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## WCHA WOMEN'S MEMBER TEAMS

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## AARON KEMP NAMED NEW COMMISSIONER OF WOMEN'S WCHA

MADISON, Wis. – Aaron Kemp, the senior associate athletic director at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pa., has been named the new commissioner of the women's Western Collegiate Hockey Association. He accepted a four-year agreement with the WCHA.

Kemp, 38, succeeds Sara Martin, who has served as the guiding force of the women's WCHA since its founding in 1999. Martin will retire on June 30.

"I'm honored and excited for the opportunity to join the WCHA in this role," Kemp said. "The WCHA has identified itself as the premiere women's hockey conference, producing some of the most elite players in the game today. I'm thrilled to begin serving the member institutions and student-athletes. I'm committed to the same tradition of excellence and look forward to enhancing the overall operation and image of the league moving forward."

The WCHA executive committee put together a search committee to conduct a national search for the new commissioner. Kemp will get acquainted with the WCHA's coaches and administrators at the league's annual meetings in Marco Island, Fla. April 28-29 and plans to have his office in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

"On behalf of the entire Western Collegiate Hockey Association family, we are excited to announce Aaron Kemp as the next women's commissioner," said Bill Hudson, Professor at St. Cloud State University and Chair of the Association. "Aaron brings an extensive, proven background in both the sport of collegiate ice hockey and in athletic administration to the conference and we all look forward to working with him to both continue and expand on the WCHA's great tradition."

"Aaron is most passionate about hockey and has long been a strong proponent of student-athletes. As an administrator, he has overseen both women's and men's Division 1 ice hockey programs, he has a wealth of experience coaching both women's and men's collegiate teams, he has been involved in planning and organizing Frozen Fours and he has been a member of the NCAA hockey rules committee."

Kemp joined the athletic administration staff at Mercyhurst in June of 2008. He was promoted to Senior Associate Athletic Director/Mercyhurst North East Director of Athletics in June of 2011 after serving as the Associate Athletic Director/Director of Compliance on the Erie campus.

Kemp's primary responsibility was to provide the leadership, vision, and strategic direction for the Mercyhurst North East athletics program. He also had responsibilities to oversee the operation of the men's and women's hockey programs at Mercyhurst.

Prior to joining the administration, Kemp was an assistant men's hockey coach at his



**AARON KEMP**



alma mater, Canisius College, from 2002-2004 and was a member of the women's hockey coaching staff at Mercyhurst from 2004-2008. Under head coach Michael Sisti, Mercyhurst compiled a 109-25-14 record during Kemp's time, boasting four College Hockey America Championships and four appearances in the NCAA Division I playoffs.

Kemp was part of the American Hockey Coaches Association NCAA Division 1 Staff of the Year for the 2004-2005 season and the CHA Staff of the Year the same season.

He has served on the executive committees for Atlantic Hockey and CHA conferences, was on the local organizing committee for the 2003 Men's Frozen Four, was the tournament director for the 2011 Women's Frozen Four and currently serves on the NCAA hockey rules committee.

Kemp earned a bachelor's degree in physical education in 1999 and a master's degree in Sports Administration in 2004, both at Canisius College. He is married to Darcey, the Dean of Students at Mercyhurst North East, and the couple has a son Jackson and two daughters, Ashlyn and Cierra.

Brad Frost, the coach at the University of Minnesota, which has won the last two WCHA titles, was a member of the search committee which selected Kemp.

"Aaron brings great experience in both the hockey and administrative world," said Frost who has won two national titles at Minnesota and made three straight appearances in the NCAA title game. "He will do a tremendous job in taking our league to the next level."

Hudson, who chaired the search committee for a new commissioner, had high praise for Martin, the only leader the women's WCHA has ever had.

"I also want to take this opportunity to again thank retiring commissioner Sara Martin for all she had done to promote both the WCHA and women's collegiate ice hockey over the past 15 years," said Hudson. "Her commitment and dedication have been exemplary and we will always be grateful to her."

WCHA-member teams have appeared in a record 15 straight national championship games and captured 14 consecutive national championships between 2000-2013 (2000 AWCHA Div. 1 champions, 2001-2013 NCAA Women's Frozen Four champions). Six WCHA players have earned the Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award as the top player in Division 1 women's collegiate ice hockey. Hundreds of WCHA players have had extensive experience and success in international competitions such as the Winter Olympics, IIHF World Championships and Four Nations' Cup.