

## Thornton Named Men's Lacrosse Coach At LMC

Written by Whitney Noble  
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Darry Thornton has been named the new head men's lacrosse coach at Lees-McRae College, announced Director of Athletics Craig McPhail Monday.

"In meeting with Darry, I see someone committed to building a lacrosse program in the right way, by recruiting the masses, developing strong communication and have the organizational skills of a leader who can give our young men, campus, community and alumni a product we can all be very proud of," praised McPhail.

Thornton brings over seven years of collegiate coaching experience with him to Lees-McRae, serving as the head coach at Mohawk Valley Community College and Mount Saint Mary College, as well as the assistant coach at former Conference Carolinas member Queens University of Charlotte.

"We are excited to have someone with coaching and recruiting experience for our position as we try to establish a culture of positive change within our men's lacrosse program," said McPhail. "Darry is known as a bounty recruiter and for our program to get to the level we all expect, it will take the efforts and connections he has to create an interest in playing lacrosse at Lees-McRae."

A graduate of Oneonta State College, Thornton most recently served as the head coach at Mohawk Valley for the past two seasons, mentoring five all-conference players and playing an integral role in the defensive unit lowering its goals against average by 4.5. Under Thornton's direction, Mohawk Valley's offense steadily improved over the course of his two-year tenure, posting its highest-single game scoring effort in three years.

Prior to Mohawk Valley, Thornton established both the men's and women's lacrosse programs at Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, N.Y., recruiting over 50 student-athletes in just six months in preparation for each team's inaugural season.

Thornton served as the assistant coach at nearby Queens during the 2009 season, taking over as the defensive coordinator with four games remaining, and mentoring the defensive unit to a goals against average of 9.0 in that span. The Schenectady, N.Y. native also served as the man-down coordinator, leading the unit to a penalty kill rate of 77 percent while coaching five all-conference players that season.

Before joining the Queens staff, Thornton spent one season as the assistant coach at Hartwick College in Oneonta, N.Y. and one year as the assistant at Oneonta State, playing a key role in each defensive unit holding opponents to less than 9.3 goals per game. Thornton mentored four all-conference players at Hartwick and five at Oneonta, serving as the man-down coordinator at Hartwick and mentoring that unit to a penalty kill rate of 81 percent.

Thornton has mentored 19 all-conference selections at three separate schools, while also coaching 10 regional all-star game selections and one all-region selection at Mohawk Valley. A two-time all-star game head coach while at Mohawk Valley, Thornton graduated from Oneonta State in 2003 with a bachelor's degree in mass communication. During his two-year career at Oneonta State, Thornton led the team to a 22-10 record, a No. 11 national ranking, and a berth in the ECAC championship game.

What they're saying about Coach Thornton

**Mike Morgan, head men's lacrosse coach at Merrick College:** "Darry is a great guy with a lot of energy, a tireless worker, and a great recruiter. He has an eye for the right type of player, knows everybody and can evaluate talent with the best in the country."

**Dan Mulholland, head men's lacrosse coach at Mount Saint Vincent:** "Darry has a great

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rapport with student-athletes, and is very organized with his practices and recruiting. With his knowledge of X's and O's as a former goalie, he has been able to lead the defense while handling the other team's offense. He also has a great personality. "

**Photo Courtesy: Darry Thornton, LMC Athletics**