

Jeremy McClain

Director of Athletics at
Delta State University

Where did you grow up and go to school?

I grew up in Houlka, MS, a small town in the northeast part of the state, and attended Houlka High School. I was very fortunate to receive a baseball scholarship to play at Delta State where I earned my undergraduate degree and eventually my MBA.

What is your job and what are some of your responsibilities?

I am Director of Athletics at Delta State University. I am responsible for 13 NCAA Division II sports and 350 student-athletes here on campus. Ultimately, I am responsible for the success and growth of our student-athletes, our teams and our program as a whole.

What were some of your first jobs and how have they contributed to your success today?

I grew up on a farm with horses and cows and the whole nine yards, so my jobs included fixing fences, hauling hay and cleaning out horse stalls (which I recommend everyone should do at least once). After college I was able to play baseball professionally for a few years and then I moved into the corporate world as a marketing representative with an insurance company. I came back to Delta State as the Director of Development for the Foundation before taking over as Director of Athletics. While all these experiences are different, they have all helped prepare me for what I am doing today. Whether it was a lesson in work ethic, perseverance or business, each experience has had an impact.

What is something most people don't know about your job?

A common misconception about my job is probably that it revolves around ball games.



While that is an important part of my job, I would estimate that only 10 percent of my responsibility is directly tied to what happens when the lights are on and there is a crowd in the stands. So much more of my job is focused on the administrative side, being a problem solver and handling people, whether that be student-athletes, coaches, staff, faculty or community.

What are some of your goals for the athletic department? Where do you see the department in 5-10 years?

We are very fortunate to have a rich history of athletic success and to be recognized nationally for that success. My goal is for us to continue to build upon that. Not only do we want to be recognized nationally, we want to be the model for other athletic programs our size. I want people to say that Delta State does it the right way. They win champi-

onships by helping student-athletes reach their full potential on and off the field. Simply put, I want us to be the benchmark.

When you're not working, what are some of your favorite things to do around Cleveland and the Delta?

Free time is at a premium, so I usually spend it with my wife, Christie, and our two children, Cannon (5) and Kate (3). Having spent much of our lives in Cleveland, Christie and I have fallen in love with the culture and the people. Our favorite thing to do is share that with others. We often invite family and friends to town so we can share the 'Delta experience' with them and help them understand why we love it so much. That usually revolves around some type art (Christie's favorite) and good food (my favorite)! **DBJ**