

Behind the Leader of the SEU Track and Field Team: Nick Dodson's Story

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December 1, 2025



(Coach Dodson posing at meet. Photo courtesy of SEU Athletics and Nick Dodson.)

May 2, 2018. Nick Dodson's first day on the job at Southeastern University (SEU) in Lakeland, Florida. As he looked around his empty office, containing nothing but a desk, a chair and a monitor, he asked himself, "Where do I start?"

Flash forward seven and a half years, and that day is still fresh in his mind, but his office is a little more decorated. The trophies, awards and pictures that surround him are a testament to what living a faithful life looks like.

If there was one word to describe Dodson, it would be humble.

Raised in Southwest Georgia, Dodson never looked for success or fame, saying, “I never had any dreams of winning any of this stuff … My dream was to … make it out of my hometown.”

Dodson picked up track in seventh grade, mainly to stay conditioned for football, but continued throughout high school. He began competing in hurdles and unleashed a natural talent. His hard work paid off when he took home his first championship in 2006.

Taking a leap of faith, Dodson became the first signee of Shorter University's Track and Field program in Rome, GA. Here, he would see his success multiply, becoming a national champion in the men's 400-meter hurdles in 2011, earning 11 All-American titles and qualifying for the Olympic trials in the 400 hurdles.

“I never had any dreams of winning any of this stuff,” said Dodson. “My dream was to make it out of my hometown.” This dream and more have been accomplished.

When Dodson decided to hang up his spikes, he began looking at the next best thing: becoming a coach. “I just felt like God kept calling me to coaching,” said Dodson. With this, he set off on the next step of his journey.

After coaching at three prior institutions, the Lord called him to SEU. In 2018, he was hired to be the first coach of SEU's Track and Field program. “We want coaches who will support the mission of the university and the athletic department, build character in student-athletes, build

academic success, and win on the field, on the court or on the track,” said Drew Watson, SEU’s athletic director. “We really felt like he would be a good fit. Christian coach, very driven, very student-athlete focused.”

Dodson has one vision for this program: “To transform lives through Christ … [and] make sure that they don’t leave here without a degree.”



(Dodson and athletes celebrating after win. Photo courtesy of SEU Athletics and Nick Dodson.)

Under Dodson, SEU Track and Field has never lost a conference championship for both men’s and women’s teams. He’s won eight Sun Conference Coach of the Year titles, was inducted into the 2019 NAIA Hall of Fame and the 2025 Georgia Track and Field Hall of Fame.

With the upcoming season around the corner, the SEU community is excited for where Dodson will lead his team. Watson said, “Just hearing Coach interact with the players … we would not be the successful program we are without Coach Dodson.”