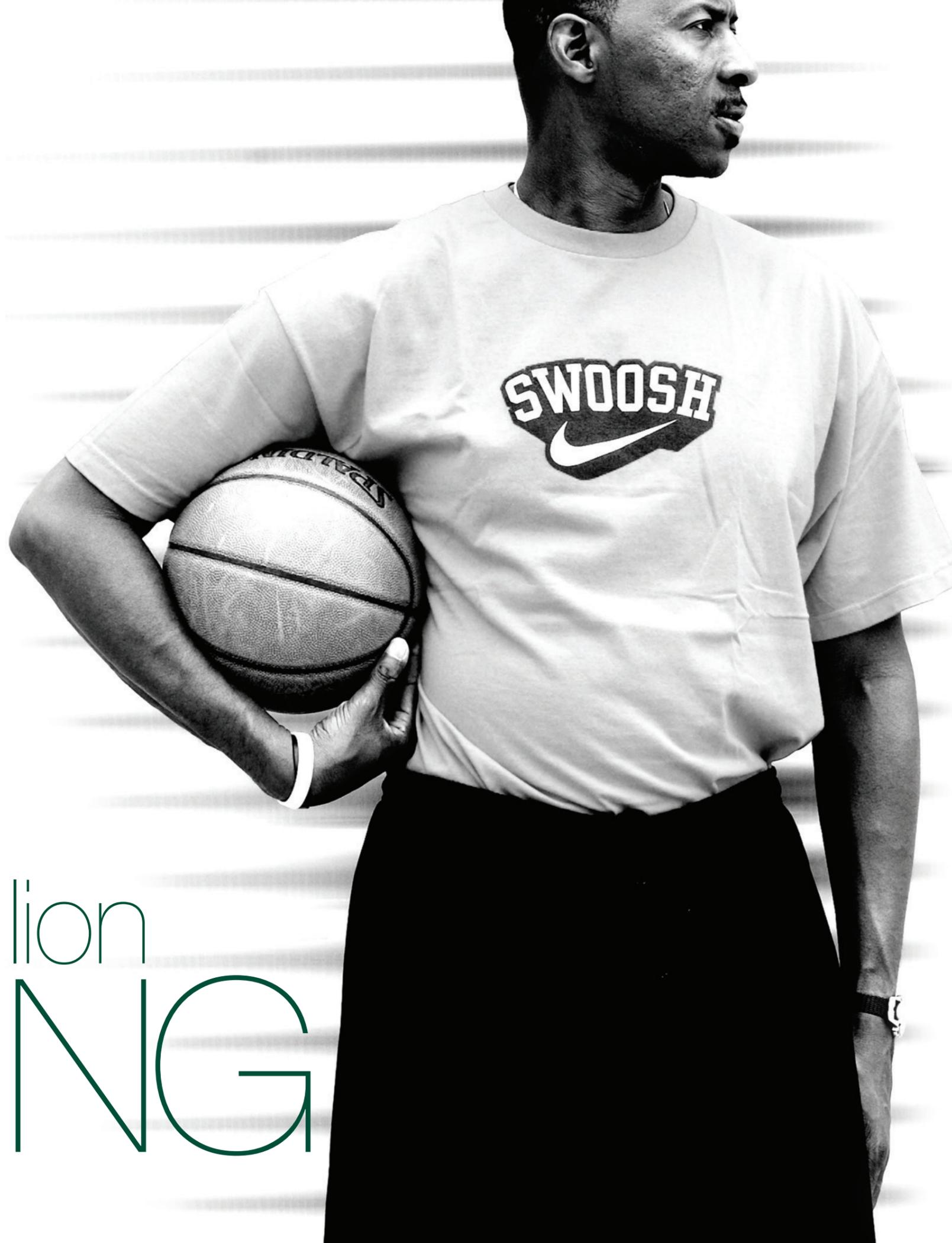


the lion KING



by Marcia De Wolf

Dennis Davis is St. John's athletic director, Middle School PE teacher and advisor, varsity basketball and baseball coach and has been with the school since 1985. As St. John's director, Tom Walters, puts it: "Dennis is a very special faculty member at St. John's. He is one of the few people that I know who can walk up to the microphone and receive a round of applause from the student body. This is before he even does anything! This respect extends to the faculty and the parents. Let me put it this way: If we could compare our school to a professional sports team, he would be a franchise player; not up for trade. Dennis is an integral part of the St. John's success story."

