

## George Valesente – Class of 1962



George Valesente was a three sport athlete in high school. He played varsity football for three years and received All-Conference and All-State recognition. His play was so highly acclaimed, he received an invitation to play in a high school All-American game. In basketball, George was All- Conference for two of his three varsity years and led the league in scoring. While playing baseball, Mynderse won sectionals and George was All-Conference in two of his three varsity years. He was a leader as well, being chosen captain in all three sports. His athletic accomplishments led him to being voted Athlete of the Year.

Sports didn't stop for George when he went to Ithaca College. He joined an exclusive group of athletes that played three sports for four years. He played on an NCAA playoff team in all three sports. Never having played soccer before, he showed his athletic ability and learned the sport so well, he became a three year starter and team captain. In basketball he graduated as the third all time leading scorer and team captain. It was in baseball that George excelled at Ithaca. As a pitcher, he had a 1.36 ERA and averaged a strikeout every inning. He was a career 300 hitter and set school records with at bats (7) and runs scored in a game (5).

After Ithaca, George entered the professional ranks in baseball. He played four years and went to the Triple A level.

Following his playing career, Valesente coached two years at Brockport, New Paltz and Maritime before returning to Ithaca in 1978 to take over his current post as baseball coach. While at Ithaca, George has guided the Bombers to 2 national titles (1980,1988), 9 World Series and 30 NCAA postseason berths. His teams have never had a losing season and won nearly 70% of their games. They have 16 league titles and 2 runner-up finishes. Ithaca has won the last eight Empire 8 titles.

George has been honored many times for his outstanding coaching, twice voted the American Baseball Coaches Association Division III Coach of the Year and District Coach of the Year in 80, 81, 86, 88, 91, 92 and 94. He is currently ranked 6th all time in Division III wins, 3rd among active coaches and 19th in active winning %.

George lives in Ithaca with his wife, Dianne, and has two grown children, David and Christina.