

Goodbye, Mr. Miceli

Dwight D. Eisenhower resided in the White House, Archbishop Francis P. Keough was the archbishop of Baltimore and the Baltimore Colts were two-time champions of the National Football League.

That was the scene Nov. 10, 1960, when Augie Miceli began teaching math at Calvert Hall College High School's brand-new campus in Towson. In his 60th school year on the job, he is retiring. His final day in the classroom will be May 30.

Miceli, 86, first came to the school in 1958 as an assistant football coach. His varsity teams included his son, Augie Jr., class of 1982. His more than 6,000 students have included a grandson, Augie, '20 - and several faculty and staff members, four of whom shared their sentiments about Miceli with the Review.

Engaged

Calvert Hall's retirees this year include Frank Passaro, '71, a social studies teacher who first encountered Miceli in the summer of 1967, when Passaro was getting up to speed for Algebra I.

"He made it (summer school) interesting and engaging, and helped you develop good study habits," said Passaro, in the middle of a three-generation Calvert Hall family. "You wanted to do well. My Dad (Frank Sr., '42) was a carpenter, a math guy. He would go over my stuff the same way Augie went over things with me."

Passaro served as a public school administrator and in other Catholic schools before joining the Calvert Hall faculty in 2003.

"I remember coming back for a football (Turkey Bowl) alumni event," Passaro said. "I saw Augie, still having fun. He seemed to like what he was doing."

Opportunistic

Religion teacher Walter Dobryzki, '78, had Miceli for trigonometry as a senior.

"He was always available if you needed help," Dobryzki said. "I still see that today."

Whether it's before school or after school, every time I walk past his class, he's there, working with a student."

In addition to those "opportunity" periods, another Miceli constant is partnering with parents. Miceli knew their influence first-hand, as his own father would not let him play football at Baltimore City College, even after he made the team.

"He taught me that parents are a great resource," Dobryzki said. "He told me, 'you will be surprised how fast a student turns around when he gets home and hears that his parents got a call.' I'll email the parents, but he's old-school. He still calls."

Disciplined

Doug Heidrick, '89, knew what to expect from his freshman algebra teacher. His father, Lou, had taught and coached alongside Miceli. His family worshipped at St. Ursula in Parkville, the longtime parish of Miceli and his wife, Angela.

Miceli went to the The Citadel, a military college in Charleston, S.C., and served two years in the U.S. Army.

"You could see that background in his teaching," Heidrick said. "There was regimentation, and a strategy for how we could best achieve our goals. We were going to get the most out of every one of his classes."

An advancement associate at his alma mater, Heidrick said, "When alumni come back, he's the guy they want to see."

Fatherly

Donald Davis, '96, a physical education teacher and football coach, can attest to Miceli involving parents. A drop in his geometry grade as a sophomore coincided with his new driver's license, which was soon restricted after a Miceli phone call home.

Miceli, who went 9-5 as a head coach in the Turkey Bowl against Loyola Blakefield, was in his mid-70s when Davis asked him to return to the Calvert Hall program as an assistant coach.

“I add guys to the staff to coach me, as much as the kids,” said Davis.

That mentoring included summer nights in Ocean City at the Miceli property on 57th Street.

“We would sit on the porch and talk football, he would show me to how to install X, Y or Z in two weeks,” Davis said. “With any coach, any age, it comes down to two questions: Does the guy care about kids, and does the guy know his stuff? That certainly resonates with Mr. Miceli.”