HEISHMA NORTHERN NAMED

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

PRAIRIE VIEW, Texas - Prairie View A&M Director of Athletics Fred Washington announced that defensive coordinator Heishma Northern, who was named head coach in-waiting this past October, will become the 31st head coach in university history effective immediately. Northern will replace Henry Frazier III, who stepped down as head football coach this afternoon to pursue other opportunities.

"These are exciting times on the “Hill” and we were definitely not looking forward to separating from Coach Frazier," said Washington. "He brought our football team to a point of stability on the field and in the classroom and you just can’t ask a coach for any more than that. He came to Prairie View and did what we asked him to do and we will always appreciate him. He is and will always be a Panther."

Frazier leaves Prairie View as the second-most successful head coach in school history with a Prairie View A&M mark of 43-30 during his seven-year span. During his tenure, Frazier captured the school’s first Southwestern Athletic Conference Championship since 1964 in 2009 and has guided the Panthers to four consecutive winning seasons. Named the 2009 Eddie Robinson Award winner as the top coach on the Football Championship Subdivision level, Frazier leaves behind a program that has become a consistent contender in the SWAC and on the FCS ranks.

A 14-year veteran on the collegiate level, Northern has moved the Prairie View A&M defense to new heights during his six-year tenure as the team’s defensive coordinator. Under his watch, Prairie View’s defensive unit has produced several All-Americans in addition to ranking near the top of several statistical categories on the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS). As a result of the unit’s success, Northern was named the 2008 Division I-AA Coordinator of the Year by FootballScoop.com and has participated in the NCAA Champions Forum and NCAA Expert Coaches Academy. He has also completed an NFL training camp internship with the Oakland Raiders.

“Northern is just one of those guys who you would never really know is in the room but he knows the game of football and has been a big part of our success,” added Washington. “He’s our guy now and we are excited about opening up the 2011 season giving him this opportunity.”
A native of Baton Rouge, Northern is a 1996 graduate of Southern University with a degree in mathematics. He began his coaching career at Glen Oaks (La.) High School before moving on to the collegiate level at Morehouse College under former NFL standout Doug Williams. After a stint at Morehouse, Northern moved on to Grambling State with Williams and spent seven seasons there as the team's defensive coordinator, defensive backs coach, running backs coach and special teams coordinator. Northern has collected a total of five SWAC Championships with one coming as a player in 1993 and four as a coach (2000-2003, 2009).

“I'm happy for the opportunity to become head coach at Prairie View A&M University,” said Northern. “Being a head coach on the collegiate level was one of the goals I've set since entering the coaching profession and I plan to go above and beyond while carrying out my goal. I also want to thank Coach Frazier for allowing me to work alongside him for six years as he was more than just a head coach. He was very good administrator who taught me more than Xs and Os as he believed in letting his coaches do the jobs they were assigned to do.”

Northern, who also holds a master’s in Sports Administration from Grambling State, is the oldest of three siblings and is married to the former Paula Duell of Baton Rouge, La. Together, they have one son, Adam (3).