



Mr. Michael John Zegarelli

November 11, 1954 - April 27, 2018

UTICA - Mr. Michael John Zegarelli, age 63, passed away on Friday, April 27, 2018, after a valiant battle with cancer. At the time of his passing, his son was by his side, holding his hand, and giving him the strength and support to embrace the arms of the Lord.

Michael was born on November 11, 1954 in Minster, Ohio, the son of Thelma (Kemper) Zegarelli and the late Nicholas Zegarelli. Mike and his family moved to Utica when he was a child. He was educated in local schools and was a graduate of Utica Free Academy/Class of 1973. Mike then attended the University of Findlay College in Ohio where he played Division II football with his lifelong friend and fellow roommate, Al Niswander of Ohio, and graduated with a degree in Criminal Justice and Sociology. He went on to graduate from the College of Saint Rose with a Master's degree in Special Education.

Mike became a Special Education teacher in the Utica City School District where he worked for over 25 years until his retirement in 2012. He also held a position in the Utica School District for over 20 years as a coach for many sports including wrestling, baseball, softball, and most important to him, football. He was also known as the quintessential Ohio State football fan. Mike enjoyed the times he spent with his "breakfast group" sharing sports stories, jokes, and laughs as well as his Monday night dinners with Dave Scarlino, Joe Gentile, and Marty Nemecek. He joined the Utica College Football staff in the summer of 2002 where he coached for 13 years until he retired from coaching in the summer of 2015. The family appreciates the times the Utica College

coaching staff, especially Blaise Faggiano, spent with Mike during his illness. He attended Historic Old St. John's Church and was a true believer.

Michael was a caring and loving person who would do anything for his family and friends. If you were one of the people who were lucky enough to be part of that group, you saw firsthand the kind of man he was. He also loved to eat, and his mom catered to his favorite cuisine, especially Ruben sandwiches, her signature dish that he truly appreciated. Mike's greatest blessing in life was having a son to be a parent to, and playing and coaching college football. He humbly sacrificed for his son and empowered him to know and reach his potential. He was his son's superhero, and Michael II is certainly his father's son! Mike will be fondly remembered by his family, friends, colleagues, students, and the many athletes he coached, as a man who lived his life, as Frank Sinatra would say, ... "my way".

Michael is survived by his mother, Thelma; his son and pride and joy, Michael J. Zegarelli II and his mother, Antoinette; and his brothers and sisters and their spouses, Ronald and Cynthia Zegarelli, Richard Zegarelli, Marie and James Goodman, Jacqueline Wuest and Frank Custodero, Cynthia Zegarelli, John and Joanne Zegarelli, Brian and Jane Zegarelli, and Mark Zegarelli; and his many nieces, nephews, 4 great-nephews, aunts, and uncles. He will remain in the hearts of his two "adopted sons", Michael Christmas, and Randy Czternastek to whom he was a father figure for the past 20 years. He was predeceased by his brother-in-law, D. Michael Wuest.

The family would like to thank the staff at Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, especially the 10th & 9th Floor, for the compassionate care rendered to Mike during his illness; and Dr. Sam Benjamin and his staff in Oneida for their medical care and support.

The family honored and commemorated Mike's life at a private time. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Michael's funeral service and Celebration of Life which will commence on Monday afternoon at 1:00 at Historic Old St. John's Church where his Memorial Mass of Christian Burial will be offered by Rev. John Buehler. The family will receive visitors at the

conclusion of the service. By family request, please omit floral offerings.
Remember, "Face Up".

<https://youtu.be/6E2hYDIFDIU>

Tribute Wall

JG

“ Coach Zegarelli, my condolences on your passing. *“PUSH UP POSITION”*. Many great memories, thank you coach for being there for us.

Jeffrey Griggs - February 11 at 02:26 PM

Valerie
Kratzenbe

“ He was a good teacher God has taken a great angel rip n God bless prayers for the family n friends in there time of need God please help them with the pain they are having.



Valerie Kratzenberg - May 22, 2018 at 02:22 PM

AR

“ I was on vacation when I heard of the passing of Coach Zig. A great friend, a great assistant wrestling coach, a great human being. My condolences to the entire Zegarelli family

Alfred K. Rocci - May 01, 2018 at 03:21 PM

LG

“ Another great man has moved on but still looking over us all. My time with Mike was on the Cornhill Bears Football field as a coach. He was a coach that got through to all the players no matter their background. I met Mike through his brother Rick. The entire Zegarelli family are special people. My prayers goes out to you all! I can't make the services due to work but my thoughts will be with you all!

Larry Greenfield - April 30, 2018 at 10:29 AM

LA

“ I cannot express the sorrow I am feeling for you all. Michael was a great man and I am sure the best father. I hold a special place in my heart for long ago memories. Remembering fun being at your home when we were so young. Be strong lift up each other sending love and prayers to the family .

