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/ Athletic Building Becomes Bev Vaughan Hall to Honor Former Basketball Coach and Director of Athletics



ATHLETIC BUILDING BECOMES BEV VAUGHAN HALL TO HONOR FORMER BASKETBALL COACH AND DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

by [Francis Tommasino](#) | September 5, 2025

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Christopher Newport University paid tribute to the man known as the "Father of CNU Athletics" on Thursday, as the University announced the re-naming of Ratcliffe Hall. The multi-purpose facility will now be known as Bev Vaughan Hall, in honor of the school's first Director of Athletics and Men's Basketball Coach.

"Bev Vaughan built the foundation for Christopher Newport Athletics," President William Kelly said during remarks at a ceremony in what is now known as Bev Vaughan Hall. "This is such an important building that is now surrounded by a thriving campus. Thanks to Coach Vaughan for showing us how to win. More than anyone else, he is responsible for building the foundation for what is now the winningest program in Virginia at any level, and by any measure, one of the top Division III programs in the nation."

Vaughan and the Captains won a lot over his coaching career, a total of 204 victories over 14 seasons, including the program's first 20-victory season in 1977-78. While Vaughan was originally hired in 1967 to create a men's basketball program, it wasn't long until he added the title of Director of Athletics, a position he held until 1987.

"It's so exciting to honor one of the pivotal figures in our department's history," Director of Athletics Kyle McMullin said. "Bev Vaughan was instrumental in making Christopher Newport Athletics what it is today. His work has positively impacted countless student-athletes, coaches, administrators, and staff, and Bev Vaughan Hall is the

beating heart of our department."

When Vaughan first arrived on campus in 1967, the building that now bears his name was still under construction and the school was still a two-year institution. Vaughan had already led the start-up efforts of basketball programs at both Ferguson and Denbigh High Schools in Newport News, and those experiences, as well as his time as an assistant coach at his alma mater, the College of William & Mary, would prove to serve him well.

"We started from scratch...there was nothing," Vaughan recalled. "We didn't even have a scoreboard our first year, we kept the time on a stop watch at the scorer's table and they manually posted the score on the wall. When we did get a scoreboard for the second season, our maintenance guy was leery of heights, so I was the one who went up the ladder to replace the bulbs."

Vaughan's first venture to the athletic building under construction on campus proved to be a memorable one. Then Christopher Newport President Scotty Cunningham told him to stop by on a Sunday, when crews wouldn't be working.

"Well, I stopped by and the place was wide open, there weren't even any doors at the time," Vaughan remembered. "So I walked in and went to the locker room area to look around. As I walked through, a man jumped out at me with a gun pulled and said, 'What are you doing here?' Turns out he was a security guard and after I explained who I was, and that the President had invited me to come by, he put the gun back in his holster. Not exactly the warm welcome I was expecting."

Somehow Vaughan and his initial teams found a way to win eight games in each of their first two seasons and the program was off and running. Christopher Newport became a four-year institution in 1969, and Vaughan engineered the school's entry into the Dixie Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Under his leadership, the department would grow exponentially in the coming years by adding men's soccer, men's and women's tennis, volleyball, men's golf, baseball and softball teams. Vaughan was in the first class to be inducted into the Christopher Newport Athletic Hall of Fame in 1988.

In 2000, Christopher Newport opened the Freeman Center, a new home for men's and women's basketball as well as volleyball and track & field. What is now known as Bev Vaughan Hall transformed into an athletic administration facility with re-vamped locker rooms, meeting rooms, and offices for outdoor athletic programs, which grew to include football in 2001. In the years since, additional projects have created an outstanding strength and conditioning area for student-athletes as well as the Vince Joseph Athletic Training Center. Bev Vaughan Hall is also the home of Christopher Newport's dedicated IT Department, serving the entire campus' technology needs.

Vaughan, now 87, was surrounded by family and friends at the ceremony in the building re-named in his honor. A number of players from his teams were also in attendance, including Roland Ross, who has been a part of the CNU family since getting the opportunity to play for Vaughan's Captains.

"Coach Vaughan is a great man, and was a father figure to many of us," Ross said. "He was a no-nonsense leader and fierce competitor. I remember advancing to the conference championship game every year, and the expectation of hard work was instilled in us. He set the tone for our teams then, and all that have come along since...and all that will come along in the future."

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