



### Lewis Appointed to Lead the Providence Academy Boys Hockey Program:



The Providence Academy Athletics Department is pleased to announce the appointment of Chris Lewis to the position of Boys Hockey Head Varsity Coach & Program Head.

Coach Lewis grew up in Minnesota, attended Orono High School, and went on to St. John's University (MN.) where he earned a Bachelors of Science degree in Economics. He is a Vice President at U.S. Bank Wealth Management. He and his wife Jodi, and their two sons reside in the West Metro.

Growing up outside of Minnesota, Lewis recalls begging his mother to let him play hockey when he was young. While her first response was, "No, you'll get hurt," after further consideration and help from friends and family, the hockey flame was lit. Growing up playing in Wayzata and Orono, representing Team Massachusetts in Lake Placid NY, and Team USA Selects in Norway and Sweden, Lewis played his High School career for the Orono Spartans. There he was a three-sport athlete and three-year letter winner in hockey as a skilled forward. In Lewis's Junior and Senior year, the team made their first two High School State tournament appearances, with a 3rd place and Consolation Championship finishes in his Junior and Senior year.

From a young age, coaching always seemed to be a passion for Lewis. "I paid attention and learned a lot about coaching from my coaches over the years. Whether it was during summer coaching for Gopher's Coach Woog, Power Skating with Dick Vraa or other mentors in my life I wanted to learn and develop". Over the last 20 years Lewis has coached several teams from Mites to High School, AAA Teams, or advising and mentoring athletes one on one. Lewis has spent the last four years here at Providence Academy helping rebuild the hockey program, and connecting to youth players and families.

When asked, "Why do you coach", Lewis says "as a Coach, you are entrusted with a fantastic opportunity to enrich the lives of your players who develop as a person first and athletes second. It is a challenge that requires building trust, holding one another accountable and forming a team. I often tell players, the most exciting part of my day is coming to practice"

When asked, "Why Providence Academy", Lewis's reply was simple, "Providence Academy holds Honor, Integrity, Truthfulness and Character in high regard as values. A place like that can be magical, on and off the ice. No matter what the future holds for our athletes, those are our leaders of tomorrow and it's an honor to be a part of their development."

## Welcoming Blake Friesen and the Return of Will Radke to our Boys Hockey Program



Blake Friesen begins his first season with the Lions Hockey program as the Varsity Assistant Coach. Coach Friesen will be working with the defensemen and helping Coach Lewis with special teams.

A 2004 Benilde St. Margaret graduate, Friesen finished his career as the school's career leader in assists (80) and points (114) for defensemen. He scored two goals and 13 points as a freshman on the Red Knights' 2001 Class A state championship team and set career highs with 14 goals and 39 points as a senior, becoming the school's first Mr. Hockey Award finalist.

He earned all-conference honors and the team's Best Defenseman Award three times and served as a team captain as both a junior and senior.

After concluding his senior season, Friesen finished the season with the Sioux Falls Stampede of the United States Hockey League and spent the entire 2004-05 season with the organization before embarking upon a four-year collegiate career at Minnesota State - Mankato.

With the Mavericks, he saw action in 111 games, scoring four goals and 17 points before earning his bachelor of science degree in international business. While with the Mavericks, he was a recipient of the College of Business Henry and Marilyn Okleshen Hockey Scholarship Award.

Following his senior season, he signed a professional contract with the Idaho Steelheads of the East Coast Hockey League, where he played five games in 2009 after finishing his final college season.

He spent the entire 2009-10 season with the ECHL's Kalamazoo Wings but was limited to 18 games due to injuries before retiring from the professional ranks.

Friesen is currently a small business owner and along with his hockey coaching, he works as a trainer and mentor. He was raised in Minnetonka and currently resides in Minneapolis. When asked what attracted him to Providence Academy, Blake states, "PA's mission, in summary, is about personal/professional development in which to prepare them for the world ahead, through God's eyes. If you're not developing as a person, you're not developing as a player. PA has strong core values and structure which are hard to find nowadays." We are excited to welcome Coach Friesen to our hockey staff.



Will Radke begins his 2nd season with the Lions Hockey program as the Head JV coach. Coach Radke brings great energy and excitement to the rink everyday. Coach Radke has 6 years of coaching experience and understands the importance of skill development at the JV level. He states, "I want to make sure the JV players are ready to go if they get an opportunity throughout the season to play at the varsity level."

When asked what are you most excited about for this year, Coach Radke says, "We have a great group of players returning from last year and it's going to be exciting to watch them grow this year."

**GO LIONS!**