

## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**April 26, 2012**

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### **IU Kokomo selects cross country coach for inaugural season**

**KOKOMO, Ind.** — Indiana University Kokomo has selected Jason VanAlstine to lead the men’s and women’s cross country teams in their inaugural seasons.

VanAlstine, who is also an assistant professor of economics, wants to field a team with men and women committed not only to being competitive athletes, but also to being outstanding students.

“These runners will be very visible representatives of IU Kokomo as they train on trails and roads in our community,” he said. “I expect them to represent the campus in a positive manner academically as well. It is an honor to be part of the first team, in our first year in the NAIA.”

VanAlstine, a first-time coach, was a four-year member of the varsity cross country team at St. Vincent College, Latrobe, Pa. He has started recruiting efforts, with plans to begin practices this summer.

He said IU Kokomo will be attractive to students because “they can get a prestigious Indiana University degree in a smaller, more personal setting, and run on a college team.”

Chancellor Michael Harris said the addition of cross-country is part of an intentional effort to create a more vibrant student life experience for students.

“Athletics is a key part of the student life experience,” he said. “This will be an exciting season for the Cougars, as we join the NAIA and double the number of sports teams available to our students.”

Harris announced in 2011 that IU Kokomo would add club sports, starting with women’s volleyball and men’s basketball, and set the goal of joining the NAIA. With the cross-country teams, IU Kokomo now offers four team sports.

Jack Tharp, interim athletic director, said meets will be scheduled during the fall semester. He anticipates great interest in IU Kokomo's newest sport.

"We have a lot of active running clubs and outstanding high school cross-country teams in our region," he said. "Many of those athletes will see this as a great opportunity to earn a degree here and continue to train and run competitively after high school. These teams will be good additions to our campus."

*Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.*

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