

# ST. MARY HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME 2026 INDUCTEES



## *David Weber – 1967*

In the storied history of Saint Mary High School athletics, few names resonate with the same quiet authority and all-around excellence as Dave Weber. A quintessential "student-athlete" before the term became a cliché, Dave navigated the fields and courts of Rutherford with a rare combination of physical prowess and tactical intelligence, leaving an indelible mark on three different programs.

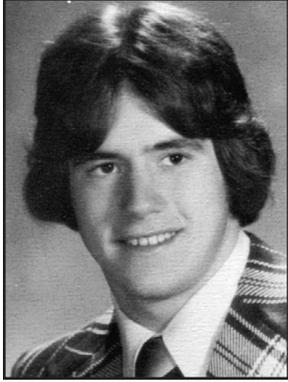
On the gridiron, Dave was the steady hand that guided the Gaels' offense. As a running back, he was described by teammates and coaches alike as a "quiet leader," a player who commanded respect through action rather than volume. His dual-threat capability was never more evident than during a landmark victory over Pope Pius High School, where he dismantled the defense by both throwing for a touchdown and sprinting for another. He was the engine of a powerhouse era, sharing the huddle with legends who would eventually join him in the Hall of Fame.

When the seasons shifted to the hardwood, Dave transitioned seamlessly into the role of the cerebral point guard. Under the tutelage of Hall of Fame coach Charles Agle, Dave became the floor general for one of the most formidable basketball squads in the region. Known for his fluid style and high basketball IQ, he possessed the uncanny ability to read defensive shifts in real-time, adjusting plays on the fly to exploit weaknesses. Whether he was feeding the post, crashing the boards, or taking over the scoring—such as his masterful 23-point performance against Hudson Catholic—Dave was the heartbeat of a team that consistently notched wins against rivals like Rutherford High, Queen of Peace, and the Ho-Ho-Kus Saints.

Dave's competitive spirit extended to the diamond as well. As a key fixture of the Saint Mary baseball team, he provided consistent power and reliability. Playing alongside greats like Andy Cefalo and Bill Byrne, Dave helped anchor a lineup that turned the Gaels into a perennial threat, proving that his athletic instincts were as sharp with a bat as they were with a ball.

Beyond his high school years, the same dedication Dave showed in sports fueled a distinguished career in science. Joining Hoffman-LaRoche, he contributed to the groundbreaking development of Interferon, a pioneer in the field of cancer-fighting pharmaceuticals. His professional life mirrored his athletic career: a commitment to excellence that resulted in a tangible benefit to the community.

Today, Dave resides in Nutley, New Jersey, with his wife, Jill. While his playing days are etched in the record books of Saint Mary, his greatest pride remains his family—his children Carley, Gail, and Keith, and his granddaughter, Abigail. Dave Weber's induction into the Hall of Fame is not just a recognition of his stats, but a celebration of a man who played every game, and lived every chapter of his life, with the heart of a champion.



## ***Jimmy Flynn – 1976***

Jimmy Flynn, affectionately known as "Errol," was a standout athlete at Saint Mary High School in Rutherford, NJ. A member of the Class of 1976, Flynn left an indelible mark on the school's athletic program, excelling in both football and track.

Flynn's prowess on the football field was undeniable. As a running back for the Saint Mary Gaels, he possessed a rare combination of speed, agility, and toughness. He was equally skilled at blocking as he was at running, a quality that earned him praise from his coaches. His junior year was highlighted by a spectacular kickoff return against Paramus Catholic, where he also rushed for 145 yards on 10 carries. In 1974, he was named to the All-League First Team as a running back.

His senior year was even more impressive. Flynn rushed for a total of 784 yards and was voted to the All-League First Team as a defensive back. One of his most memorable performances was against Pope Pius, where he amassed 258 rushing yards and two touchdowns, with scoring runs of 67 and 92 yards. He also had a stellar game against Paramus Catholic, rushing for 102 yards on 18 carries.

As a tri-captain, Flynn helped lead the 1975 football team to the state finals, finishing the season with an 8-3 record. Even in the championship game, Flynn's impact was felt, as he blocked a punt and recorded an interception.

