Lenoir-Rhyne University has named Mike Houston its new Head Football Coach today. Houston becomes the 18th coach in the school's history. Houston replaces Fred Goldsmith, who announced his retirement last week after four seasons at the helm and 45 years of coaching.

Houston has been Lenoir-Rhyne's Defensive Coordinator and Secondary Coach for the last four years (2007-10). On February 4, 2010, Houston was elevated to Assistant Head Coach. Under Houston's leadership, the Bears' defense had one of their best seasons in recent memory in 2010. Last fall, Lenoir-Rhyne led the South Atlantic Conference in total defense (276.6 ypg) and finished fourth in Division II in rushing defense (75.7 ypg).

In addition, senior defensive back Marcus Shuford (Newton, N.C.) became the third player in school history to win league defensive player-of-the-year honors and played in the Cactus Bowl (the NCAA Division II All-Star Game). The Bears also finished the year with a 7-4 mark, its first winning season since 1994.

"I'm extremely excited about the opportunity at Lenoir-Rhyne," said Mike Houston. "I have great respect for the tradition here and I'm excited about what we have coming back. I look forward to working with this coaching staff and I'm ready to get started on August 11."

Houston came to Lenoir-Rhyne after spending one year (2006) as the Associate Head Coach and Defensive Coordinator at Brevard College.

At Brevard, Houston was part of a staff that re-established football after a 56-year absence. The 2006 Tornado squad won two games while playing a roster comprised of true freshman.

Prior to Brevard, Houston served as the Head Coach at T.C. Roberson High School in Asheville, N.C., from 2001-05. Under Houston, T.C. Roberson went 42-18 (5-4 in the playoffs) and was a two-time Times-News Area Coach Of The Year (2002 and '04).

Houston was also named an Assistant Coach for the 2005 North Carolina Shrine Bowl staff and helped lead North Carolina to a 28-24 win over South Carolina.

Houston's 2004 T.C. Roberson squad was his best-ever, as the team went through the regular season undefeated and finished 13-1 before losing in the state semifinals. The 2004 team averaged 38 points per game while allowing just nine points per outing as it won its first-ever conference championship in school history.

Houston left T.C. Roberson with the highest winning percentage of any coach in school history and helped establish the Rams as one of the top football programs in the state of North Carolina.

Houston, who was a 2005 Shrine Bowl Assistant Coach, spent five years as T.C. Roberson's Defensive Coordinator (1996-2000) before taking over the head job.

Houston started his coaching career at Forbush High School in East Bend, N.C., where he served as Falcons' Defensive Coordinator (1994-95).

Houston is a 1994 graduate of Mars Hill College with a bachelor's degree in biology and played tight end on the Lions' football squad.

Houston is married to the former Amanda Owen and the couple has one child, Owen Michael, who was born on December 1, 2008.