

AU hires Vecchio as new athletics director

4/10/12



When Paul Vecchio starts his new job as director of athletics (AD) at Alfred University in July, it will be a homecoming in more than one way. Vecchio, who has been senior associate athletic director for communication and sports administration at the University at Buffalo (UB), a Division 1 program, since 2006, previously spent three years, from 1992-95, as sports information director at Alfred University. He is originally from nearby Olean, and his wife, Dawn, is from Hinsdale, so returning to the Southern Tier is "coming home" in that way as well. "We are looking forward to having Paul join the Division of Student Affairs at Alfred University as director of athletics," said Kathy Woughter, vice president for Student Affairs. "He impressed everyone on the search committee and in the open forum with his commitment to development of student athletes. He has the blend of leadership skills and experience in athletic administration that we think will serve Alfred University athletics programs well now and into the future." For Vecchio, "definitely one of the most exciting opportunities" associated with his new job at Alfred University "is the chance to work with an excellent leadership team, starting with President (Charles M.) Edmondson. As I was catching up on what's been happening at Alfred University since I left 17 years ago, I was impressed with what President Edmondson has accomplished in terms of campus life and the work he's done to raise the academic profile of the University" as measured in Alfred's national rankings. The coaches and others with whom he would be working most closely on a day-to-day basis are "really, really impressive," said Vecchio. "They are a great group of professionals." His new job will not be without challenges he admits, and among them is the need to upgrade the facilities. "That's a common theme, from Division I to Division III schools, public and private. The recession has affected nearly every school's ability to not just add new facilities, but to maintain those that they have. There are a number of things that we will need to do to assure that our student athletes have the best possible experience, the best possible facilities for practicing and competing." At the same time he notes the needs for new and updated facilities, Vecchio points to the success of some AU teams in spite of where they practice and play. In particular, he notes the winning women's softball team, and the track and field teams. Asked what three things would top his agenda when he starts work in July, Vecchio said the first two items are related. He wants to meet with the head coaches in each sport to "understand what they need" to create the ideal experience for their players, and then, secondly, determine what he can do as AD to make that happen to benefit student athletes. He also will be working with Edmondson and Woughter to make sure the University can address the areas of greatest need. He noted that the athletic director's role at Alfred is exciting because "nearly 30% of the undergraduate population at Alfred are student-athletes, so athletics can play an enormous role in the future success of AU in areas like out-of-state recruiting, retention rates, alumni pride and

community engagement."Vecchio credits James Moretti, a 1972 alumnus of Alfred University, former football player and former football coach, with "great leadership" during his 14 years as AD. "I've got pretty big shoes to fill," said Vecchio, "but fortunately, I've known Jim for more than 20 years, and I know I can always reach out to him for support and counsel." As senior associate athletic director at UB, Vecchio oversees 26 employees. He has day-to-day supervision of the wrestling and men's and women's tennis teams, each of whom have coaches who have achieved Coach of the Year honors, as well as advanced to post-season play during the time Vecchio has been supervising them. Vecchio was involved in developing the concepts for and undertaking a successful effort to raise \$325,000 to upgrade the wrestling facilities at UB.He also oversees the UB athletics communications office, managing the University's radio and television contracts and talent as well as acting as official spokesperson for the Division of Athletics. His staff of six has won numerous national awards for media guides, and the office was chosen by the Football Writers Association of America as one of the "Super 11" communications offices in the nation in 2010.Vecchio was executive producer for "Bullseye," a division television show that won back-to-back Telly Awards in 2008 and 2009. The national awards recognize shows produced for cable television.Prior to going to the University at Buffalo as a sports information director in 1995, Vecchio spent three years as Alfred University's sports information director. He was a staff and sports writer for the Olean Times Herald from 1991-92, and an assistant sports editor for the Tiffin (OH) Advertiser-Tribune from 1990-91.Vecchio serves on the Buffalo-Niagara YMCA Board of Directors, and previously served on a UB campus-wide communications task force; as a member of the board of directors of the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame; and as a member of the College Sports Information Directors of America.He earned an associate's degree in social sciences from Jamestown Community College in 1988; a bachelor's degree in communications from Brockport State College in 1990; and a master's in educational leadership and policy from UB in December 2011. He also completed the executive educational program offered by the Sports Management Institute in January 2008.Vecchio and his wife, Dawn, are the parents of three sons, Jake, Mitch and Tyler. The family will be relocating to the Alfred area this summer.