Flynn's athletic talents extended to the track, where he dominated the 100-yard dash with 12 wins and a personal best of 10.5 seconds. He also secured six victories in the 220-yard dash, with a top time of 24.1 seconds, and even won a long jump competition.

Beyond his athletic achievements, Flynn was known for his warmth and character. He maintained close friendships with his high school peers throughout his life and was a devoted son, brother, father, and family man. His friendly nature and love for others made him a beloved figure in his community.

In recognition of his exceptional athletic career and the lasting impact he made on Saint Mary High School, Jimmy "Errol" Flynn is proudly inducted into the 2026 Class of the Saint Mary High School Athletic Hall of Fame.



## ***Vanessa Ortiz-Angulo – 1997***

From the dirt of the diamond to the heights of the corporate boardroom, Vanessa Ortiz-Angulo has defined her life through a relentless pursuit of excellence. A 1997 graduate of Saint Mary High School in Rutherford, New Jersey, Vanessa first made her mark as a formidable force on the Lady Gaels softball team. Though she may have been small in stature, her presence at third base was nothing short of "Herculean," anchoring a defense and driving an offense that propelled her team to regional prominence.

Her high school career was a masterclass in athletic consistency and leadership. Vanessa was a member of the North Parochial B State Sectional Championship her senior year. A perennial standout, she earned All-League, All-County, and All-State honors, culminating in her selection for the prestigious Bergen-Passaic Girls All-Star Softball Game and being named her team's Most Valuable Player. These accolades were more than just trophies; they were the foundation for a collegiate career, earning her a scholarship to Florida Atlantic University where she continued to hone the discipline that would define her professional life.

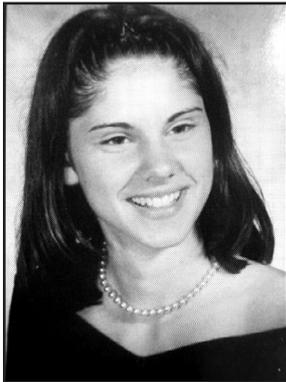
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## *Vanessa Ortiz-Angulo – continued*

Today, Vanessa translates that same competitive fire and strategic mindset into her role as the Senior Director of Talent Acquisition for Sysco, a Fortune 100 leader. In this capacity, she oversees the field talent acquisition strategy for over 180 distribution centers across the United States. Her professional journey is marked by a deep-seated passion for people and an unwavering commitment to service and resilience—traits she first developed while leading her teammates in Rutherford.

Now residing in Houston, Vanessa's greatest pride remains her family. She is married to Raphael Angulo, a U.S. Army veteran and Federal Corrections Officer, and together they are raising two sons: 16-year-old Raphael, a competitive soccer player, and 10-year-old Aiden, a math and science enthusiast with a love for basketball.

As she is inducted into the Hall of Fame, Vanessa views the honor through a lens of profound gratitude. She reflects on every challenge and victory as a necessary step in her evolution, hoping to be remembered not just for the runs she batted in, but for the legacy of mentorship and service she continues to build every day.



## *Lauren Mazzauro Gullace – 2001*

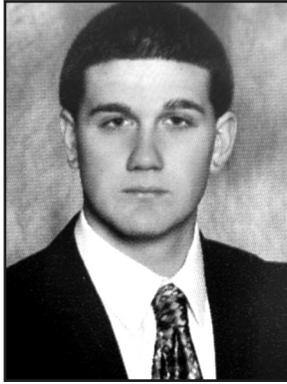
Lauren's journey to athletic greatness began when she transferred to St. Mary's from Paramus Catholic during her sophomore year. From the moment she joined the Gaels, Lauren showcased her exceptional talent and dedication, earning varsity letters in both basketball and softball. Her basketball career at St. Mary's was nothing short of remarkable, as she averaged an impressive 17 points per game during her senior year and amassed a total of 960 points in just three seasons.

Lauren's achievements on the court were extraordinary. She set records and earned accolades that solidified her place as one of the most talented athletes in the area. Among her career highlights were scoring seven three-pointers in a single game, being named the top three-point shooter in the area for two consecutive years, and receiving prestigious honors in her senior year, including All-County, All-State, and All-League recognition. Her exceptional performance earned her a full basketball scholarship to Division II St. Thomas Aquinas College, where she continued to shine for three years before a back injury led her to retire from competitive basketball.