Sincerely
Lauri Totaro

Lauri - April 30, 2018 at 09:09 AM

AS

“ I am so very sorry for you loss. I have known Mike since high school and he was a groomsman in my wedding. I also worked with him in Utica. He always made us smile. My thoughts and prayers are with you all at this time.

Sincerely,
Ann Marrone Spina

Ann Spina - April 30, 2018 at 07:27 AM


Barbara
Rigo
Goldsmith

“ Our Thoughts and Prayers are with you and your Family....May you Cherish the Memories always and know that you are not alone in your grief.....Sorry we cannot make it to the Ceremony but will be with you all in spirit....Love The "Goldie" Smiths...

Barbara Rigo Goldsmith - April 29, 2018 at 02:48 PM



Jennifer
Testa

“ *The world lost a special man, teacher and incredible coach.*

Coach Zig truly inspired and shaped the lives of so many students and athletes. He made you push every boundary, excel beyond what you thought you were capable of, believe in yourself and succeed.

Many of us carried these skills from the field and applied in life, and now can even pass to our own children.

Coach Zig was as compassionate as he was strong, helping in any way he could; from taping up injuries to giving encouragement, support, assistance with future endeavors and sincere friendship.

His energy and sense of humor was enlightening, always a joke, a crazy nick name or saying. Coach Zig would always make you smile.

Most special was his love and light of his life, his son Michael. They were a true team, a life shared together and a bond beyond measure.

Sincere prayers for Michael and his family, wishing you all comfort, peace and loving memories.

Coach Zig, my coach and true friend, I will forever hold you in my heart. Your life will always be honored by all the lives you touched.

Jennifer Testa - April 29, 2018 at 01:04 PM

RL

“ I was saddened to hear of Mike’s passing. Although I have not seen Mike in almost 40 years I still have vivid memories of him which seem like mere moments in time. Moments that make lasting memories. I remember his toast at Ron and Cindy’s wedding and him crushing the New Hartford punter in a game. My deepest sympathyes go out to his Mom, son, and brothers and sisters.

I am not surprised at how he was able to touch so many people’s lives as attested to in the tributes posted here. He could inspire and was a leader. Only God knows where they would be without him in their lives.

Rich LaScala

Rich LaScala - April 29, 2018 at 12:36 PM

TB

“ Sending love and prayers to Michael John, Thelma, Tuttie and the rest of Zigs family. So sorry for your loss

Tammy Bottini - April 29, 2018 at 10:20 AM

FP

“ ive known mike from the city school district days and also coached with him at Utica college for 13 yrs ...always smiling always there to help anyone ...he was a gentle man but very strong..a great coach and an even better dad and man ,,,,,,Orlando ziggy (his nic name from our fla coaches convention) boydid the pranks fly love u zig ill miss u very much

frank palmisano - April 29, 2018 at 07:39 AM



“ Fly with thee angels Zig!!!

Eileen Austin - April 29, 2018 at 12:24 AM

CM

“ It broke my heart to hear of Mike's passing. He and I go back almost 30 years of friendship and good times. Our coffee spot was always Friendly's on Burrstone Road. He was a very kind person. He loved his job, love his students, his sports and above all he loved his son. Where you saw one, you surely saw the other. That was a beautiful bond that I know he treasured.

Michael John, always know that you were the nucleus of your father's life and he loved you so much. He was very proud of you and you made him very happy.

Rest in peace my friend and thank you for all the laughs and guidance you gave me when I needed it. Our talks will never be forgotten.

Cathy Massoud - April 28, 2018 at 10:06 PM

TF

“ Our condolences to Mike. Coach Z- You will always have a special place in our hearts. It was an honor and privilege to have you as a coach, mentor and friend. We will cherish all the memories we have of you. Rest easy Coach Z...Rest easy. You will be profoundly missed.

With much love and respect,

The Maroney Family

The Maroney Family - April 28, 2018 at 07:51 PM

LF

*My deepest sympathy and condolences go out to the Zegarelli family especially Marie who I knew all through high school at UFA. Many thoughts and prayers to the family at such a difficult time. 🙏
Lou Ann Emma Fiore*

Lou Ann Fiore - April 29, 2018 at 09:32 PM

DT

“ *Diane Testa lit a candle in memory of Mr. Michael John Zegarelli*



Diane Testa - April 28, 2018 at 07:42 PM

AR

“ *Aaron Reed lit a candle in memory of Mr. Michael John Zegarelli*



Aaron Reed - April 28, 2018 at 06:42 PM

AR

“ *Coach Zigeralli was an amazing man, to know him was to love him. He touched the life of so many youths that passed through the doors of the Utica School District. "On and off the field" He instilled so many things into his athlete's that we will carry on with us for a lifetime! As I write this, I can hear him yelling "You Stud!!" I know you will be starting a league of your own in heaven.*

Sorry for your loss Mikey. May God be with you during this time.



