



Caldwell College's new \$8.5 million George R. Newman Student Activities & Recreation Center

CALDWELL COLLEGE

ACADEMIC & ATHLETIC CHAMPIONS

As he unpacked his boxes into a makeshift office on a warm evening in the summer of 1988, Mark Corino could only imagine the challenge he was preparing to embrace.

Corino was giving up the security of a high school teaching job, and was walking away from a successful five-year stint as men's basketball coach at Bloomfield College, to become the Athletic Director at Caldwell College, a rapidly growing institution that was making a commitment to an aggressive athletic agenda.

"I thought it would be an outstanding opportunity for me," Corino recalled. "But in the same instance, I needed to know that the College was committed to athletics. They assured me they were, and I felt comfortable that it was the right challenge."

When Corino arrived at Caldwell in 1988, the College had joined the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and had four athletic programs. The staff size, including Corino, was four.

Today, with a total college enrollment nearing 2,300, there are nine programs, with a tenth on the horizon next fall. Corino oversees a staff of 28, including an NCAA Compliance Officer, a full-time Academic Advisor, a full-time Athletic Trainer and a Sports Information Director.

Also, in June, 2002, the College became a fully accredited member of the NCAA, Division II, after a successful 14-year tenure in the NAIA and the last four years as a dual member of the NAIA and a provisional NCAA member.

Caldwell officially opened a 60,000-square-foot recreation and athletic center, named for George R. Newman, the late son of a College benefactor. The building cost \$8.5 million and sits proudly on Caldwell's campus. It includes athletic and administrative offices, a fitness center, a suspended track and an 1,800-seat arena that is now home to the highly successful men's and women's basketball program.

Corino, who put together a 95-48 mark in five years as head men's basketball coach at Bloomfield College, went to Caldwell with little thought of coaching men's basketball. But two months after arriving at the school, he stepped into the dual role as Athletic Director and head coach of the struggling new program.

Fourteen years, 259 victories, nine NAIA All-Americans, seven Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference (CACC) titles and five trips to the NAIA National Tournament later, Caldwell's success in men's basketball is unquestioned.

Women's athletics at Caldwell has continued to steadily grow. The women's basketball team has made three appearances at the NAIA

National Tournament and has won two league championships.

Today, the school, under NCAA guidelines, has a Senior Women's Administrator. In addition to the basketball team's success, the women's soccer team gained a berth in the CACC playoffs this fall, and the softball team has set school records for victories in a season twice in the past three years. There are plans for a women's cross country program to commence in the fall of 2003.

Men's athletics include soccer, basketball, baseball and tennis. The soccer program has won a conference championship and has appeared in the CACC Tournament three times. Golf continues to be a co-ed program.

As an NCAA, Division II program, Caldwell has athletic scholarships to offer in all nine of the school's intercollegiate programs.

Corino knows that a successful program could only be countered with a commitment to academics.

"The word 'student-athlete' has a great deal of significance here," Corino says with pride. "Our (NCAA) graduation rate (81% of student-athletes graduate Caldwell) is very important to us. We want our student-athletes to be just as committed in the classroom as they are to athletics."

Corino points to the Athletic Department's Mission Statement, which, in part, emphasizes a commitment to "a quality academic and athletic experience, in order to meet the diverse needs of its student-athletes."

"In our statement, we also seek to provide athletic and recreational opportunities to all members of our College community, including alumni," Corino said. "We can never forget what the administration and our alumni have done to make this a successful program. And our current student-athletes should understand the importance of sustaining that high standard."

Overall, 14 student-athletes have attained NAIA All-American status. Five have gone on to play their respective sport professionally.

Corino especially enjoys showing the Newman Center to the alumni and parents of alumni.

"That's what makes me the proudest," Corino said. "As I was showing the building, it all came back to me, as I saw the faces of those family members. They were there when it all started. It reminded me of all those years in building something special."

Caldwell College is located 20 miles west of New York City at 9 Ryerson Avenue in Caldwell, NJ 07006. Admissions Office - 973-618-3500 or 1-888-864-9516 toll free. Website: www.caldwell.edu. E-mail: admissions@caldwell.edu.



Caldwell College's championship men's and woman's basketball program is led by Assistant Coach Dean Johnson, Women's Head Coach Nicole Durnien-Amato, and Men's Head Coach & Athletic Director Mark Corino.