After stepping away from the sport, Lauren returned home to complete her education at William Paterson University. She transitioned into a successful career as a realtor and, alongside her husband Frank, became a business owner, managing multiple restaurants on the Jersey Shore. Lauren's passion for basketball lives on through her three children—Isabella, Frankie, and Scarlett—who are following in her footsteps as talented players.

Lauren's connection to St. Mary's and Rutherford remains strong. She cherishes the memories of her time at St. Mary's and maintains close friendships with her best friends from the area. Although she no longer resides in Rutherford, her heart remains deeply tied to the town that shaped her into the remarkable individual she is today.

Lauren's induction into the Hall of Fame is a testament to her incredible athletic achievements, her unwavering dedication, and her lasting impact on the community. Her legacy as a Gael and her contributions to the sport of basketball will continue to inspire future generations.



## *Dan O'Neill – 2009*

The story of Daniel O'Neill is one defined by early dominance, collegiate grit, and a late-career resurrection that defied the odds of injury. From his first moments on a high school mound to his final stand in a national championship series, O'Neill's career is a testament to the pursuit of excellence in the face of adversity.

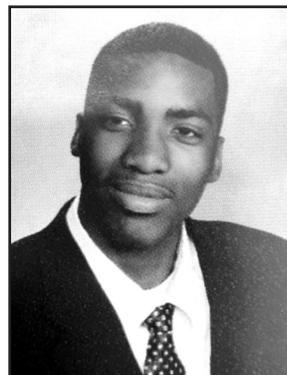
O'Neill's journey began with a statement of intent at St. Mary High School. In his very first varsity start, he delivered a no-hitter, setting the tone for a career that would see him become one of the most decorated pitchers in the program's history. Over four seasons, O'Neill was a force of nature, compiling a 28–10 record and striking out 364 batters. His consistency earned him four All-League

selections and three All-Area, All-Bergen County, and All-State (Parochial) honors. By his senior year, the national scouting community took notice; he was named a Rawlings Preseason All-American and was ranked by Perfect Game as the 8th best pitcher in New Jersey and No. 136 nationally.

Seeking to remain close to his family, O'Neill chose to play Division I baseball at Rutgers University. Across three seasons, he became a reliable arm against some of the most prestigious programs in the country, including St. John's, Purdue, Notre Dame, and the University of Miami. It was against the nationally-ranked Miami Hurricanes that O'Neill cemented his legacy as a "big game" performer. Entering the bottom of the ninth inning with the bases loaded and no outs, he displayed ice-water veins by striking out the side to escape the jam. He continued to battle into the 12th inning, a performance that highlighted the poise and fearlessness that defined his collegiate tenure.

The trajectory of O'Neill's career was nearly halted by a grueling four-year layoff due to injury. For a long time, it was uncertain if his body would ever allow him to compete again. However, O'Neill authored a remarkable final chapter at Keystone College. Returning for one last season, he provided veteran leadership that propelled the team through the NCAA Regional and the Division III World Series. Under his guidance, the program reached the National Championship Series, ultimately finishing as the National Runner-Up.

Beyond the spring seasons, O'Neill was a winner in summer ball, leading the North Jersey Eagles to back-to-back championships in the Atlantic Collegiate Baseball League. Today, the competitive fire that fueled his playing days has been channeled into Meraki Baseball, an organization he founded to develop the next generation of players. Despite the accolades, O'Neill remains grounded, attributing his success to the "unwavering support, sacrifice, and love" of his parents, Daniel and Carol O'Neill.



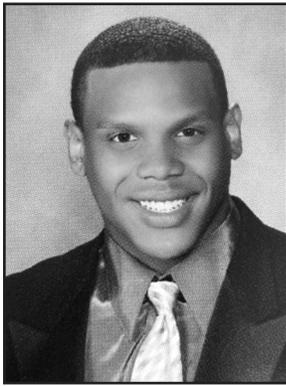
## *Travis Taylor – 2009*

Travis Taylor's ascent to the Hall of Fame is marked by a rare four-year tenure of excellence that fundamentally reshaped the St. Mary basketball program. As a four-year letter winner, Taylor demonstrated a steady evolution from a versatile prospect into one of the most formidable interior forces in the region. His impact was recognized early and often by coaches and opponents alike, earning him 1st Team All-League honors in both his junior and senior seasons.