Tell us about yourself

I was born and raised in Florida. After graduating High School, I attended Dakota State College on a basketball scholarship and also played at a community college in Kentucky and at Armstrong State College in Savannah, GA for my final two years. The Atlanta Hawks offered me a tryout but I did not end up getting a contract. Then, my agent told me about an opportunity to play professional basketball in Belgium. After playing for Quaregnon, Calais [France] and Charleroi, I came to St. John's (where Ron Campbell was the Athletic Director at the time) to start the St. John's Junior High School basketball program. A job opened up in the PE department the next year and I have been here ever since, teaching in Middle School, as basketball and baseball coach and as the athletic director since last year.

What is the best thing about St. John's?

Many things, but most of all the family atmosphere and international feel. Also, the fact

"Even before I arrived at St. John's last summer, Coach Davis welcomed me to the school. Over the season, Coach inspired us to play better as players and as a team. He was a huge part of our success this season."

Jack Koval
St. John's varsity
boys basketball player

"Dennis just understands kids. He has real empathy for them and they pick this up."

Mandy Macleod
Middle School principal

"He is a man who teaches and preaches not only the game of basketball but also discipline, effort, sportsmanship and hard work to name only a few of the virtues needed in sports!"

Annie Constantinides
athletic director and varsity boys
basketball coach, ACS Athens

"There has not been anything more rewarding for me than getting to help my dad win those elusive ISST championships. He loves basketball, St. John's, and all his players, and to be fortunate enough to be guided by such a great coach, let alone have him be my father, will be a memory I will always cherish and appreciate. Being on that court, and looking to the sideline and seeing my father there, always brought me a sense of confidence and comfort, because I knew that no matter what happened, he'd always be there to show me the way. I can only hope to be half the leader, best friend, and father to my future children as my dad has been to me."

Josh Davis
his son



Dennis Davis (aka Gladys Knight) makes his singing debut at a Booster Bash.

that you see [Middle School] students grow into responsible adults who graduate, start a career and then come back to visit. So many of the students I have taught played on sports teams, it is great to see them develop over the years.

Who has most influenced your career?

My grandmother was the one who motivated me and encouraged me to reach for my dreams. My family really did not like the idea of me going overseas, but she was the one who told me to go if that is where my heart is.

What is your fondest memory of your time at St. John's?

That would have to be the three consecutive ISST basketball titles

(2003–2005), especially the one in 2003 as it was the first ISST basketball title for St. John's. Coupled with the 87–0 winning streak and the fact that my son, Josh, was part of it, made for an unforgettable time.

What has changed for you since becoming the athletic director last September?

I have to be diplomatic in the choices I make and ensure all sports get equal treatment. I try to include everybody and make sure everyone's needs are met. I maintain a good relationship with parents, coaches and students—as I believe it is the kids that make these programs work. I feel strongly that the athletic director needs to be approachable.

"When I reflect back on my 30 years of ISST basketball, foremost among the most respected coaches is Dennis Davis. The collegiality among ISST coaches is epitomized by Dennis. I always looked forward to playing a Dennis Davis-coached St. John's team. I knew St. John's would be totally prepared, play hard, competitive basketball, yet always reflect a respect for both the game and the opponent in accordance with the high standards and expectations set by Dennis. He is an outstanding teacher and coach, highly respected throughout the ISST and one whose friendship I shall always value. I trust all at St. John's realize their good fortune having Dennis as a coach, athletic director and model educator for the youth of their school."

Ray Morgenstern
Frankfurt International School former athletic director and varsity boys basketball coach (now retired)

"I will always have a soft spot in my heart for Coach Davis. Coach is a very blessed man. Coach Davis has the gift of seeing a person for who they really are and not just for what is on the outside. I have four very different children. Coach never made any judgments or created unrealistic expectations for them. He enjoys them for their diversity

and embraces their own potential. Coach sees their souls and works with their inner being. Coach took our son, Andrew, under his wing at a very important junction of his life. We moved Andrew to Belgium in his junior year. I believe that Coach saw something special in my son and helped him adjust to St. John's and Belgium. Then there is Ryan. Coach saw Ryan for his abilities rather than for his disability. We feel truly blessed and honored to have known him for the last three years. He will always be a wonderful friend to the Nelson family."

