directors with minority football coaches. The Coalition Academy will further the NCMFC’s mission of preparing, promoting, and producing minority coaches at all levels of competition given the well-documented inequities minority coaches experience. In other words, the NCMFC wants the best candidates selected regardless of color, race, or sexuality.

Spearheaded by NCMFC Board Member Desiree Reed-Francois, and supported by Founder Michael Locksley, this unique and purposeful year-long program ties together mentorship, networking, and leadership training to help prepare the next generation of minority head coaches.

"As part of our efforts to provide comprehensive educational opportunities and networking to minority coaches, the Academy allows our participants to build upon their on-field experiences with the off-field information necessary as they advance," Reed-Francois said. "In the end, as in many professions, relationships and advocacy matter. The Academy will hopefully foster lifelong relationships between coaches and decision-makers. The Academy will provide minority coaches with one more tool in their belt as they seek to advance their careers and we are grateful to the mentors and to the coaches for their willingness to move college athletics forward."

The goal of this program is two-fold. First, the Academy will help counteract the unfortunate and misleading narrative that there is a lack of qualified minority coaches to fill available positions. Second, the Academy will help bring parity to the hiring process in college football.

**Prepare. Promote. Produce.**

8115 Maple Lawn Blvd., Suite 275, Fulton, MD 20759 | 1.888.50NCMFC or 1.888.506.2632  
info@ncmfc.com | www.ncmfc.com

The Coalition Academy will be a platform to create more equity in the hiring process. The Academy's goal is that after its inaugural year, the candidate pools at elite college programs will be larger and more diverse. To achieve this goal, the Coalition Academy will pair minority coaches with college athletic directors who will provide not only individual mentoring, but also networking for potential opportunities. The participants in the inaugural Coalition Academy include:

**Athletic Directors:**

- Barry Alvarez  
Wisconsin
- Whit Babcock  
Virginia Tech
- Greg Byrne  
Alabama
- Jennifer Cohen  
Washington
- Pat Chun  
Washington State
- Jeremiah Donati  
TCU
- Candice Lee  
Vanderbilt
- Bernard Muir  
Stanford
- Dan Radakovich  
Clemson
- Jack Swarbrick  
Notre Dame
- Desiree Reed-Francois  
UNLV
- Kevin White  
Duke
- Debbie Yow  
Emeritus, NC State

**Coaches:**

- Marcus Arroyo  
UNLV
- Tony Elliott  
Clemson
- Marcus Freeman  
Notre Dame
- Josh Gattis  
Michigan
- Pep Hamilton  
Houston Texans
- Brian Johnson  
Philadelphia Eagles
- Jerry Mack  
Tennessee
- Jay Norvell  
Nevada
- Travaris Robinson  
Miami
- Willie Simmons  
Florida A&M
- Ryan Walters  
Illinois
- Everett Withers  
Florida International

The NCMFC views mentorship and networking as an undervalued aspect of searching and securing a leadership position in the industry of football. The guidance these coaches will receive from an experienced athletic director is invaluable.

The Coalition Academy has brought together over a century worth of knowledge about the hiring process at the highest levels of college football. The Academy will not focus on the Xs and Os of the game; rather, it will focus on the Xs and Os of hiring. It will equip already capable coaches with the insight and intangible skill sets necessary for leading a football program. To this end, one difference in separating a successful head-coaching candidate from the other candidates is leadership. The Academy will provide training in areas that will help coaches advance their leadership skills, ranging from interview preparation, to media engagement, to culture creation. And before the start of the next hiring cycle, all Academy candidates will participate in mock interviews conducted with the participating athletic directors.

Coaches are no longer selected, they are elected. In today's game, potential coaching candidates are rarely identified to fill vacancies through a rigorous weeks-long or months-long vetting process. Media messaging, public perception, and the "hype" or "aura" surrounding a coaching candidate dictates their potential for securing an interview. The Coalition Academy will prepare and promote minority coaches in manner that will include these coaches in the hiring conversation through a high-powered networking group. As the next hiring cycle begins, the Coalition Academy will set metrics and track progress not only to analyze the hiring landscape, but also to improve on the program for future participants. Ultimately, this program will provide a unique platform for participating coaches to expand their reach, connections, and visibility – all ultimately in the pursuit of leading a football program and molding the next generation of student-athletes.

### **About the National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches**

Despite the vast number of minority football players at all levels, minorities are excluded from or limited in leadership opportunities at most levels disproportionately. The reason for their exclusion is inextricably intertwined with societal roadblocks that underrepresented individuals frequently face. These roadblocks create an unfortunate imbalance where minorities do not enjoy meaningful participation in available coaching opportunities to the same degree as their counterparts.

Established in June 2020, The National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches (NCMFC) and its foundation are dedicated to preparing, promoting, and producing minority football coaches and administrators at all levels of football. Amid a global pandemic and a renewed focus on equity, there is now a significant movement in football led by some of the most prominent football coaches and executives through the NCMFC.

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