

## A Penn State Mont Alto Student Publication

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## Bill O'Brien Named New PSU Head Coach

ERICA THOMAS & BRITTANY CRUICKSHANK

On January 7<sup>th</sup> 2012, USA today announced that Bill O'Brien has agreed to contribute his coaching skills to the Penn State football team

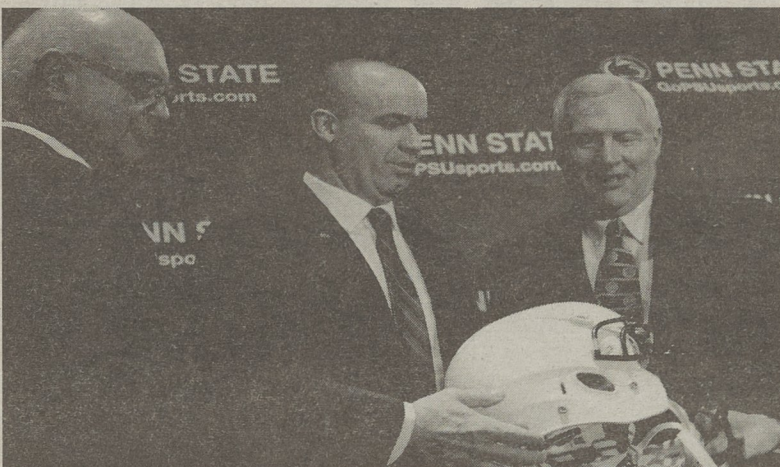
O'Brien is an accomplished collegiate coach who has worked with Brown, Maryland and Duke Universities. He is also a former coach for the New England Patriots. He started his NFL coaching career in 2008 as a wide receiver coach. During his second year of coaching for the Patriots, O'Brien then served as the quarterback's coach for the 2009 and 2010 seasons, and in 2011 he was appointed the offensive coordinator.

"There's only one Joe Paterno," O'Brien stated following the announcement. "What I'm

going to try to do is be Bill O'Brien, and we're going to do the best we can to continue the success that he's had here for many, many years. Again, we're going to show respect for Coach Paterno and what he did here and we're going to move forward to a new era of Penn State football."

Showing mutual respect to O'Brien, the late Joe Paterno expressed his feelings on his successor. According to the Huffington Post, Paterno said: "I understand Bill O'Brien has been named head coach and I want to congratulate him." He continued by saying, "I don't know Bill, but I respect his coaching record, and I am particularly pleased we share a connection to my alma mater, Brown."

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Collegian Photo By: Sarah Finnegan

University President Rodney Erickson and Acting Athletic Director Dr. Dave Joyner hand Bill O'Brien a Penn State Football helmet after the official announcement of his appointment as the new head football coach.

## Losing A Legend:

## The Death of Joe Paterno

LACEY LAPP

Former Head-Coach of the Penn State Football team, Joe Paterno, died at 9:25 am on Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, at the age of 85.

In November, Joe Paterno's son announced that his father had been diagnosed with lung cancer during a follow-up appointment for a bronchial illness. According to a statement from Mount Nittany Medical Center, Paterno died of "metastatic small cell carcinoma of the lung."

"We grieve for the loss of Joe Paterno, a great man who made us a greater university," said Penn State University President Rodney Erickson and the Board of Trustees in an official statement. "His dedication to ensuring his players were successful both on the field and in life is legendary and his commitment to education is unmatched in college football. His life, work, and generosity will be remembered always."

The University is also making plans to honor Joe Paterno for, as Penn State Live states, "his many contributions and to remember his remarkable life and legacy."

The Paterno family also presented a statement saying Paterno's death "leaves a void in our lives that will never be filled" and that he "died as he lived."

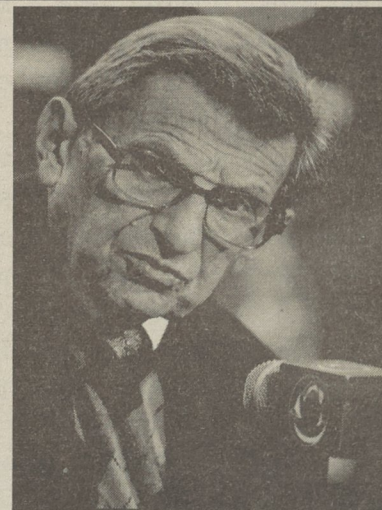
"His ambitions were far reaching, but he never believed he had to leave this Happy Valley to achieve them. He was a

man devoted to his family, his university, his players and his community," continued the Paterno family's statement. "As the last 61 years have shown, Joe made an incredible impact. That impact has been felt and appreciated by our family... It is evident also in the thousands of successful student athletes who have gone on to multiply that impact as they spread out across the country."

This impact can also be seen in the form of his 409 game wins, twenty-four winning bowl games out a total of thirty-seven played, his title of five-time national coach of the year, and Penn State Football's achievement as the number one ranking school in 1982 and 1986 with Paterno as coach.

Penn State alumni, students and fans gathered in State College on January 25<sup>th</sup> for Paterno's funeral. Thousands watched as a bright blue hearse drove by. The Paterno family followed behind, riding in the blue Penn State buses used by Paterno and his team to ride to home games.

A memorial service was held at the Bryce Jordan Center the day following the funeral, where 12,000 mourners showed their respect to the former coach. Kenny Jackson, a former wide receiver for the Philadelphia Eagles and two time collegiate All-American at Penn State, spoke at the memorial service. "[Joe Paterno] never took a compliment, he always deflected praise, never thought he was the



Collegian Photo By: Chloe Elmer

show, but today my teacher, you have no choice," Jackson said. "Today we are going to show you how much we love you."

Paterno's death impacted many students. "I am filled with shock, grief, and disbelief. I can't believe the man I thought could never die is gone," commented student Tia Singer.

McCartney also recalled a dream he had the night before Paterno's viewing: "Joe Paterno, pant legs rolled up, walking the white sidelines in heaven, is still coaching. He is watching, not a football game, but our lives, trying to see if the sayings, memories, teachings that he left behind guide us in the direction to do the right thing and to make an impact in others' lives the same way he did. When the time comes for him to recruit us to come be on his team, we will be met by Joe at the gates of heaven so that we can be on his field, in a place that is just blue and white. We will be reminded... We are Penn State!"

