



May 1, 2023

Gretna Elite Academy for immediate release

GEA Lincoln families,

As many of you know Jen and Tom Burkey are stepping away from soccer. When you think of soccer in Lincoln one thing that has remained consistent over the years is the presence of the Burkeys. Their love for the game has served so many families and we would like to thank them for their years of dedication and for the many players that they have had such a positive impact on. We wish the Burkey family well as they move onto the next stage of their lives.

With that being said, we are excited to announce that Brandon Bonilla will be taking the reins of GEA Lincoln as the Director of Coaching with the assistance of Dan Pennisi as Technical Director. Brandon is the current Nebraska Wesleyan Men's Soccer Head Coach and Dan is the current Assistant Coach at Nebraska Wesleyan University as well coaching with GEA teams in Omaha the last few years.

The two coaches' passion and love for the game aligns with our core club pillars (respect, development, leadership, integrity & joy) and we look forward to working together to continue to grow the game as well as provide pathways to higher level opportunities.

"We have dedicated the majority of our lives as players, coaches and parents in the game of soccer at the youth, high school and college levels. We have reached a point that we have decided that leading a club and coaching is no longer a priority. We have always tried to focus on developing people and in the process players that have a passion for the game with a solid technical foundation. As a result lifelong relationships and friendships are and always will be the greatest benefit from the time invested"

Jen & Tom Burkey

"Dan and I would first like to thank Jen and Tom Burkey for their support in passing on this great club to our guidance. We also want to thank Chris Dunford and Mitch Kavanagh for this opportunity and a shared vision. We are excited to bring our knowledge of the game and energy to GEA Lincoln. I feel that we are in a unique position as we take over because not only do we

bring years of combined coaching experience at the club and high school level, but the college level as well including two universities right here in Lincoln. This will only strengthen our goal of creating quality young people through the game of soccer. We plan to put an emphasis on the fundamentals and individual technique while we build the team concepts from that starting point. We are really excited to continue the growth of the game here in Lincoln and help prepare players for any level they are trying to achieve.”

Brandon Bonilla & Dan Pennisi

There will be further details in the near future including team formation specific information for the 2023/2024 soccer year.

[www.gretnaeliteacademy.com](http://www.gretnaeliteacademy.com)