

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### FFC SADDENED BY THE PASSING OF PETER ARMATIS

**FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (Friday, April 3, 2020)**—It is with great sadness that we at Fredericksburg FC announce that Peter Armatis passed away on Wednesday morning.

Armatis, 54, served as a coach and board member with the club, beginning his time as a recreation coach and working his way up to coaching one of the club's Black teams, the highest youth level in the club. Most recently, he was coaching the club's 2007 Boys Black and 2005 Boys Red teams, preparing them for the Spring season.



"When I came on board six years ago, coach Peter was a recreation coach who had a passion for coaching and showed a true and honest love for the game. He continually asked questions and looked for ways to help his team and the club," said Grover Gibson, FFC's President and Executive Director.

Armatis believed in building a strong culture among his players and it showed in the way his teams developed both on and off the field. That's something that fellow coach Kevin Leahy, who assisted Armatis with FFC's '07 Boys Black team, said was integral to the growth of those around him.

"Without a culture built on respect, hard work and empathy, you will only have a collection of individuals. We often spent hours talking about this, how to handle certain situations that arose, how to help players grow as people," said Leahy, who met Armatis in 2015. "Peter was at his best when he was helping you work through a problem. He didn't give you the solution, but would often just listen, ask a question and listen some more."

Armatis' style of coaching didn't only help his players grow, but also his fellow coaches. FFC '05 Boys Red assistant coach Chris Sweet said he was



apprehensive at first about making the move from the recreation level to helping with a travel team, but that Armatis quickly quelled that feeling.

“He convinced me that working together would make this team twice as strong,” said Sweet, who also met Armatis in 2015. “From the moment I became coach, he empowered me to be able to do anything he was able to do. He was completely transparent with me, and often took my thoughts and incorporated them into whatever activity we were doing.



“There was never a head coach–assistant coach mentality. We were equal. He could ask me to take over any activity at any moment and the transition would be seamless. Working together we could feed off each other’s strengths and help each other overcome our weaknesses. I’m really going to miss that.”

FFC Recreation Director Adrian Batchelor, who shared time coaching both on the same and opposing sidelines, said Armatis’ personality was very influential on others. He added that he was a person that you would instantly warm to because of his appreciation and passion for all aspects of life.

“Peter was just in a class of his own from that perspective—offering mentorship to others, both in and out of the soccer community. Peter put his best foot forward in everything that he did. He was passionate, competitive, caring, responsible. . . Just an all-round great guy,” Batchelor expressed. “He was a wonderful family man and his good nature just spilled over to everyone that he met. From a fellow husband, parent, coach, teammate, friend, brother from another mother, he will be missed immensely.”

With his strong need to continue learning and growing not only his own coaching knowledge, but also that of his fellow coaches, as well as advancing the abilities of the club as a whole to provide for its players and families on and off the field, Armatis was a welcome addition to the FFC Board of Directors in the Spring of 2019.

“His impact on the board was immediately felt by encouraging more social events and simply spending more time together off the field, which created an extremely positive vibe throughout the club which was much needed,” Gibson said. “As Peter progressed





at FFC, he was continually looking for ways to help not only the players, but other staff members and coaches as well, to excel and be not only better coaches, but simply better people.

“He was a perfect ambassador for FFC, as a coach, as a parent and as a board member.”

A great way to describe Armatis’ approach to coaching comes from a post on the FFC website

looking back at his first trip to the United Soccer Coaches Convention in 2018. At one of the sessions he attended, he said the following statement resonated with him.

“Nobody cares about how much you know until they know how much you care.”

Armatis clearly cared about whatever it was that he was doing, in soccer and in life.

Armatis is survived by his wife, Stacy, and three children, daughter Olivia, and sons Jake and Will.

The club has set up a scholarship fund in Armatis’ honor through GoFundMe Charity entitled “Go FFC, Go Navy, Go Blues,” which reflects his love of the club, the Navy and English Premier League side Chelsea Football Club. The proceeds will be directed toward helping underprivileged kids who want to play for FFC.

You can donate at this link:

<https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/go-ffc-go-navy-go-blues-scholarship-fund>



—**Tom Leiss**

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