

Coach Vinnie Ascolese - Head Football Coach North Bergen High School

Throughout his exemplary 43 year career, Coach Ascolese has served as a model and standard of personal and sporting excellence to the young athletes in his charge. Their determination, skills, and competitive spirit are the products of lessons well taught by Coach. Anthony Avillo, North Hudson Fire Chief and former player, said it best in his book, "Many of the attributes of my life have come about as a direct result of Coach Ascolese".

Undoubtedly, Vinnie has the ability to get the most out of an athlete both on the field and academically. He is a good listener and a staunch supporter. He is a caring and understanding person who never gives up on his kids. He believes in being tough, yet encouraging. He teaches them why it is important to do their best and remains an important figure throughout their lives. He shares in their happiness as well as their sorrow. He praises them when they do well and counsels them when they don't. He believes that if you ask for loyalty you must provide loyalty. He has sung at their weddings, visited them in hospitals, delivered eulogies at their funerals, gotten them summer jobs and help through summer school. Over the years he has provided both emotional and financial support to his players and their families. Each week he talks to his players about a particular theme and relates it to the team, the game and their life experiences. One former player said, "I was the worst kid in the school, Coach Ascolese set me straight, I later became a Marine Corps Tactical Unit member and later graduated from college – I owe him everything".

For a time in his career, his entire family participated on the football field. His three sons played Varsity and all three daughters were cheerleaders. His wife, Patricia, has cooked a hot meal before kick-off for the past 43 years.

His players have taken his lessons to the battlefield to the NFL and to many college varsity teams and their own coaching positions. Ten of his former players are in school administration and 49 are coaches. With over 300 wins, Coach is proud to have the #1 team in New Jersey and has accumulated 7 State Championships, 12 County Championships, and even took 2nd place in county cheerleading competition in his short stint as their coach.

In the course of his career, he has been named the Vince Lombardi "Man of the Year", the New Jersey Football Coaches' "Coach of Year", the "Italian Citizen of Year", the Heisman "Legendary Coach of the Year", the Christopher Columbus "Educator of the Year", the Toyota "Regional Coach of Year", NFL High School "Coach of the Week" and the NY Giants "Coach of the Week".

He has received the Daily News "All-Star High School Football Coach" award four times, the Hudson County 5th Quarter Club "Coach of Year" 13 times, Hudson County Freeholders "Lifetime Achievement" award and is now in the North Bergen and Hudson County Hall of Fame.

Coach Ascolese was selected as the 2003-04 New Jersey "Coach of Year" by the National High School Federation of Coaches Association.