

Silverfield adds Lou Esposito to Memphis football coaching staff

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – University of Memphis head football coach Ryan Silverfield announced the addition of Tiger alum Lou Esposito to the coaching staff on Wednesday. Esposito will serve as the co-defensive coordinator and defensive line coach. Esposito, a four-year letterman for the Tigers from 1997-2000, has 21 years of coaching experience.



“We are thrilled with the addition of Lou Esposito our coaching staff,” Silverfield remarked. “A former Tiger is coming home, and he will have a great impact on our defense and our program.”

Esposito returns to Memphis after spending the past seven seasons as the defensive coordinator at Western Michigan. Esposito also served as the defensive line coach from 2017-19 before shifting to defensive ends for the 2020 campaign.

“My family and I are thrilled to be back where football started for me,” Esposito said. “I look forward to building on the immense success that Ryan Silverfield and his staff have already begun. The future is bright for Memphis Football. Go Tigers Go!”

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sive end Marshawn Kneeland to Second-Team All-MAC honors, while cornerback Keni-H Lovely was earned third-team accolades. Kneeland had a career-high 57 tackles, 7.5 tackles for loss and 4.5 sacks while handling constant double teams. He also posted eight quarterback hurries and two

forced fumbles, one that led to a defensive touchdown. Lovely totaled 48 tackles, 4.5 tackles for loss, two interceptions, five pass breakups, three forced fumbles and one fumble recovery.

During the 2022 season, WMU's defense was one of the best in the conference. The Broncos ranked third in scoring defense at 22.4 and second in yards allowed with 347.4. Senior linebacker Zaire Barnes was named First Team All-MAC and went on to be drafted in the 2023 NFL Draft in the sixth round by the New York Jets. (DT) Braden Fiske and (DE) Andre Carter earned Second Team All-MAC honors, while (CB) Keni-H Lovely and (LB) Corvin Moment earned Third Team All-MAC selections.

In 2021 the Broncos were second in the MAC in sacks by, recording 40 in 12 games. WMU also was fourth in scoring defense. Senior defensive end Ali Fayad became the ninth player in program history to win MAC Defensive Player of the Year. Fayad had 40 total tackles and a career-high 13 sacks on the season, also earning First Team All-MAC honors. (DL) Ralph Holley, (LB) Zaire Barnes and (CB) Dorian Jackson all earned Second Team All-MAC honors, while (LB) Corvin Moment earned Third Team honors.

The 2020 season proved a challenge unlike any other, as the Broncos played a six-game, MAC-only schedule due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Esposito had to navigate a season defined by injuries and uncertainty. Still, the WMU defense ranked 13th nationally with 3.17 sacks per game (19 in six games). In addition, the Bronco defense pro-

duced three All-MAC selections in first-team DL Ralph Holley, first-team safety Bricen Garner and third-team LB Treshaun Hayward.

Esposito's impact on the Bronco defense in 2019 was felt in the scoring column as WMU held opponents to just 25.9 points per game to stand second in the Mid-American Conference. The mark was the best for the program since yielding 19.8 in 2016. Western Michigan finished the 2018 season ranked 10th in the league, surrendering 34.5 points per contest.

The Broncos also went from 12th in the league in pass efficiency defense (160.69) in 2018 to seventh (136.70) under Esposito's direction in 2019. Western Michigan exceptionally stout in pass defense during the latter portion of the 2019 campaign, holding three of its final five opponents to less than 150 passing yards.

The defensive line excelled in 2019 as the Broncos finished third in the MAC in tackles for loss per game (6.50) and second in sacks per game (2.77). The Bronco defense finished 21st in the country in sacks per contest in 2019. A year earlier, WMU finished fifth in the league in sacks per contest with 2.4. Esposito's defense created 22 turnovers in 2019 to tie for the second most in the MAC, up from a seventh-place finish in the league in 2018.

Individually along the defensive line in 2019, Esposito guided junior Ali Fayad to second team All-MAC honors. The Dearborn, Mich., native finished first in the league with 0.31 fumbles recovered per game and sixth nationally. He also checked in second in the MAC in tackles for loss per game (1.13) and sacks per game (0.50). At Northern Illinois, Fayad finished with a career-high 4.5 TFL, the most by a Bronco in a game since Drew

Nowak's 5.0 versus Akron on November 25, 2011.

Ralph Holley also grew under Esposito in 2019, collecting a team second-best 10.5 TFL to go along with 4.5 sacks. Holley recorded 38 tackles and a quarterback pressure and started every game.

All-America linebacker Treshaun Hayward thrived under Esposito, recording 142 tackles to stand third nationally. Fellow linebacker Drake Spears also turned in a strong senior year with Esposito at the helm of the defense, collecting 96 tackles, 2.5 TFL, 0.5 sacks, two interceptions and three quarterback pressures. Spears earned second team all-league honors.

