

High school football team camp a summer tradition at Alfred University

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Alfred University Head Football Coach Dave Murray and his staff hosted the 15th Gridiron Champions Football Camp for high school teams this July on campus.

Murray and his staff developed friendships with the players and coaches and assisted in coaching on the field. Additionally, the camp introduced high school football players to the Alfred campus community.

"The camp is a great recruiting tool," Murray said, estimating some 400 high students football player came to campus. "It's something we look forward to every summer."

Eight teams participated in two, five-day camp sessions over two weeks. Central Square, Chautauqua Lake Central, Corning, Victor, and Webster-Thomas high schools attended the July 8-12 camp session, while Maple Grove and Raritan (NJ) high schools participated July 15-19. Last season, these teams combined for a 47-25 record.

The teams stayed in the University's residence halls under the supervision of camp counselors. Team members spent their days at camp practicing, in classroom meetings, exercising in the University pool and weight room, listening to guest speakers, and watching film.

Murray, who has run a football camp for 22 years, said it gives teams an opportunity to prepare for the upcoming fall football season.

"It can be considered similar to preseason practice," said Murray. "It gives coaches a chance to evaluate their talent, try out new schemes on offense or defense and go into a situation where the team is on its own. Hopefully, when they leave, they are a better football program with very fond memories of Alfred University."

Murray's hope that the players and coaches enjoy the camp seems to be a reality.

"The entire focus is football," said Victor Head Coach Geoff Mandile. "It's a great experience for our kids. "

"It gives teams a great opportunity to build team chemistry, install their schemes and compete against other teams," said Cornwall Head Coach Marcus Hughes. "Every year we go, we get better as a team."

"They (the players) enjoy how intense it is," said Corning Head Coach Timothy Hughes. "It's a nice opportunity for kids to see what a college campus is like."

"I wouldn't recommend it to anyone in our division because I don't want them to come here," quipped Maple Grove Head Coach Curt Fischer. "I love Alfred University."

“It’s like our second home” said Raritan Head Coach Anthony Petrucci. “As long as I’m the head coach, this will be the place where we spend our summers.”