



**ASHWORTH
COLLEGE**



Next Level America, Ashworth High School grads move up to collegiate baseball leagues

Puerto Rico-based Next Level America Academy and online education leader Ashworth High School make it possible for youth to get their high school education and the much needed athletic exposure to compete for U.S. college baseball scholarships.

Sept. 30, 2010 - [PRLog](#) -- NORCROSS, Georgia – In the 1989 movie Field of Dreams, Ray Kinsella spent a lifetime searching for his dreams. Then one day, his dreams came looking for him.

While many high school athletes hope that their dreams become reality, for several recent Ashworth High School (<http://www.ashworthcollege.edu/programs/high-school/>) students dreams did come true. And, like in the movie, baseball has a starring role.

For the past 23 years, Puerto Rico-based Next Level America Academy (NLAA) has made it possible for local youth to get the much needed exposure in order to compete for U.S. college baseball scholarships. While talent on the field is far from bush league, and certainly attractive to college coaches, it's the athlete's academic abilities that are of equal interest to the college or university. And that's where Ashworth High School comes in.

“To the college coaches who make it possible for our players to continue their education, we realized that we had an obligation to showcase more than their athletic abilities,” said Pedro Leon, NLAA Founder. “I realized that the flexibility of an online education program could compliment their practice schedules, so four years ago I selected Ashworth High School to provide the curriculum.”

Starting in 2007, NLAA began making the online high school classes available to the athletes. It was important that the accredited curriculum be both self paced and affordable enough for the parents to manage. The program started with 17 athletes enrolling in Ashworth's online program. Today at its Luquillo facility NLAA has 50 athletes enrolled in online high school programs. The academy is currently undergoing an expansion project which includes upgrades to the baseball facilities, conference rooms and a cafeteria.

Over the years, NLAA and Ashworth High School graduates have been recruited to play collegiate baseball at several U.S. institutions, including Alabama State University, Cedarville College and Concordia Selma College. Most recently, 2010 graduates Luis Bruno and Roberto Sapia became “fighting falcons” when they joined the freshman class at Southeastern Illinois College.

“It's a tremendous feeling of pride when you learn which college or university one of our high school graduates will be attending,” said Dr. Leslie Gargiulo, Ashworth Vice President of Education. “We're honored that we've been able to play such an important part in their futures.”

Providing high school curriculum to student athletes is nothing new to Ashworth High School. A part of Ashworth College, the institution understands the unique requirements of today's players and counts athletes from several sports among its graduates. In addition to NLAA, Ashworth has enrolled several Body of Christ Christian Academy students who are currently preparing for NBA tryouts.

“Learning how to balance life between academics and social can be challenging to any high school student and even more so when you layer on athletics,” Dr. Gargiulo said. “The flexibility of Ashworth’s online programs help athletes to stay focused on their goals while maintaining some balance in their lives.”

About Next Level America Academy

NLAA Sports Academy was founded in 1987 in the town of Florida, Puerto Rico. Its mission is to prepare student-athletes to attend college the United States. In 2007, it expanded its program to include the online academic component, partnering with Ashworth High School to deliver nationally and regionally accredited online high school curriculum to its students.

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About Ashworth College and Ashworth High School

Ashworth College, a leader in online education, offers students worldwide more than 100 online college degrees, online career certificates, online career training and high school online diplomas that are affordable and fit the busy schedules of working adults. Ashworth also offers military education online as well as specialized programs for corporate partners and homeschoolers.

Headquartered in Norcross, GA, Ashworth is accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC). The Accrediting Commission of the DETC is listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a nationally recognized accrediting agency. Ashworth High School is further accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). For more information, visit <http://www.ashworthcollege.edu>.

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