The pinnacle of Taylor's high school career arrived during a historic senior campaign where he served as the engine behind a BCSL National Championship. Standing at 6'7", the center became a walking highlight reel of efficiency and physical dominance.

He averaged a double-double with 17.3 points and 12 rebounds per game, while simultaneously anchoring the defense with an average of four blocks.

Perhaps the most staggering testament to Taylor's reliability was his consistency; he recorded 21 double-doubles in just 23 games during his final year. This relentless production earned him a well-deserved spot on the 1st Team AC Basketball roster. Travis Taylor's career was defined by more than just statistics—it was defined by a championship pedigree and a standard of excellence that remains a benchmark for all who follow in his footsteps at St. Mary.



## ***Kidane Rutty – 2012***

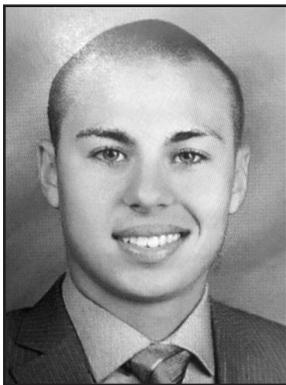
The induction of this athlete into the Hall of Fame honors a career defined by relentless hard work, sacrifice, and a deep-seated pride in representing their school. Competing across three distinct sports—football, wrestling, and baseball—they built a foundation of character and discipline that would eventually extend far beyond the athletic arena.

On the football field, they were a powerhouse, earning four varsity letters alongside First Team All-League and All-County honors. While their physical performance was notable, their leadership and accountability were truly solidified by receiving the SMHS Thomas J. Holden Award, a distinction that recognized their commitment and character as a teammate. The wrestling mat provided a different set of challenges, requiring intense grit and discipline. As a three-time varsity letter winner, they made an immediate impact by placing 2nd in Bergen County as a freshman. This early success set a high standard for their high school career, proving what could be achieved through relentless effort, even when injury prevented them from competing during their senior year.

Baseball provided the backdrop for some of the most statistically dominant moments of their career. A four-year varsity letter winner and an All-State honoree, they reached a legendary peak during the 2011 season. That year, they became a top contender for the New Jersey Triple Crown, producing a staggering stat line: .637 Batting Average 9 Home Runs 59 RBIs. Though they finished just one RBI short of the state lead, the drive required to compete at that level remained one of their proudest achievements.

Their athletic journey continued at Drew University, where they earned a spot as a freshman starter, fulfilling a lifelong dream of collegiate competition. Eventually, their path took a bold turn as they moved to Florida to enter the culinary world. They successfully channeled the same intensity, "weight cut" discipline, and competitive mindset developed in sports into their professional craft in the kitchen.

This Hall of Fame recognition celebrates more than just individual accolades; it honors a journey shared with coaches and teammates and a lasting standard of excellence.



## ***William "Willie" Krajnik – 2014***

Willie Krajnik was a remarkable athlete who made his mark at St. Mary High School from 2011 to 2014 as a four-year starter in both football and baseball. His dedication, skill, and leadership on the field earned him numerous accolades and solidified his legacy as one of the school's most accomplished athletes.

In football, Willie showcased his talent early, earning 2nd Team All-League (NJIC) honors as a linebacker during his sophomore year. By his senior year, he had become a key player for St. Mary, helping lead the team to the Non-Public Group 1 Final. His regular season stats were impressive, with 1,043 passing yards, 12 touchdowns, and over 400 rushing yards, demonstrating his versatility and ability to impact the game in multiple ways.

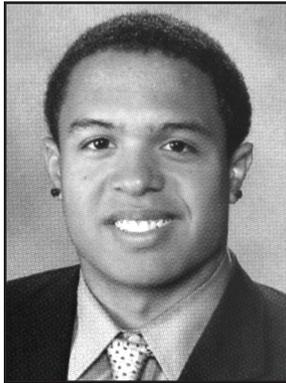
Willie's baseball career was equally outstanding. As a sophomore, he earned 2nd Team All-League (NJIC) honors as an infielder. His junior year was a breakout season, as he achieved a .512 batting average, a 1.79 ERA, and an incredible 92 strikeouts in just 51 2/3 innings pitched. His performances earned him 3rd Team All-Bergen County and 1st Team All NJIC honors, as well as recognition as the Bergen Record Athlete of the Week for his role in an upset win over Gloucester Catholic and a 20-strikeout game against Weehawken.

