

## GEORGE A. CAPACCI

### CLASS OF 1971



George always considered himself to be an athlete and recognized the student/athlete distinction, for without academics there would be no athletics. In addition to his academic accomplishments at Mynderse Academy (Student Council President, Top Ten Academics, National Honor Society, NY Boys' State), George received appointments to both the Naval Academy (Annapolis) and the Coast Guard Academy (New London). He chose the Coast Guard Academy because he wanted to play two major intercollegiate sports in university. While a student/athlete at Mynderse, George played three sports for the Blue Devils - football, wrestling and track. In football, he was a two year starter at left guard and linebacker. In his senior year, despite suffering a ruptured appendix after the fourth game and undergoing surgery, he came back to play in the season's final game against arch-rival Waterloo, helping the 1970 football team to a perfect 8-0 season and league championship. George was also the Wayne-Finger Lakes wrestling champion (177 lb.) in 1971 as well as WFL track champion in discus in 1971, contributing to Mynderse team success in both sports. While at Mynderse, George was a member of the Block "M" sports club and winner of the SMS Aldo J. "Ollie" Beatini Memorial Award as Outstanding Athlete of the Year in 1971 as well as the St. Patrick's School Alumnus Award for Athletics.

George accepted a nationwide competitive appointment to the US Coast Guard Academy and not only played his two major sports, football and wrestling, but picked up another gentile sport, namely rugby. Capacci went on to serve as Captain on these three teams at USCGA. In football, he played middle linebacker for four years. In his senior Co-Captain year, George played for NFL football legend and head coach Otto Graham. George was recognized as ECAC Player of the Week on two occasions and was an Honorable Mention All American team member in 1974. At graduation in 1975, Ensign Capacci received the US Navy League award for outstanding performance on the gridiron and the USCGA Monogram Club award as the outstanding athlete in intercollegiate football.

In wrestling, George captained the freshman team and was New England freshman champion. The next three years at the Academy, George served as

Captain of the intercollegiate wrestling team and despite injuries finished as New England Division II/III runner-up all three years. George qualified for four and competed in three NCAA national wrestling tournaments. Upon graduation, George Capacci received the Admiral Leamy award as the wrestler demonstrating the qualities of leadership, ability and adaptability, the American Legion award for the graduating senior demonstrating excellence in intercollegiate athletics as well as the Hoffman Award for intercollegiate athletics. While at the Coast Guard Academy, George was a founding member of the Academy Rugby club, playing in the spring season for three years and captaining the team in his senior year. Following graduation, Capacci continued to play club rugby for various clubs during his assignments across the country, most notably the West Potomac RFC in Washington DC during the 1970s and 80s, serving as Captain and East Coast Selector for the US Rugby Team. Wrapping up his Coast Guard Academy resume, George served as President of the Monogram All-Sports Club and additionally at graduation, he received the Baker Award for inspirational leadership in Academy Athletics. In 2014, he was inducted into the US Coast Guard Academy Athletic Hall of Fame. George's career as a commissioned officer in the US Coast Guard was primarily within the surface operations specialties serving ten years at sea on polar icebreakers, seagoing buoytenders and a fisheries law enforcement cutter. He commanded two Coast Guard cutters including the first vessel on-scene following the grounding of the T/V EXXON VALDEZ in 1989. During a tour in Washington DC, George assisted President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter as a White House Social Aide coordinating official functions and events. He also found time to earn a Master's degree in Public Administration from the George Washington University.

After retirement as a Commander in 1995, George earned his Unlimited Master's USCG license and continued his maritime career with the Alaska Marine Highway System in Juneau, Alaska. He served seven years at AMHS before moving to British Columbia Ferry Services in Victoria, British Columbia. After five years in Canada, George moved to Seattle to work with Washington State Ferries. Captain Capacci left WSF in April 2015 completing eighteen years in leadership positions with passenger ferry systems in the Pacific Northwest and still resides in Seattle.

His greatest satisfactions, however, come from a loving marriage since 1980 to wife Kathy and their union which was blessed with four children, Christina, Natalie, Anna and Andrew, all accomplished citizens and athletes in their own specialties and two beautiful grandchildren.