

FAREWELL, MR. FACCIOLLA!

Get this: Dominic Facciolla Loves Sports

As one of ten kids growing up in the 1960's in Detroit, Mr. Dominic Facciolla's childhood days were spent on the sandlot, the basketball court, the school gym. You name it. Wherever there was a game, Dominic was there, either in the action or watching court side, itching for his turn to jump in with the older boys.

Sports was part of his culture, and with seven older siblings and famous athletes to look up to like Muhammad Ali and Magic Johnson, it's easy to see where Dominic's competitive spirit comes from.

After studying at Wayne State, Dominic traveled to Europe, where he met his wife, Bernadette, earned a Master's Degree, and served as an athletic director, physical education teacher, and coach-first at the American Overseas School of Rome and later in London at the Marymount International School. Their son, Dominic, was born in London, but time would tell that Europe would not be their future.

In his 1999 job search back in the states, Dominic was so impressed with what Academy had to offer that he looked no further and signed on as Athletic Director.

His biggest shock came when he found his administrative position blocked him from coaching (his favorites being soccer and basketball). Nonetheless, Academy's challenge kept the Detroit native more than occupied. And Dominic more than rose to the challenge.

In Dominic's tenure, our athletics programs have flourished with countless championships at league, local, and state levels. Academy's growth of programs, such as the girls volleyball team (which won its first league championship in history this past year), can't help but make Dominic smile. Thanks to Dominic's help, programs such as bowling, ice hockey, and girls soccer came to fruition.

While he is proud of the banners lining the Mackenzie Gym walls, Dominic's legacy will be long remembered far beyond solely the number of these championships.

To be sure, in Dominic's words, "No more than a handful of schools can equal that number of banners." But for him, what separates Academy athletics from the pack is its "amateur ethos." With few exceptions, each Academy student can suit up in the maroon and grey for whatever team they're interested, regardless of talent.

He credits the school's culture for this unique blend of inclusivity and sustained excellence, for "doing it right."

Dominic's most rewarding experiences have been the satisfaction of "helping a boy or girl through something," and the opportunity to make a difference in the life of an athlete or a young coach.

And with an attendance record of 200-plus football games, nearly every home basketball game, and truly innumerable more events (including four Academy postseason match-ups in one day: all away games), that dedication is unmistakable.

There's only so much recognition that goes to someone in a position like Dominic, but beyond his induction to the Mid-State-League Hall of Fame this past October and the platter of accolades he helped bring to Academy, his legacy as a level-headed leader will live on.

Dominic's future is uncertain; however, it's satisfying to know that he's nothing but giddy about being able to just "goof around" and relax for a few months.

Being the family man he is, it's certain that he will spend as much time as possible with his wife, Bernadette, his son, Dominic, and his family in Michigan and Europe.

Wherever he touches down, his connections to the school that he loves so dearly will not be splintered, and it's comforting to know that the future of Academy athletics will be in good hands with our next director, Jason Singleton, in addition to the renovations that will be completed by the time his foot is out the door this July.

Despite his Michigan roots and his unwavering support for the Spartans and Wolverines of the state up north, he's an Ohio man, and he always will be.

by Andrew Cahall '20 and Charlie Sabgir '20



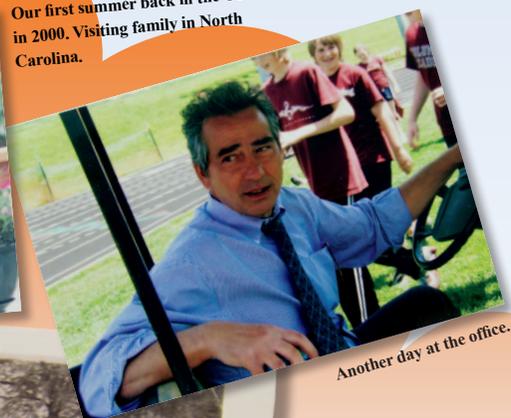
Athletic Director, Dominic Facciolla



Getting on the train at Waterloo station in 1998.



Our first summer back in the US in 2000. Visiting family in North Carolina.



Another day at the office.



1960 family road trip. Dominic (first from left) holding a bat. "We played a sport whenever we had a chance."