

# Baltimore Catholic League honors nine former basketball stars

**By Paul McMullen**

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CATONSVILLE - Notre Dame basketball coach Mike Brey was the featured speaker at the second Baltimore Catholic League Hall of Fame induction dinner May 3, but Mark Amatucci got in the last word.

Amatucci, the last of the nine men honored, attended Calvert Hall, coached the Cardinals to a mythical national prep championship in 1981-82; serves the school as a guidance counselor and sends his son there.

While thanking family, friends and former players, Amatucci also noted the educational component of a league best known to the public as a springboard to the NBA for the likes of Carmelo Anthony (New York Knicks), Rudy Gay (Memphis Grizzlies) and Gary Neal (San Antonio Spurs).

"People who understand the Baltimore Catholic League know that it is about more than basketball," Amatucci told an overflow crowd at Rolling Road Country Club. "The educational work, with the archdiocese (of Baltimore), is what makes the league great. The Baltimore Catholic League should be honored for all the education it provides."

The five players inducted included Darryle Edwards, Calvert Hall Class of 1981, whose brother, Paul (Calvert Hall, '82), was in last year's inaugural Hall of Fame class. Amatucci credits the Edwards brothers for putting his Calvert Hall program on the map. Both went on to star at Mount St. Mary's.

Also inducted was the late Leon Dickerson, who left Cardinal Gibbons in 1988 as its second all-time leading scorer, earned a master's in social work from Holy Cross and worked at St. Elizabeth's School in Baltimore, which serves youths and young adults with special needs.

The other players inducted were Robbie O'Connor, Loyola Blakefield, Class of 1975; Phil Lane, St. Maria Goretti, '96; and Darnell Harris, St. Frances Academy, '04.

Gene Shue (Towson Catholic, '49) and Barry Scroggins (Mount St. Joseph, '71) were honorary inductees. Their heyday came before the creation of the league in 1971, a year their profiles peaked.

Shue was an NBA all-star who then coached the Baltimore Bullets to the 1971 NBA Finals. Scroggins and the Gaels' upending of the dominance of city public schools in the old Maryland Scholastic Association created a split that led to the formation of the Baltimore Catholic League.

Larry Callahan, who was the athletic director when Cardinal Gibbons opened in 1962 and later served as superintendent of schools for the archdiocese, was honored as a contributor.

Brey's Notre Dame team is guided by point guard Eric Atkins, a rising junior out of Mount St. Joseph. Brey acknowledged the foundation Gaels' coach Pat Clatchey provided Atkins, and noted the presence of several former BCL coaches, such as Amatucci and Joe Baker of Calvert Hall, Jerry Savage of Loyola Blakefield, Cokey Robertson of St. Maria Goretti and Dan Popera of Archbishop Curley.

"The teachers and coaches in this league," Brey said, "are phenomenal people and master educators."

**View a slideshow of the Hall of Fame dinner:**

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