Byker Named Top Sports Information Director

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Tune in to a Dordt football or a basketball game on the radio or online, and you’ll hear his enthusiasm for his work and for Dordt sports teams. His efforts were recognized in August, when Byker was named the 2016-17 Hauff Mid-America Sports/Great Plains Athletic Conference Sports Information Director (SID) of the Year. The award is based on votes from the league’s sports information directors.

“When I look at the SID’s we have across this league, I am truly humbled to receive this award,” says Byker.

“As a group, we push each other to be better, and because of that our schools and league thrive.”

Byker uses both old and new technology as Dordt’s sportcaster. He broadcasts games over the radio, and he updates the athletic section of Dordt’s website.

“I’ve had the privilege of working with athletes, coaches, and athletic administrators who trust me to tell their stories while also experimenting with new avenues for telling those stories,” says Byker. “The series this spring using video interviews of senior athletes was well received, and it left me wishing I had committed to it long ago. This is an exciting time in our industry as it changes and evolves.”

When Byker joined the Dordt radio staff in 2001, the office relied primarily on the radio and press releases. Over the next several years, the athletics portion of Dordt’s website was developed and improved; today, the website provides both daily updates and information about athletes, games, and Dordt programs.

“When I started here, we weren’t offering live stats online. We weren’t doing the video broadcasts. We were still faxing and mailing out information. Now it’s instantaneous,” says Byker.

The Dordt athletics website now hosts scores from past games, event information, and team schedules, as well as contact information for coaches and staff for each sport. Byker also oversees the Defender social media platforms.

“Almost anything you read or see on the Internet related to Dordt athletics, Mike does all of that,” says student announcer Derek De Vries. “On top of that, he’s a husband and a dad to three kids who are in high school or older right now.”

Byker is a 1992 graduate of Dordt College with a major in radio and TV communication.

“I grew up listening to the Twins and Dordt basketball on the radio,” says Byker. “That was the window into my interest in broadcasting.”

As a student, Byker worked for a year at KDCR radio. Following graduation, he began working at a radio station in Sheldon, Iowa. Within months, Byker replaced the station’s sports director and learned how to do play-by-plays. Eight years later, Byker joined KDCR radio as sports information director.

“To watch how things have grown in the sports information field from 2001 to now is exciting,” says Byker, “You have to embrace change, and you have to roll with it.”

Mike Byker has served as Dordt’s sports information director since 2001.

Byker is an active member of Co-SIDA and served as media coordinator for the NAIA Volleyball and Women’s Division II Basketball Championship Tournaments in Sioux City, Iowa, including doing play-by-play broadcasts on the NAIA Network.

“Mike goes above and beyond, working many hours to promote our student-athletes,” says Glenn Bouma, associate athletic director at Dordt. “Defender Nation is grateful to Mike for his work both on and off the air.”

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