



The year was 1969 and the nation was divided on the justness of the Vietnam war. For eighteen year olds of that time, depending on your birth date your sheriffs ID and Draft card had equal importance. It was also the summer that mans space travel culminated in Neil Armstrong's taking his steps on the moon. It was not unusual for a young man to dream of the day that he could help defend his country and of traveling to places that were never dreamed possible. Tony Basile was one of those dreamers. Knowing that, Tony and Delores made the sacrifice to send their son the school they felt could best help him make those dreams a reality.

When Tony started at CBA, his dream was to be a basketball star. A pretty fair player at Blessed Sacrament, he looked forward to the winter when he would try out for the freshman basketball team. Unfortunately, his class had a bevy of talented players and Tony was not chosen for the team. But as the saying goes, when one door closes another one opens. And it just so happened that Jerry Riordan was the doorman. He convinced Tony to put his speed to good use and join the indoor track team. Anyone who attended CBA at the time understands how convincing Mr. Riordan could be, so in return for the promise of future success in Earth Science, Tony agreed. And that decision would change his life forever.

During that time the CBA track teams completely dominated the area. The indoor track teams traveled throughout the state and would routinely win or finish near the top of each of invitational in which they participated. The outdoor track teams were even more successful. In fact by the time that Tony joined Riordans Raiders, they had won six consecutive league championships and not lost a meet since 1965. During his freshman and sophomore year Tony learned from the stellar performers like Don Brown and Steve Vavonese and they became role models for him.

By the time that Tony was a junior he had established himself as one of the best sprinters in the area. He had been part of many championship relay teams in his first two years, but now it was time for him to have that same success in individual events. In indoor track it became commonplace for Tony to win the 300 and 160. During his junior year he helped lead his team to victories in seven invitationals. Tony broke several meet records along the way individually and as part of relay teams. That season also marked the first time that non public schools were allowed to participate in sectional competition. Tony made the most of this opportunity by winning sectional titles in two events, the 300 and the 640 yard relay, and both record setting performances. He continued on to the first intersectionals and ran a personal and meet best of 32.6. His senior year was more

of the same. His 32.7 in the 300, 17.1 in the 160 were both good for section III titles. He also was part of the section III champion mile relay team.



In the spring, it was more of the same. His team would win league and sectional championship in both his junior and senior years and Tony continued his amazing individual success. Riordan took advantage of Tony's versatility by using him in any combination of events from the 100 to the 880. His 10.1 in the 100 and 21.9 in the 220 showed the kind of speed that Tony possessed. But his signature event was the 440. By his junior year, he became one of the top quarter milers ever to compete in Central New York. Following in the footsteps of Don Brown, he dominated the event in 1972 and 73. As a junior, he breezed through the regular season hardly ever being challenged in a race. His 49.3 in the sectional championships smashed the previous record and in the state meet he finished second by 4 tenths of a second earning him all state honors. When his high school career was completed, he had quite an impressive list of achievements. He won 10 league championships and 8 sectional championships. Tony was earned All American honors in the 300, clocking the fourth fastest time in the country in that event in 1972. And all this from a guy who was cut from his freshman basketball team.

Tony continued his career at Fordham University and had similar success. In fact in 1976, Tony qualified for the Olympic Trials in the 200. More importantly, he continued to be recognized for his leadership ability. He was named captain of the track team in his senior year and although his days of athletic competition would end that year, his leadership had only begun.

You see, when Tony chose his career path, he chose to help defend our country. The discipline and dedication needed to succeed in athletic, were just what was necessary to succeed in the military. Although his speed on land had diminished a bit, Tony has found a new way to break speed records as he flies the F-16.... Colonel Basile has flown 67 combat missions including 51 in operation desert storm. The leadership that he showed on the track has continued in his professional career as he is the currently the Commander of the 174th Fighter Wing. We can only surmise that Tony's has made those dreams that he had as a young boy certainly come true.



Your athletic and career successes have all brought great pride to the CBA Community. At this time we would like to show you just how proud we as we put you in your rightful place in the LaSallian Athletic Hall of Fame.