

WAYNE KING



JJC baseball legend reflects on success



With 803 career wins at JJC, two NJCAA Division III World Series Championships and his recent induction into the NJCAA National Baseball Hall of Fame, Wayne King has good reason to be proud of his impressive resume. But JJC's head baseball coach and director of athletics takes his successes and accolades in stride, attributing his achievements to hard work, loyal support from his family and a personal commitment to helping the hundreds of athletes he has coached in his 23 years at JJC.



"We're in student services here, and it's all about helping the kids have success." – Wayne King

What motivates you as a coach?

Well the obvious answer from a coach would be wins, but I think what I enjoy most is seeing successful kids. Over the years that I've been here I've seen kids become bigger, stronger, faster, more mature, get scholarships, move on to four-year schools, play more baseball, get married and have kids of their own. That's what I like seeing—the kids really develop.

What do you love about being at JJC?

The thing is that we've built something here. We've built a program; we've built a reputation. There have been opportunities for me to go to some other schools, but that would mean starting all over again. I'm at the stage now where I don't know if I could leave here after I've put so much of my heart and soul into JJC. We're in student services here, and it's all about helping the kids have success: get better in academics, get better in maturity and get better in responsibility.

What do you do for fun outside of your duties at JJC?

I love to golf. I golf as much as I can! I enjoy the time I get to spend in the summer away from baseball, and also when at least I can spend some time with my wife. It's a time consuming job that I love and I enjoy, but being able to spend time with my family is important. Our kids are grown up and gone, so it's just my wife and me now. My wife Janine has been a loyal, loyal supporter of me since I walked in the door here, and none of this would have happened without her support. She's been behind me the whole way.

What do your accomplishments mean to you?

When you have success and you are recognized, that makes you feel good. But those things don't happen without good kids, good coaches, and people who have bought into your philosophy and who have worked their tails off to be successful. It's very humbling at times, and now that they're going to name the field after me, it's going to be so odd to be looking out from the third-base dugout and seeing your name on the scoreboard. [The college renamed the baseball field Wayne L. King, Jr. Field on September 24, 2009.] It really wasn't my goal in life—my goals in life were to help kids as much as possible.

Are there any coaches you look to for inspiration?

No, I'm very odd. Even though I'm in the sports field, I don't emulate or idolize anyone. I don't have a favorite baseball team, I don't have favorites in anything. I just look at individuals. Now my father was an inspiration to me—he taught me a lot of things. I've picked up characteristics from him and my mom. My mom was compassionate and my father was hard-nosed, and I think I have both of those traits. They were both there to support me – I played sports all the time, and there was never a "no" out of their mouths, or anything like that. And a lot of the reasons I'm sitting here today is because of them.

What is something relatively unknown about you that would surprise people?

I think the ones who know me best know that I'm compassionate – that I'm not a hardnosed bully, that I can be very tender at times. Kids who played for me in my early days can tell you I was really hardnosed at that time. But the ones who know me can see a different side of me. I am what I am, and people know when I'm happy or mad or whatever. Being straightforward may help develop that sense of trust kids have with me. Kids come in and sit in my office and tell me their life stories, so yeah there's a lot of trust that goes back and forth.



King and his players celebrate on the field.