As a whole, the Broncos' 2019 defense featured four players with 9.0 or more TFL, four with 4.5 or more sacks and six with 60 or more tackles. Involving the team's secondary in reaching the quarterback, Esposito was able to collect 12.5 TFL and 2.0 sacks from WMU cornerbacks and safeties. Sophomore Patrick Lupro, who took over as a starting corner in week five, collected third team All-MAC accolades while racking up 64 tackles, 4.0 TFL, 1.0 sack, three interceptions and a team-high seven pass breakups.

The 2018 season had Esposito guide Fayad to 12.0 TFL and 7.5 sacks while racking up five quarterback pressures and four forced fumbles. Holley was another of Esposito's successful linemen, reaching 9.5 TFL and 7.0 sacks in 2018.

After Esposito's promotion to interim defensive coordinator, WMU defeated Northern Illinois 28-21 in the regular season finale. Esposito's unit limited the MAC West champion Huskies to 262 yards of total offense in the best league performance by the group of the season. As a team, Western Michigan finished the game against NIU with 4.0 sacks,

10.0 TFL and three turnovers gained.

During the 2017 season, sophomore Antonio Balabani was Esposito's most impactful defensive lineman, collecting 7.5 TFL and 4.0 sacks with three quarterback pressures. Senior Andre Turner chipped in with 6.0 stops behind the line of scrimmage, including 3.0 sacks.

Esposito returned to Kalamazoo prior to the 2017 season after serving as the first head coach in Davenport University's program since 2014.

At Davenport, the Panthers played their inaugural season in 2016, going 6-5. Off the field, Esposito was in charge of recruiting 125 student-athletes in two years to establish the program and oversee a multi-million-dollar fundraising campaign for the new football facility.

Prior to his time at Davenport, Esposito was defensive coordinator at Ferris State University, in 2013. While there, he improved the rush defense from 13th in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) to first in a single season and ranked in the top 25 in two of the national polls. He led a defense that finished in the top five in many GLIAC statistical categories in 2013. Ferris State led the GLIAC in total defense along with rushing defense and team passing efficiency defense.

During his first stop in Kalamazoo, from 2010-12, Esposito coached the defensive line. While working with the unit, he coached the 2011 MAC Defensive Player of the Year, Nowak, who led the league in sacks that year. Nowak went on to be named a Phil Steele All-American.

Esposito also coached Freddie

Bishop, who went on to play for the New York Jets in the NFL. Paul Hazel was another NFL disciple of Esposito's, spending time with the Cleveland Browns, Houston Texans and New York Giants.

A past Division I offensive lineman at the University of Memphis, Esposito spent six years as the head coach at Division II Saint Joseph's (Ind.) College before moving to Western Michigan. At St. Joseph's, Esposito was the Great Lakes Football Conference (GLFC) Coach of the Year in 2006 and 2009 and posted a 30-25 record while recording a 100 percent graduation rate for four-year athletes in his years guiding the program. He led the team to a pair of GLFC championships in 2006 and 2009.

He coached 23 All-GLFC student-athletes in 2009 alone, ranking first in both rushing offense and defense. The Pumas also had the top-ranked red zone offense in the GLFC, boasting the 2009 GLFC Offensive Player of the Year and an unblemished record in conference play.

During his playing days at Memphis, Esposito was a four-year letterwinner on the offensive line and served as the team captain in 1999 and 2000.

Upon graduation, he signed a professional contract to play for the Arena Football League's Memphis Xplorers in 2001 and went on to join the Xplorers' coaching staff in 2002 and 2003. Esposito and his wife, Brooke, have four children - Louis J. Esposito IV, Emilia Rose, Anthony and Mason.

For complete information on Memphis Tigers Football, visit www.GoTigersGo.com and follow the team's social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Silverfield promotes Hankins from sports page 1

players under his direction earned all-conference accolades, including first-team honors for linebacker JJ Russell in 2021.

Prior to Memphis, Hankins served as an assistant coach at UT Martin (2010-16), as well as defensive coordinator (2017-19), and the special teams coordinator and linebackers coach at Marshall (2020).

Along with Hankins' promotion, Silverfield also announced title

changes for two Memphis assistant coaches for the 2024 season. Charles Clark will be the Deputy Head Coach and defensive backs coach, while Jeff Myers will serve as the Run Game Coordinator and offensive line coach.

For complete information on Memphis Tigers Football, visit www.GoTigersGo.com and follow the team's social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Baseball tickets now on sale from sports page 1

and Mississippi State games (April 23). The Tigers' home conference slate kicks off with a series against American Athletic Conference (AAC) newcomer Florida Atlantic (March 28-30) and includes additional series against AAC newcomer UTSA (April 12-14), perennial AAC-power East Carolina (April 26-28) and Wichita State (May

16-18) to conclude regular-season play.