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## *William “Willie” Krajnik – continued*

Willie continued to shine in his senior year, earning 2nd Team All North Jersey, 2nd Team All-Bergen County, and 1st Team All NJIC honors. He finished the season with a .498 batting average, 14 stolen bases, 22 RBIs, and capped off his high school career with an impressive 110 career hits.

Willie Krajnik’s achievements in football and baseball reflect his exceptional talent, hard work, and dedication to his teams. His contributions to St. Mary High School athletics will be remembered for years to come, and his legacy as a dual-sport star remains an inspiration to future athletes.



## *Jonathan Rafael Diaz – 2014*

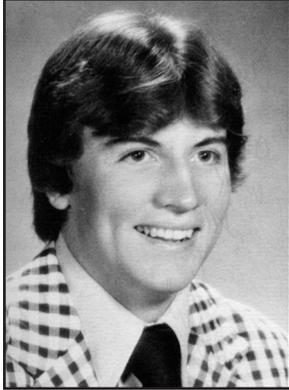
Jonathan Rafael Diaz, a proud alumnus of St. Mary High School’s Class of 2013, left an indelible mark on the school’s football program during his time as a standout running back. His exceptional athleticism and dedication earned him numerous accolades, including 1st Team NJIC-Meadowlands B All-Division honors in 2011 and multiple 2nd Team recognitions in 2012, such as All-County, NJIC Patriot All-Division, and All North Jersey Honors. Jonathan’s remarkable performance on the field culminated in his selection as the starting running back for the Bergen County All-Star Game, where he represented St. Mary alongside his teammates AJ Godsil and John Perez.

Jonathan’s football career was nothing short of extraordinary, amassing 3,662 rushing yards and 52 touchdowns over two seasons. His 2011 season saw him achieve 1,708 rushing yards and 16 touchdowns, while his 2012 season was even more impressive, with 1,954 rushing yards, 36 touchdowns, and three interceptions, two of which he returned for touchdowns.

After graduating, Jonathan relocated to central Florida to be closer to family and pursue his dream of attending the University of Central Florida. He also planned to serve his country by enlisting in the United States Navy. In 2017, Jonathan returned to New Jersey and began coursework in Psychology at Bergen Community College. His passion for technology led him to enroll at Lincoln Technical Institute in Paramus in 2025, where he graduated as Valedictorian in January 2026 with a certificate as a Computer Systems Support Technician. Today, Jonathan combines his love for technology and education as an IT Coordinator at a private high school in Fair Lawn, NJ.

Beyond his professional achievements, Jonathan cherishes traveling and spending quality time with his longtime girlfriend, a fellow St. Mary alumnus, as well as his growing niece, twin sister, and three half-brothers. He remains connected to his first love, baseball, and enjoys studying defensive football film, keeping his coaching aspirations alive.

Jonathan’s legacy as a student-athlete and his dedication to personal and professional growth make him a deserving inductee into the St. Mary High School Hall of Fame. His name, Jonathan Rafael Diaz, will forever be etched in the annals of St. Mary history, inspiring future generations to pursue excellence both on and off the field.



## *Michael P. Sheridan '77 – Contributor Award*

Michael Sheridan was the architect of SMHS's mission to grow and succeed for the last 40 years. When he joined the staff in 1985, the school was grappling with low numbers, sparse amenities to enhance academic experiences, dwindling athletic programs, and anemic financial resources. Motivated by loyalty and love for the school that had been a part of his family's history since the 1930s, he quickly began laying the foundation to turn things around.

Hired as a teacher by Mary Lanni, he established strong rapport with staff and students and convinced them that each had a role in the resurrection of the traditions that made SM a very special place. In that vein, he immediately reinstated the football program, a cornerstone in SM history. While coaching football, baseball, and track, he served as Development Director relentlessly recruiting new students to build enrollment. Knowing he faced monumental hurdles, he enlisted his friend and classmate Mark Giordano to join the effort, and together they were an indomitable team. A year later, when legendary coach Jack Jones joined his football staff, St. Mary was once again a fierce championship program and back in the headlines.

