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Delaware's college-bound athletes get a helping hand

Group provides direction, advice and information

By JACK IRELAND
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Choosing a college is a daunting task for many high school students.

Pat Ramone, Lou Calvarese Jr. and Rich Ranauto hope they can make the process easier for local kids.

The three head a group of former athletes and coaches involved with
http://athleticscholarshiphelp.com">Athletic Scholarship Help.

The group helps athletes in volleyball, field hockey, field hockey, boys and girls basketball, football, boys and girls lacrosse, boys and girls track, tennis, baseball, softball and other sports.

"For Pat and myself it's 100 percent personal," said Calvarese who played sports at Mount Pleasant and one year of college at West Chester. "We are looking at every sport these days that student-athletes, boys and girls, play in Delaware and the surrounding area. Even though we might not have coaching experience in all sports, we are there to help students in any sport. We encourage the student-athlete."

Ramone, who spent nine seasons as a regional scout for the Orioles, built a reputation as one of the best managers in Delaware American Legion baseball history.

"I actually did something like this for years. helping kids I knew about, coached and cared for," said Ramone. "Some student-athletes and their parents have no idea about everything that goes into finding the right college Lou and I decided back in July to put together this service."

http://athleticscholarshiphelp.com">Athletic Scholarship Help serves student-athletes from across the state and region.

"We want to tell parents where your son or daughter stands academically when it comes to getting into the college of their choice, any scholarship possibilities and guiding them through this process," Ramone said. "If an athlete is not a real good student, we will continue to help you. We'll look at some solid schools at the junior college and NAIA level. Your child might need that smaller school, that smaller class size to find their way. It can be done."

Ramone said the group is working with about 25 student-athletes in several schools, including A.I. du Pont, Archmere, Salesianum, St. Mark's, Delaware Military Academy, Charter and Glasgow.

"We really expect to pick up more and more as the word gets out there," he said. "We want to be able to help these athletic directors and coaches who are often overworked as it is."

Ramone said his organization has been in contact with Caravel Academy baseball coach Paul

Niggebrugge, who runs a similar program that started with middle school and high school baseball players.

Calvarese said **http://athleticscholarshiphelp.com">Athletic Scholarship Help** does charge for it services and fees are based on what services the parents want.

"We try to be up front and frank with these kids, no matter what sport they play," Calvarese said. "We will even do videos of an entire game an athlete plays in. That would be an extra $150, but when you come to think about it, that's not bad. We also do a five-minute video that can be sent out to various colleges the student might be interested in attending or is being recruited by.

"We aren't out there to make all kinds of money at the expense of parents who might not be aware of all the dangers out there when it comes to finding a good place for not only sports, but academics and a good campus atmosphere.

"Our goal is to charge just enough to make this project work and have something left over to keep the program up and running," Calvarese said.

Calvarese's son Mike is a sophomore baseball player at A.I. As a parent, he's using the program to help his son.

Ramone played sports at McKean High, where he excelled in baseball. He was a player of the Stahl Post team that reached the 1970 American Legion World Series. In addition to his success managing Stahl, he was as an assistant baseball coach at Wilmington University when the Wildcats qualified for the 1992 NAIA World Series. Wilmington now is an NCAA Division II program.

Ramone said he has assisted in helping more than 100 high school seniors to receive college scholarships. About 25 of them went on to sign professional baseball contracts, including Derrick May (Newark High) and Bill Johnson (Delcastle).

Calvarese played football and baseball at Mount Pleasant. He also pitched one year at West Chester University. He managed and coached for a number of years in the Delaware American Legion League.

"Lou is passionate about all sports and has been involved in athletic programs for more than 30 years, both as a player and a coach," Ramone said. "Lou is an active board member in the Piedmont [Little League] and has experience in coaching at the high school level as well. Lou played sports at the collegiate level and understands the commitment involved in playing at the next level."

Ranauto played sports in high school and also wrestled at the University of Delaware. His son Vinnie, was an All-State wrestler and football player at Caravel and plays linebacker at Shippensburg University, an NCAA Division II school.

FYI

For information on **http://athleticscholarshiphelp.com">Athletic Scholarship Help**, call Lou Calvarese Jr. at 530-4649.