To purchase tickets, visit www.gotigersgo.com

For complete information on Memphis Tiger Baseball, visit www.GoTigersGo.com and follow the team's social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

City Council finalizes approval of resolution on Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium, granting \$120 mil

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – The Memphis City Council on Tuesday, January 9, finalized its approval of a resolution allocating and appropriating \$120 million in State grant funding to go towards renovations of Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium, the home of Memphis Tiger Football, as well as transfer ownership of the stadium to the University of Memphis Auxiliary Services Foundation.

“We could not be more thrilled that the Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium ownership transfer and allocation of State funding for renovations have been approved,” University of Memphis Vice President and Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Laird

“Many people have been involved in helping get this process to the finish line. We are tremendously appreciative of the Fred Smith Family, the City of Memphis administration, the Memphis City Council, Fred Jones and Steve Ehrhart for working together to help develop a pathway to help our University and City ascend.”

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Jones and Steve Ehrhart for working together to help develop a pathway to help our University and City ascend.”

Thanks to what is made possible by the allocation of the State grant funding and the ownership transfer, Memphis Athletics will immediately initiate a leadership fundraising campaign to match the \$50 million challenge gift made by the Frederick W. Smith Family for the stadium renovations.

All told, Memphis is designing a \$220 million project, with \$120 million currently available from State funding and \$50 million needing to be raised to match the challenge gift of \$50 million from the Fred Smith Family.

Project partners MFA, Populous and Barton Malow, who have been involved in the project since its inception, are in the process of finalizing the designs so the optimal construction timeline to coincide with the new funding formula can be determined.

Additional details will be communicated as project benchmarks, and therefore the renovation's impacts on fans, are finalized.

For complete information on Memphis Tigers Athletics, visit www.GoTigersGo.com and follow the department's social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Tony Orlando announces Farewell Tour; ‘Timeless’ album is now available ... from sports-Ent. 5

room-only live draw -- was recently honored as a New Jersey Hall Of Fame Inductee and remains a relentless supporter of American veterans.

To the delight of his countless fans, Tony will continue hosting his beloved hit radio program Saturday Nights with Tony Orlando on 77 WABC Music Radio (Red Apple Media, Inc.), which airs in New York, as well as reaching New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. Orlando will naturally continue engaging in a multitude of ongoing projects – including a new film and multimedia company, Tony Orlando Productions.

Saturday Nights With Tony Orlando is in its third successful year, showcasing Tony's extensive (and often encyclopedic) knowledge of musical history. The show also boasts interviews with music's most beloved and iconic artists, all of whom consider themselves to be close friends of the legendary host – and his program often celebrates an engaging musical theme with a varied and unique playlist each weekend. The show airs from



10PM-Midnight ET and is streamed weekly worldwide to 170 countries and all 50 states.

HISTORY
•Tony Orlando is a Grammy-nominated artist with a whopping fifteen Top 40 hits, two Platinum albums, three Gold albums, and millions of copies sold. “Tie A Yellow Ribbon” was the #1 Billboard Song of the Year for 1973 and went on to become the theme song for Tony Orlando and an anthem for hope, reunion, and renewal in America.

•Orlando is a recipient of two American Music Awards and a People's Choice Award for Best Male Entertainer. He is the 2016 recipient of the Casino Entertainer Of The Year award and the Bob Hope Award for Excellence in Entertainment from the Congressional Medal Of Honor Society, honoring his tireless efforts on behalf of our nation's veterans.

•In 1990, Tony was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk Of Fame to commemorate his out-

standing achievements in the entertainment industry. He was also inducted into Mohegan Sun's Walk Of Fame in 2010.

TONY ORLANDO – The Farewell Concerts

January 19, 20, 21 – Las Vegas, Nevada - South Point Casino

February 27, 28 - Niagara Falls, Ontario - Fallsview Casino

March 2 - Des Plaines, Ill. - Des Plaines Theater

March 3 - St. Charles, Ill. - The Arcada Theater

March 16 - Atlantic City, N.J. - Resorts Casino Hotel

March 22 - Uncasville, Conn. - Mohegan Sun Arena

For more information, visit TonyOrlando.com or find and follow Tony Orlando on social media.

Watch for The Mid-South Tribune's 29th Black History Month Edition in February 2024!

Stop The Violence Don't Keep Quiet

Memphis Area Legal Services, Inc.
Free Domestic Violence Legal Advice
10:00a-12:00noon

Feb 9, 2024
Mar 8, 2024
Apr 12, 2024
May 10, 2024
Jul 12, 2024
Aug 9, 2024
Sept 13, 2024
Oct 11, 2024

Benjamin L. Hooks Public Library
3030 Poplar Ave., Mtg Room C
Memphis, TN 38112