

Erik Garcia

Head Women's Soccer Coach

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CAREER RECORDS

Head Coach — Cal State LA
NCAA | 7 seasons | 54W-34L (45.0%)

Biography

After guiding the Golden Eagles to another winning season in 2025, Erik Garcia returns for his eighth season as the head coach of Cal State LA's women's soccer program. He continues to have Cal State LA holding its position among the top conference and regional contenders.

Garcia led the Golden Eagles to a 7-5-6 record and a 4-4-3 mark in California Collegiate Athletic Association play in 2025 with a largely new cast. He expertly directed a late-season surge that had the Golden Eagles on the brink of a 12th straight trip to the conference tournament. The Golden Eagles finished the season riding a six-match unbeaten streak, but saw their season end with a 0-0 tie at Cal State San Marcos in the conference finale.

Cal State LA once again fielded one of the best defenses in the nation and allowed two goals in a game only once in 11 conference matches and twice in its 18-game regular season.

In his first six seasons as the head coach, Garcia has led the Golden Eagles to an overall record of 51-34-30 and a conference mark of 31-18-17. Cal State LA has collected 31 All-CCAA awards, 15 All-West Region awards and 1 All-America award during Garcia's tenure. He has also had players earn 3 CCAA Goalkeeper of the Year awards, one CCAA Impact Award, and nine CSC Academic All-District awards.

Garcia led the Golden Eagles to an 11th straight CCAA Tournament appearance in 2024. The Golden Eagles were 9-4-5 overall and finished third in the conference with a 6-4-1 record. The Golden Eagles were second in the conference and 20th in the nation in goals against average and they allowed one or fewer goals in 16 of 18 games.

He directed a team that was No. 1 in the CCAA and No. 11 in the country in save percentage with goalkeeper Taesja Paopao earning CCAA Goalkeeper of the Year honors for a second straight season.

He masterfully guided the Golden Eagles to a third-place finish in the CCAA and a trip to the NCAA playoffs in an outstanding 2023 season. Cal State LA had a 9-3-9 overall record and a 5-0-6 mark in CCAA play. The Golden Eagles were ranked No. 3 in the West Region and received votes in the final United Soccer Coaches national poll.

Garcia got the Golden Eagles into the second round of the NCAA Tournament for the second time in three seasons and just the fourth time in program history and Cal State LA set a new program record with a 15-game unbeaten streak.

Garcia directed one of the nation's top defenses once again and the Golden Eagles recorded 12 shutouts, just one shy of the program record set in 2022, and were No. 6 in the nation with a 0.471 goals against average.

The Golden Eagles thrived despite playing one of the region's toughest schedules. The Golden Eagles opened

with a 1-0 win at Concordia, a 2-2 tie at 2023 national champion Point Loma and a narrow 1-0 loss at 2022 national champion Western Washington to open the season. They then embarked on their 15-match unbeaten streak that began with a 2-1 win over Biola on Sept. 13 and finished with a 1-0 win over Chico State on Nov. 5 in a first-round CCAA Tournament game at University Stadium.

After a 1-0 loss to Cal State San Marcos in the conference tournament semifinals, the Golden Eagles began NCAA Tournament play with a thrilling penalty-kick advancement past Simon Fraser following a 0-0 tie. Paopao, who went on to earn All-America recognition from the United Soccer Coaches, blanked the Red Leafs on four penalty kick tries and Amanda Macedo and Shelby Melin made their tries to get the Golden Eagles past the first round.

The Golden Eagles fell to host Seattle Pacific in the second round, 1-0, to end their season.

The 2023 season was an outstanding follow-up to a spectacular 2022 season when Garcia expertly guided the Golden Eagles to their first CCAA Tournament title since 2014 and into the NCAA playoffs for the second time in three seasons.

Cal State LA finished the sensational season with an 11-4-6 record and was ranked 24th in the nation in the end-of-the-season poll by the United Soccer Coaches. The Golden Eagles were included in the final end-of-the-year rankings for the first time since 2014.

The Golden Eagles were 5-1-5 in conference play and finished third in the conference, just three points out of first. The No. 3 seed Golden Eagles proceeded to post three straight shutouts over No. 6 Cal Poly Pomona (2-0), No. 2 Stanislaus State (1-0) and No. 1 and host Sonoma State (1-0) to win the conference tourney title. Cal State LA earned a No. 4 seed in the NCAA West Regional and fell to No. 5 Concordia in a hard-fought first-round match at Hawaii-Hilo to end the season.

The Golden Eagles featured one of the best defenses in the nation and tied a program record with 13 shutouts. Cal State LA allowed only 13 goals all season and had a sparkling goals against average of 0.62.

After the 2020 season was canceled by COVID, Garcia led the Golden Eagles to a strong finish in 2021 and an eighth straight appearance in the CCAA Tournament in their return-to-play.

The Golden Eagles were 6-3-1 down the stretch, including a clutch double-overtime win over Cal Poly Pomona in the regular-season finale that got them into the conference tournament. Cal State LA then advanced past San Francisco State on penalty kicks in the opening round of the tournament in San Francisco, earning the Golden Eagles a spot in the semifinals for the first time since 2017.

Garcia adeptly guided a huge roster consisting mainly of newcomers into one of the conference's top teams by the season's end.

Prior to the cancellation of the 2020 season, Garcia led the Golden Eagles to a memorable season in 2019 in his first year as the head coach. He guided the Golden Eagles into the NCAA playoffs for the first time since 2014 and made the most of the opportunity. The Golden Eagles upset host Sonoma State, 1-0, in a first-round game in Rohnert Park and posted the program's first NCAA playoff win since 2011.

