



Nov. 20, 2019

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## **Bill Bennett to coach UOG baseball team**

Long-time baseball aficionado and instructor Bill Bennett will coach the University of Guam's newly reinstated men's baseball team, the UOG Athletics Department announced today.

Bennett is a 20-year Guam resident with more than 40 years of involvement in baseball and softball skills development programs for national teams, school teams, youth, and coaches. He is the founder of the Guam Amateur Baseball Association, a nonprofit organization that develops baseball and softball leagues, tournaments, private lessons, camps, and clinics, and the Guam Baseball Academy, which runs training academies and leagues.

"His dedication to youth on the island is well-known, both in developing them as baseball players and as contributing members of society," said Athletics Director Doug Palmer. "I think this is the best hire we could have found, and we are confident he will make Triton Baseball the championship-caliber team it was in the past."

Bennett is a Level II certified umpire and coach through the Baseball Confederation of Oceania and a national team-level certified coach in the Major League Baseball International Envoy Program, which has sent him to New Zealand, Australia, China, Mongolia, and Southeast Asia to teach the game of baseball. He also continues his education in baseball and softball annually by attending the American Baseball Coaches Association Convention.

"Baseball is a great game, and I'm excited for the opportunity to take the lead and execute the strategic plan for growing a varsity baseball program at UOG," Bennett said. "I want to thank the players, the university, and the community in advance for supporting the growth of the program as we work to guide young athletes to their best potential not only in the sport, but academically and in their daily lives as well."

The Triton Athletics Department has not had a men's baseball team since the late 1990s. Bennett played for the UOG team as a community player in 1982–1983, when the team won the Guam Major League Championship.

As head coach and manager of the team, Bennett will be working to carry out a three-year strategy for the program, which includes developing a competitive baseball team, developing a program to train high school baseball athletes into UOG baseball athletes, and starting a baseball academy to continue to elevate the skill level of players and coaches.

“A big part of the UOG baseball program's success will come from our ability to recruit quality talent from local high schools,” Bennett said, “so the growth of youth participation is a top priority.”

### **Team tryouts**

Team tryouts will be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 14 and 15, at the George Washington High School baseball field. The team will participate in the Guam Major League starting in February. For more information, contact the UOG Athletics Department at 735-2861.

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