Scott and Michelle Nelson
former St. John's parents

"Dennis Davis was my baseball coach during my junior and senior years. Dennis had been the basketball coach for some time, but these were Dennis' first two years coaching baseball.

My dad had coached Little League for many years and offered to help Dennis get started by providing practice drills and plans.

Both years, the teams performed well during the regular season and finished third in the ISSTs. Dennis was a great coach, mentor and positive role model. When I was in Waterloo in December, I made sure to stop in and visit Dennis since he was such a big part of my junior and senior years at St. John's. It has been fun reading about Dennis' ongoing successes as a coach. That consistently high performance speaks volumes about Dennis' ability to connect with young people, get them to gel as a team and work hard to maximize their performance."

Thanks Dennis! Keep up the good work—we former Lions relish the stories about beating up on ISB!

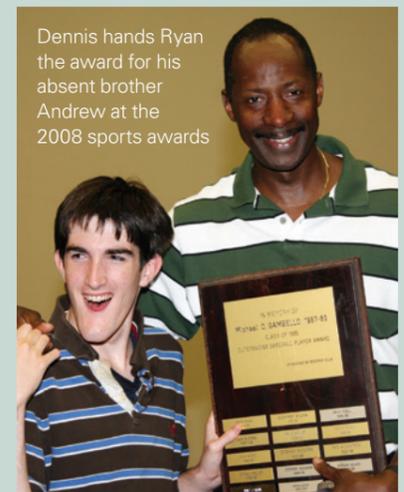
Paul Lawyer
alumnus and former St. John's baseball player

I was actually part of the first team that Dennis coached at St. John's. This was before he was on the staff or even the varsity coach. It was the basketball season of 1982–1983 and Dennis was coaching the Junior High boys basketball team. We had an away game in Antwerp and in the locker room, to my horror, I realized that I had forgotten my uniform. I had my socks, shoes and everything else—but no uniform. So, I sheepishly let Dennis know what the situation was. Needless to say, he was not amused. A few heartfelt expletives might even have been expressed. As I was the starting center, and playing in my underwear was not an option, Dennis said he would take care of it and excused himself. Apparently he went to the Junior High girls team, which had just finished playing, and convinced the tallest girl on the team to lend me her uniform. Unfortunately, this tall girl had not spent the game on the bench but had been incredibly active as the uniform Dennis handed me was soaking wet. The way Dennis looked at me and told me that he would see me on the court in five minutes, I knew protestations would have been out of place. When I appeared on court, Dennis had a good laugh at my expense because, as you may imagine, I looked quite ridiculous. I was quite amused by my own appearance and was actually quite relieved that I could still play. We also went on to win very comfortably. Dennis coached me many times after that, but I will always remember the quick thinking and resourcefulness which he showed then and how it all transpired with good humor. It really was quite a funny episode.

Thomas Snyder
alumnus and former St. John's basketball player

DENNIS DAVIS' ALL-STAR TEAMS

| First team | Second team |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Ben Dupont 06 | Mustafa Johnson 86 |
| Joshua Davis 05 | Eric Bauer 89 |
| Petar Joksimovic 04 | Zaman Toleafoa 94 |
| Serkan Erol 05 | Aaron Rossi 03 |
| Harkan Erol 04 | Richard Barghash 06 |
| Aaron Van Gorp 98 | Josh Rafferty 08 |
| Mel Pyatt 98 | Scott Rafferty 10 |
| Paul Mellet 93 | Kasper Theilgaard 09 |
| Cyril Mellet 94 | Calle Carls-Cederholm 09 |
| Nathan Sequeira 93 | Laurent Karim 06 |
| | Marc Barghash 08 |



Dennis hands Ryan the award for his absent brother Andrew at the 2008 sports awards

"There is a side of Dennis that many people don't know: he once performed as Gladys Knight with his basketball team as his Pips at a Booster Bash. It was an incredible performance."

Erik Wouters
former athletic director

"It feels good to know that the man I love is being appreciated. He deserves every expression of praise, respect and recognition."

Martine Lucq
his wife

"Dennis Davis embodies the expression of 'putting your best face forward.' Obviously, his 6'7" frame initially garners the attention of students and parents, but it is his calm and instructive demeanor that keeps their attention. As a teacher, coach and administrator, Dennis is the best St. John's has to offer."

Aggie Mannix
Booster president