The victory was also the first road playoff win in Cal State LA women's soccer history.

Cal State LA had the best strength of schedule in the NCAA West Region and a tough non-conference schedule was highlighted by a 1-0 overtime win national runner-up Western Washington.

Garcia led the Golden Eagles to a 9-8-1 overall record, including a 5-5-1 mark in conference play. Cal State LA started the season with a 5-1 record through six games and climbed all the way up to No. 10 in the nation. After an 0-4-1 stretch, Garcia got the Golden Eagles to regroup and back-to-back shutout wins on the last week of the regular season lifted Cal State LA into the conference tournament for a seventh straight season

and, ultimately into the NCAA playoffs.

Before becoming the head coach, Garcia was the program's top assistant coach for six seasons and was instrumental in keeping the Golden Eagles among the top programs in the West Region.

In his six seasons as the top assistant coach, he helped the Golden Eagles to a 59-35-19 record and six appearances in the CCAA Tournament.

In 2018, Cal State LA had a 10-6-2 overall record and posted its most wins since the Golden Eagles went 16-2-3 while winning the CCAA championship and earning the No. 1 ranking in the West Region in 2014.

In 2017, he helped lead the Golden Eagles to a 9-5-3 overall record and into the CCAA Tournament semifinals.

In 2016, he helped guide the Golden Eagles to the championship game of the CCAA Tournament for the second time in three years. Cal State LA reached the title game as a No. 6 seed in the tourney after advancing past Cal State San Bernardino and Sonoma State in the first two rounds.

In 2015, Cal State LA overcame a 0-5-2 start and ultimately reached the CCAA Championship Tournament. The Golden Eagles wound up with a 7-7-4 overall record and finished third in the CCAA.

Garcia helped the Golden Eagles to one of the best seasons in the program's history in 2014. Cal State LA went undefeated in conference regular-season matches (9-0-2) and then recorded wins over Sonoma State and Chico State to win the conference tournament title as well. Cal State LA finished the regular season ranked No. 5 in the nation. It was the second conference title in the program's history and the first time the Golden Eagles went through a conference season undefeated.

The Golden Eagles were 16-2-3 overall and earned the No. 2 seed in the NCAA West Region and hosted the first two rounds of the NCAA playoffs. The Golden Eagles set new program marks for most shutouts (13), fewest goals allowed (10), consecutive wins (8) and longest unbeaten streak (14). In addition, the No. 5 national ranking was the best in the program's history.

Garcia joined the program in 2013 and helped the Golden Eagles achieve a 10-6-3 record with an 8-5-3 mark in conference play. Cal State LA closed the regular season with an 8-2-2 record over its final 12 games and earned a spot in the four-team conference tournament. The Golden Eagles were ranked fifth in the final NCAA Division II West Region poll, but missed out on the six-team regional after two teams ranked outside of the top six earned automatic qualifying bids.

Garcia came to Cal State LA after serving as Cal Poly Pomona's interim men's soccer head coach in 2012.

Prior to that, he was the associate head coach of both the men's and women's programs at Kansas Wesleyan in 2011. He helped Kansas Wesleyan's men's team to a national ranking as high as No. 8 and a school record for wins in a season with 17, while the women's team also won a conference title.

Before his one year in Kansas, Garcia was an assistant coach for four seasons at two schools for longtime coach Lance Thompson.

Garcia was at Cal Poly Pomona with Thompson for the 2009 and 2010 seasons and the Broncos enjoyed great success, winning 20 games over the two years.

He was also with Thompson for two outstanding years at Notre Dame de Namur and helped the Argonauts to a 24-12-4 record. He was the associate head coach in 2008 when the Argonauts won a Pacific-West Conference title. Notre Dame de Namur was 14-3-3 that season and qualified for the NCAA Division II playoffs for the first time. The Argonauts recorded 12 shutouts and had a goals against average of 0.62.

Garcia began his coaching career in 2006 as an assistant coach for the men's and women's programs at Holy

Names. Both teams won Cal-Pac Conference championships. The men made their third consecutive regional playoff appearance, while the women made their first-ever trip to the postseason.

Garcia led L.A. Villa FC of the Women's Premier Soccer League to a 6-3-2 record and a third-place finish in the Coastal Standings in 2016 in his first year with the club, coaching a team that included former Cal State LA players Liz Franco and Stacey Rodwell. It was the first winning record for the franchise in three years.

Garcia also served as an assistant coach for the LA Misioneros FC, a Player Development League team based in Los Angeles and was the head coach for the Misioneros' reserves in 2013. In 2014, Garcia was named the Misioneros' associate head coach, and, during the season, became the head coach. He guided the team to a 7-2-5 overall record and into the playoffs for the first time in the team's history.

He also served as an assistant coach for the Orange County Blues USL-Pro team in 2014.

Garcia played for two seasons at Holy Names and helped lead the team to its first-ever NAIA postseason berth as a junior. The team was ranked fifth in the nation and captured conference and regional championships. The Hawks advanced to the regional playoffs in both his junior and seniors seasons.

He also played at Los Angeles City College, where the team made its first-ever playoff appearance.

Garcia earned his bachelor's degree in sociology from Holy Names in 2006.

Garcia was born in Los Angeles and grew up in Honduras. He is the proud father of three children.

COACHING CAREER

Head Coach — Cal State LA

NCAA | Women's Soccer | 2019

Women's Soccer head coach at Cal State LA, 2019-20 - 2026-27. Source:

https://stats.ncaa.org/people/41133?sport_code=WSO
