

Escobedo Returns to Indiana as Associate Head Coach

The Hoosiers' latest NCAA Champion is back to serve his home state

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BLOOMINGTON, Ind. – Indiana University wrestling head coach [Duane Goldman](#) announced Wednesday the addition of [Angel Escobedo](#) to his coaching staff. Escobedo, Indiana's 2008 NCAA Champion and the only four-time NCAA All-American in program history, will serve as the Hoosiers' associate head coach.

"I'm really excited to have Angel join our staff," Goldman said. "He's someone I recruited out of high school, and he had a career here that speaks for itself; but even more than that, he's a great person. I think he's someone who will be a great role model and example for our guys, and to have him come back says a lot about his affinity for the university and his desire to create success here."

Escobedo returns to Bloomington after a three-year stop at Iowa State, where the Griffith, Indiana native served as a volunteer assistant coach while training full-time as a professional wrestler. During that time he molded a group of lightweight grapplers into national contenders, most notably two-time All-American and four-time NCAA qualifier Earl Hall. Escobedo also guided Kyle Larson to NCAA qualification in the 2015-16 season.

"I've always had it in the back of my mind that I wanted to end up at Indiana," Escobedo told IUHoosiers.com on Wednesday. "I always told [coach Goldman] that if he ever had an opportunity for me to reach out to me. When I got that call, my family and I were super excited about it."

Escobedo left the wrestling room at Simon Skjodt Assembly Hall in 2010 as one of the all-time greats to don the IU singlet. In addition to being Indiana's only four-time All-American, Escobedo holds the school record with three Big Ten Championships at 125 lbs. (2008, 2009, 2010). His 137 career wins ranks second on Indiana's leaderboard, and his pin tally (42) ranks third all-time.

"He had arguably one of the most prolific high school careers in this state," Goldman said on his former wrestler. "He could've gone anywhere he wanted out of high school but he chose to come here and represent his state. In doing that, he was a four-time All-American, a NCAA Champion, and a three-time Big Ten Champion. He went on to pursue an international career, but I think his heart has always been here."

The pursuit of wrestling excellence continued after graduation for Escobedo, despite his accomplishments while wrestling in the IHSAA and NCAA. Escobedo ascended to the professional level after graduation and continued his career during his tenure at Iowa State. He earned multiple podium finishes at the professional international level, including a fifth-place finish at the 2015 World Championships in the Team USA singlet.

But Escobedo couldn't resist the opportunity when he got the call from his college coach, his university, and his home state.

"It's having that IU logo on your chest when you're wrestling," Escobedo said on his love for the program. "I wanted to put the state Indiana back on the map of collegiate wrestling and I've always wanted to make Indiana known for what it is: a great state for wrestling. Beyond that, Indiana University felt like family to me."

Escobedo ensures a continued tradition of excellence in the Hoosiers' lightweight group, which is no different from his collegiate wrestling career. Following in the footsteps of two-time champion Joe Dubuque, Escobedo's 2008 title gave Indiana three 125 lbs. championships in a four-year stretch. Dating back to the 1999-2000 season, Indiana is the only program with three NCAA titles at that weight. They're also one of four teams (Cornell, Nebraska, Penn State) to win 125 lbs. NCAA championships with more than one wrestler.

"[Joe] Dubuque came before me so I had a lot to live up to," Escobedo said, recounting his first arrival to Indiana. "I took that as both a point of pride and a challenge, to represent Indiana in great fashion like those before me. I took that mentality into my work ethic, giving the best that I could to succeed."

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Nick Reith

Media Relations Assistant

Indiana University Athletics

Primary Contact: Field Hockey,

Wrestling, Water Polo

C: 317-371-6079

Email: nbreith@indiana.edu