Next, he petitioned the Borough of Rutherford to make Tamblyn Field the "Home of the Gaels" by guaranteeing the school would cover the expenses of bleachers, score boards, goal posts, locker room upgrades, and field maintenance knowing full well that he would have to raise every dollar to make good on that promise. And he did; through a myriad of creative fundraisers, Tamblyn Field was transformed into a top notch facility which has hosted some of the most exciting championship games for both the football and baseball teams. School spirit ignited and enrollment grew allowing SM to begin girls and boys soccer, wrestling, bowling, and golf teams, and reinstate the drama and music departments to make St. Mary's a great place to learn and grow for hundreds of students who have walked the halls these last four decades.

In 2000, he became the Alumni Director. One of his most critical initiatives was the establishment of the SM Board of Directors composed of alumni leaders in business to infuse the school with innovative visions and strategies to enhance every facet of the school's operations. The Board oversaw the million dollar renovation of the George Vuyosevich Gym and the new Alumni Center. The Gael Golf Outing was born as a major fundraiser. The SM Hall of Fame and The Distinguished Alumni and Merit Scholars Gala recognize the best and brightest from the past, present, and future and celebrate the momentous achievements of our school. Alumni Memorial Scholarships honor the lifelong friendships of classmates. These efforts put 21st Century technology into every classroom and provide financial aid to today's students.

As a result of Mike's proposal to the town council, Rutherford dedicated the Philip F. Sheridan, Sr. Field at Tamblyn Park in 2021 in memorial to his father, a decorated WWII pilot and 3 sport All State SM athlete. Still, his proudest legacy is the impact he had on the young men and women he mentored over the years and the important values he instilled in their lives. Dozens credit Coach Sheridan's finesse and connections with college coaches for their athletic scholarships; many recognize his guidance as a key to their acceptance to top notch universities, and others acknowledge his influence in their tireless work ethics as they pursued careers in skilled trades, law enforcement, and the military.

Mike retired from his official roles at SM in June 2025; nonetheless, he will always be a staunch supporter and trusted advisor to his Alma Mater.



*1937 State Champions  
Boys Basketball Team*



*1956 State Champions  
Girls Basketball Team*

The Legacy of Champions: The history of the hardwood is defined by two legendary squads that captured the essence of grit, strategy, and sportsmanship: the 1937 Boys and the 1956 Girls Basketball teams. Though separated by nearly two decades, both programs etched their names into the annals of greatness through sheer determination and a refusal to yield under pressure. The Strategic Mastery of 1937 The 1937 Boys team entered their campaign with the advantage of experience, returning a formidable nucleus of five seasoned veterans from the previous year.

Under the meticulous guidance of Coach Voile Dupes, the team perfected a specialized system of play designed to dismantle larger, more physical opponents. This tactical edge proved vital during the State Tournament. Their journey was defined by a spirit of redemption. Despite having been defeated twice during the season by Immaculate, the Gaels rose to the occasion when it mattered most, emerging victorious with a 28-23 win. The final hurdle took them to New Brunswick to face St. Mary's of Perth Amboy. While the "Blue and White" started with momentum, they found themselves clinging to a narrow one-point lead at the end of the third period. Sensing the moment, the Gaels applied relentless pressure in the final frame, coasting to a 38-31 victory and securing the program's second State Championship. The Dominance and Grace of 1956.

Nineteen years later, the 1956 Girls Varsity Basketball team set a new standard for excellence, asserting their dominance from the very first game of the season. Finishing with an elite 11-1 record, their success was not a matter of luck, but the result of constant practice and the "hard work" required to produce a championship-caliber team. Beyond their statistical superiority, the 1956 squad was defined by their character. They were recognized for an unpretentious display of good sportsmanship and a genuine consideration for others, whether they found themselves in victory or defeat. Possessing every intrinsic quality of a winning unit, these athletes forged ahead to claim a long-awaited and well-deserved Championship, proving that true champions are built on both talent and integrity.