Pat Lamboni’s career can only be described as full circle—a very large and very full circle. He came to Salisbury in 1976 as a baseball-playing transfer student from Essex Community College. The Baltimore native would go on to earn a K-12 physical education degree and a master’s in education while under the tutelage of Hunter Smith who started the SU’s Athletic Training Education Program (ATEP) in 1972. Lamboni spent two years as a graduate assistant before becoming head athletic trainer at Catholic University until returning to SU in 1982.

Speaking of the past 20 years, Lamboni is proud of ATEP which has been ranked 12th in the country among accredited ATEP programs and Salisbury University ATEP was one of only three Division III schools in the top 25 nationally and first among institutions in this region. But he is also proud to be paying homage to Smith with an upcoming announcement that the Hunter Smith Athletic Training Scholarship will be fully endowed.

“More than 150 students have graduated from the program and over 75 percent of them are still working in the field as athletic trainers,” he said. “Our goal is to not only take care of the athletes but our students as well.”

Lamboni is working toward state licensure for athletic trainers in Maryland, one of 43 states that have no such regulations.

“It’s something that will open doors for our profession and hopefully mean more athletic trainer jobs,” he said.

Students under Lamboni’s direction are given some golden advice when it comes to those jobs.

“I tell them, go out and work hard so that you can make a place for another SU alum. When we get a call asking for another SU graduate, that’s success.”

Another aspect of this alumni’s success, he cautions, is knowing that he is only one player of a talented and dedicated group at SU.

“It’s a team effort,” Lamboni adds.

An avid golfer and racquetball player, Lamboni is the father of three. His wife, Grace ‘81, teaches K-6 physical education in Wicomico County.

Acker Catches Footballs and Attention

It’s certainly been a high-profile senior year for tight end Kyle Acker of the Sea Gull football team. In addition to receiving front-page feature coverage in The Baltimore Sun, earning second team All-America honors from d3football.com, and playing in the Las Vegas All-Star Classic, Acker has also had the eyes of NFL scouts following his every move this year. At 6’3” and 255 pounds, Acker has been projected among the nation’s top tight end prospects by virtually all of the 32 pro scouts that have visited campus.

Regardless of where he’s drafted, or even if he’s picked at all in April’s NFL Draft (yes, this is a fickle business), Acker said he’s enjoying the pigskin publicity.

“It’s been fun. At first, I thought all the attention and all the scouts might be overwhelming. But, I’ve enjoyed it. I’m just trying to stay humble through it all.”

SU Head Coach Sherman Wood is confident that, one way or another, Acker will have his shot at the NFL limelight.

“He is projected as a late round pick, maybe in the sixth or seventh round,” said Wood. “At worst, if he’s not drafted, then he’ll sign on with a team as a free agent.”
Swimmers Set New Records

The Sea Gulls established four new team records at the season-ending Capital Athletic Conference Swimming Championship, with junior Ryan Kooy and freshman Laura Allen each claiming two new marks.

Kooy established new records in the 50-yard freestyle (22.6 sec) and the 200-yard breaststroke (2:17.43).

Allen set new records in the 100-breaststroke (1:10.97) and 200-breaststroke (2:32.40). Her second place showing in the 200-breast registered Salisbury's highest individual finish in the championship and earned her all-conference accolades.

New Facilities

Student-athletes are benefitting from two new facilities on campus this year. The track and field teams will utilize a new outdoor track for practice and competitions this season, while student-athletes from all 21 varsity teams are utilizing the new varsity weight room.

"The completion of these two projects are positive additions to our ongoing efforts to provide quality facilities for our deserving students," said Dr. Michael Vienna, director of athletics. "As a result of these improvements, we have enhanced our athletics and recreational programs for the betterment of our students and staff."

Fall Sports Recap

Field Hockey Wins National Championship

The Sea Gull field hockey team put the exclamation point on a great fall season for Salisbury Athletics by winning the NCAA Championship with a 4-1 victory over Middlebury in the title game. The Sea Gulls, who finished the year with 11-straight wins and a final 20-1 record, claimed their second field hockey national championship and first since 1986.

Men's Soccer Wins Conference Championship

The men's soccer team won its fourth conference championship and advanced to the final eight of the NCAA Tournament while finishing with a 16-3-3 record. The men's cross country team also registered a conference championship in the fall, while the volleyball (26-7) and football (7-2) teams also enjoyed outstanding seasons.

43 Players Earn All-conference Honors

Salisbury had 43 players earn all-conference honors in their respective sports during the fall, with 10 players recognized as all-region performers and four athletes—Lindsey Elliott and Melissa Webster in field hockey, Dan Meehan in soccer and Brad DeHaven in football—selected as national All-Americans.