

## Rima named Prairie baseball coach

Written by Jim Ecker

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Todd Rima had three questions he needed to answer before becoming the new baseball coach at Cedar Rapids Prairie High School.

No. 1, was it right for his family?

No. 2, would he be able to juggle being the baseball coach at Kirkwood Community College and Prairie without affecting his job at Kirkwood?

No. 3, did Prairie High School share his vision and commitment to running the program?

Once Rima had the right answers, he accepted the offer to become Prairie's new coach for the 2015 campaign.

Rima's son, Jalen, is a multi-sport athlete at Prairie and was the starting center fielder for the Hawks this past season as a sophomore.

"We talked a lot as a family," Rima said Friday. "Jalen and I talked about it a lot. I wanted him to be comfortable with it."

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Rima has developed strong ties with Prairie High School since moving here two years ago to become the head coach at Kirkwood. He's gotten to know the administrators, teachers and student-athletes.

"They have a pretty good group of guys over there," he said of the baseball program. "They're eager to learn."

Rima succeeds Matt Thede, who resigned after the 2014 season to become the new athletic director and assistant principal at Mount Vernon High school.

Rima said he'll stress "great effort" and "great attitude" with the baseball players at Prairie. "If we're good at those things, then it will turn into good things on the field," he remarked.

Rima is an academic advisor at Kirkwood in addition to serving as the baseball coach. He will continue in those roles in addition to his new position at Prairie.

"We are extremely excited to have Coach Rima lead our baseball program," said Prairie Activities Director Rocky Bennett. "He's highly regarded in the baseball circles throughout the state and his knowledge of the game and his experiences at the collegiate and high school level is second to none.

"I've been around Todd in a variety of settings and he is a tremendous teacher of the game who works well with kids at all levels."

Rima is a graduate of the University of Northern Iowa where he was a four- year starter and all-conference player. Upon graduation from UNI, Rima served as an assistant coach at UNI from 1999-2001.

In July of 2001 he was named the head baseball coach for North Iowa Area Community College where he coached 57 All-Region and Junior College All-Americans and led the program to a

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school-record 39 wins in 2005.

In August of 2012 he was named head baseball coach at Kirkwood, where he has led his teams to consecutive 30-win seasons.

"There is a tremendous amount of pride in the Prairie community and I've really learned to love the school district and the kids," Rima stated. "I am excited for the opportunity to lead the program and help it grow."

Todd and his wife, Molly, have three kids who attend College Community Schools.