Aaron Reed - April 28, 2018 at 06:41 PM



“ *Rosemary Brown lit a candle in memory of Mr. Michael John Zegarelli*



Rosemary Brown - April 28, 2018 at 04:34 PM



Rest in peace Ziggy. You will be missed by many. Summer school was so much fun .

Rosemary Brown - April 28, 2018 at 04:36 PM



“ *Michael John and family I am so sorry for you loss. Your in my thoughts and prayers.*



Therese Laffey - April 28, 2018 at 01:30 PM



“ *He was one of my teachers back in proctor he was a very tiff teacher that was always thier for his student he will be missed by many sip Mr Z.*



Bobbi jo Cater - April 28, 2018 at 01:23 PM

SG

“ My dear Michael John, I'm so sad to hear that your dad passed. Everyone that knew you and your dad, knew that the bond between you both is extraordinary! The love and respect you have for each other is unmeasurable. The care you gave your dad speaks words yet discovered. Michael, my prayer for you is to find comfort in knowing your dad was blessed to have such an AWESOME son like you. I believe you made your dad very proud. Peace and healing for you my (Mikey Johnny). Michael, fly with the angels. Love sissy

Sandra George - April 28, 2018 at 01:13 PM

SG

“ Sandr R George lit a candle in memory of Mr. Michael John Zegarelli



Sandr R George - April 28, 2018 at 12:50 PM

MK

“ I met Mike when we were at New Paltz working on our masters for Special Education. Our friendship started there and continued through the years. I worked with him at Proctor for many years and always had a great time hanging out and talking to him and had lots of laughs. Whenever I saw Mike he always gave me a big hug. His passion was helping students succeed and coaching. Ziggy Rest In Peace my friend. Maureen Keeler-Spatuzzi

Maureen Keeler-Spatuzzi - April 28, 2018 at 11:18 AM

SH

“ Mr. Z was a very special man to some of us who attended T.R. Proctor HS. I could never forget his kind words and generosity that he always showed me. A moment I could never forget is that huge hug he gave me once I walked across stage and he told me how proud he was. He was a great man and I send my deepest condolences to his family and friends during this time.



shante - April 28, 2018 at 09:49 AM

RM

“ What a giant of a man, always there for young people, always doing, always supporting his son. First met Mike when I coached the UFA freshman football team. He was a real “hard-noser” willing to take on any adversary regardless of size or nature. He was a damned good teacher, too. I’m sorry I wasn’t aware of his illness. Ziggy probably has begun forming a new team in his new realm.

*With sincere sympathy,
Ron Mancuso*

Ronald Mancuso - April 28, 2018 at 08:45 AM

CC

“ I simply have no words to convey my sincere sympathy about Mike's passing. We shared our classroom and our laughter. I know you now have the COMPUTER all to yourself!!! I will never forget you my friend. May your journey now be filled with peace and joy as God's Angels carry you home!!!!

Connie Citriniti - April 28, 2018 at 08:31 AM

SL

“ I'm still shock he was my Teacher grown up as a kid. I didn't know he was ill not at all..
No words can I say that can't take his family pain away.. My heart n prayers goes out to his family n his Son n closet friends..
He was a great Teacher n always coach anybody if they need to be teach.. No kids left behind.. He make sure they did there best n pass.. And yes he was tuff on students only if they gave him a hard time lol.. He was a great Teacher I'll care that in the memories of him teaching us grown up... Thank you Teacher.. You are going to be Miss by all your Students n Staff.. God gain another Angel keep a watch over all of us n Coach is from above in Heaven. We will never forget you.. God Bless 🙏🙏🙏

Sabrina Lindsey - April 28, 2018 at 08:13 AM



“ Blue & White Sympathy Floor Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Michael John Zegarelli.



April 28, 2018 at 07:13 AM

PW

“ Great guy. UFA classmate. Pound for pound one of the toughest guys I ever knew. On the field tough as nails, off the field a gentle and funny schoolmate.

Paul Witte - April 28, 2018 at 06:26 AM

AA

“ Mike was one of the best guys on our block growing up as as a kid. He had a knack for organizing a “street ball” game with every kid in the neighborhood. To the his brother and sisters losing a sibling is so hard especially a strong one such as Mike. God bless you all especially Thelma . You are all in our family’s thoughts and prayers.
❤️

Anthony Amodio - April 28, 2018 at 05:11 AM

VB

“ We shared many good times at phs . Rest In Peace mike Virginia boehlert



virginia boehlert - April 28, 2018 at 05:01 AM



“ To my 'brother from another mother!' Rest in peace my friend. We had a blast, teaching, and coaching together.

Dave Scarlino

Dave Scarlino - April 27, 2018 at 10:55 PM