

## Ray Ciancaglini – a boxer's message to student-athletes

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On August 14th, Ray Ciancaglini spoke to a near-capacity crowd at Bath-Haverling High School. The former prize fighter delivered his cautionary tale about the risks involved with the improper care and treatment of concussions.

Once a promising young boxer, Ciancaglini's life changed when he failed to seek proper medical treatment for a concussion and reentered the ring. Now, he has dedicated his life to mentoring young athletes who may face a similar decision.

"His message is very important," said Bath head football coach, Wayne Carroll. "He doesn't want the same thing to happen to somebody that happened to him. He fought too many fights and ignored the symptoms."

Carroll talked about the fatherly influence Ciancaglini demonstrated during the 45-minute presentation.

"He's telling all the kids 'hey, learn from my mistakes.' Don't think you're invincible and don't take anything lightly. That's sound advice that any parent would give to any kid."

More than four decades after his last professional fight, Ciancaglini suffers from Dementia Pugilistica and Parkinson's Syndrome. He takes medication to cope with its effects.

"We were very fortunate to have Ray come down and speak to our student-athletes," commented Haverling High School Principal, Randy Brzezinski. "It was a great message. It was really powerful for our student-athletes to see somebody who has received multiple concussions."

With the awareness of head injuries on the rise because of the growing concern in the National Football League, Ciancaglini's message is emphatic: "The game you sit today could be the career you save tomorrow."

Ciancaglini knows well the temptations facing young competitors who may overlook symptoms in an effort to try and get ahead in athletics.

"Hopefully, our student-athletes took that seriously," Brzezinski said of the presentation. "I know a lot of them like to hide some of those symptoms. Hopefully, they realize the im-

portance of being honest and talking to adults and coaches if they are experiencing any of those symptoms. They now understand a little bit more the importance of treating concussions and taking them seriously."

Ciancaglini's story has been featured on ABC's Good Morning America, and the New York State Athletic Trainer's Association has endorsed him. His work over the years led to New York State passing the Concussion Management Awareness Act.

The legislation requires coaches, teachers and other school personnel to be trained about the symptoms of mild traumatic brain injuries and the importance of proper medical treatment.

He is the founder of The Second Impact, an organization dedicated to concussion awareness.

The presentation at Bath-Haverling was just the latest for Ciancaglini.

"Having me come to the school speaks volumes," Ciancaglini stated. "Their concussion management is top of the line. They are being pro-active with concussion awareness. They are on top of the issue."

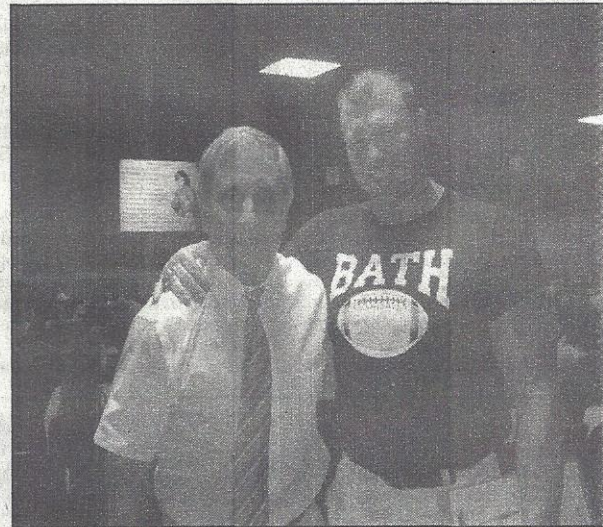


Photo Provided to The Steuben Courier Advocate

### Ray Ciancaglini and Wayne Carroll

Recently, Ciancaglini delivered his message to families at Jasper-Troupsburg. He has also spoken in the past at the Hornell and Canistota-Greenwood Central School Districts along with engagements to speak at NFL Player Development Camps.

"The word is out," Ciancaglini added. "The help is there. The decision is theirs to make."

Ciancaglini will speak at St. Bonaventure University on September 10th. Readers may learn more about Ray and his story at [thesecondimpact.com](http://thesecondimpact.com).