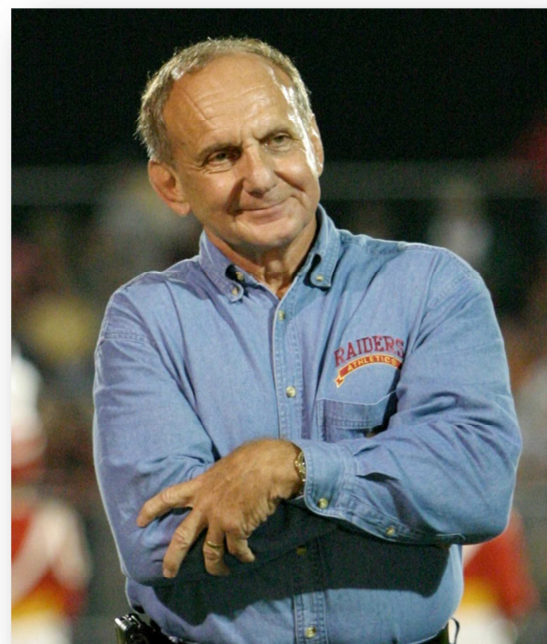


## Rocky Forte – Athletic Director

On Behalf of  
The HHS Coaching Staff from 1978 to 2003



Rocky Forte served as Athletic Director at Hillsborough High School from 1978 to 2003. He also served as the Head Wrestling Coach for several years. Upon his retirement, Rocky was also the Head Wrestling Coach for the Hillsborough Middle school.

Rocky graduated from Somerville High School in 1959. He was a three-sport athlete earning a total of seven varsity letters in football, wrestling, and baseball. Rocky was a member of the 1958-59 wrestling team which was undefeated and New Jersey State Champions. This team was the first team inducted into the Somerville High School Athletic Hall of Fame. Rocky was also a member of the 1959 Baseball Team that was also inducted into the Somerville High School Athletic Hall of Fame.

Upon graduation from high school, Rocky was awarded a full football scholarship to Furman University in Greenville, SC. After a year of living in the South during that volatile time period, he returned north. Rocky continued his education and wrestling career at Bloomsburg State College. In 1965, Rocky placed second in the Pennsylvania State College tournament. The 1965 team, which Rocky captained, went undefeated and won the N.A.I.A. National Championship under the leadership of Hall of Fame Coach Russ Hoak. After teaching political science at Bridgewater High School, he returned to college as a graduate assistant at Lock Haven University, where he coaches with Hall of Fame wrestler Gary Simons. After completing that year, he was recruited by Trenton State College to coach, where he led the team to a conference championship. Rocky also taught and coached at Glassboro State College, where he led the wrestling program to the most wins in the history of the school.

During Rocky's tenure as Hillsborough High School's Athletic Director, Hillsborough Township experienced a large growth in population. As a result of this growth, Hillsborough High School's student population also grew dramatically. The school grew from a Group 2 school in 1978 to a Group 4 school in 2003. During this time period, the athletic program went from 12 varsity sports to 21 varsity sports. Rocky was the first athletic director in the conference to schedule girls' athletic events during the evening, putting them on equal footing with boys' programs. This move impacted other schools into creating the same atmosphere for their female athletes. Rocky initiated the Senior Awards Banquet, where these scholar-athletes were honored. He is remembered for the action photos – he took all the pictures at the various events. Most athletes recall Rocky with his eye-present camera at his side.

Rocky received a B.S. Degree in Political science from Bloomsburg State College, a B.S. degree in Physical Education from Lock Haven State College, and M.S. Degree in Physical Education /Athletic Administration from Trenton State College, and a Supervisory and Principal Certification from Trenton State College.

On New Year's Eve, 2008, Rocky was diagnosed with mesothelioma. He participated in a program at Duke University Medical Center that was hoped to curtail this disease. For a while it did, and Rocky was back to lifting weights and riding his exercise bike. However, because his diagnosis was made when the disease may have already spread, Rocky's heroic efforts kept him alive for just 10 months more. His doctors credit his otherwise excellent condition for his survival that long, since it was evident that the mesothelioma had been undetected for years. Rocky died peacefully on October 19, 2009.

Rocky and his wife Janice (a former Hillsborough Teacher) have been married for 38 years. They have three children, Gina, Tony and Vince. Rocky and Janice currently reside in Lake Wylie, SC.