



# COACHING STAFF

## HEAD COACH RICH ELLERSON

HAWAI'I, 1977

5TH SEASON AT ARMY (17-32; .347)

14TH SEASON OVERALL (77-73; .513)



Since taking charge of the Army football program prior to the 2009 season, **Rich Ellerson** has been dedicated to the mission of reviving the Black Knights' storied history. Entering his fifth season, he has put Army on the path back to prominence, and has the program poised for excellence for years to come.

One of the nation's true triple-option experts, Ellerson agreed to become Army's 36th head football coach on Dec. 26, 2008.

In just his second season, Ellerson proved his methods could result in success on the banks of the Hudson. Ellerson brought winning football back to West Point in 2010 when he became just the second coach in Army history to win a postseason game. The Black Knights' 16-14 win over SMU in the Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl secured Army's first winning season since 1996.

In addition to a bowl victory, Ellerson's squads have scored some memorable wins in his four seasons. Army has defeated a team from a Bowl Championship Series automatic qualifying conference in each of his four seasons (2009 — Vanderbilt; 2010 — Duke; 2011 — Northwestern; 2012 — Boston College). Ellerson became the first Army coach since 2005 to defeat a service academy. The 2012 Black Knights ended a six-game losing streak to Air Force, which also snapped a 13-game skid versus academy rivals.

Ellerson and his staff have not been shy of utilizing younger players. In 2011, Army led the nation by playing 19 true freshmen, including 11 who started at least once. In 2012, the Black Knights had 10 plebes make their collegiate debut, including four starters on the defensive side of the ball.

In Ellerson's four seasons, the Black Knights have had unprecedented offensive success. Army has led the nation in rushing in each of the last two seasons, a program first since 1944-45. The Black Knights have finished no lower than 16th on national rushing ledger in the last four years, posting top eight finishes in each of the last three campaigns. The 2012 team used Ellerson's triple-option attack to break the Academy records for both total rushing yards (4,438) and rushing yards per game (369.8).

Under Ellerson, Army football players have continued to make their mark in the classroom as well. Army has had four CoSIDA Academic All-American selections since 2009, including three first-team honorees. Andrew Rodriguez and Zach Watts were both first-team choices in 2011, marking the first time Army had multiple players on the first team since 1957.

Rodriguez also put his name in the history books, becoming the first Army player to win the National Football Foundations' William V. Campbell Trophy as the nation's top football scholar-athlete. He also captured the Amateur Athletic Union's James E. Sullivan Award as the top amateur athlete in the country. He was Army's first winner since 1946 and was only the third college football player to win both the Campbell Trophy and Sullivan Award (Peyton Manning, Tim Tebow).



Ellerson is a veteran of nearly 30 years of coaching on the collegiate ranks, including eight as head coach at Cal Poly prior to his arrival at West Point. Not regarded as a traditional FCS power prior to Ellerson's arrival in 2001, Cal Poly finished each of his last four years ranked in the Top 25 of national FCS polls. The Mustangs won at least seven games during each of Ellerson's last six seasons at the helm and spent the majority of the 2008 season ranked in the top 10 of both the FCS Coaches Top 25 Poll and The Sports Network Division I-AA Poll. Cal Poly was ranked No. 3 in the FCS Coaches Poll for the final seven weeks of the regular season (and the last four weeks of The Sports Network Poll) before they were upset in the first round of the FCS playoffs by Weber State on Nov. 29. Before Ellerson's arrival, the Mustangs had not fashioned a winning season since 1997 and had enjoyed only three winning years since 1990.

It didn't take long for Ellerson to prove he was the right choice to revive the Army program. A finalist for the 2010 Liberty Mutual Coach of the Year Award, Ellerson produced more victories in his first two seasons (12) than any Army coach since Tom Cahill won 16 games during the 1966 and 1967 seasons.

In his first season on the banks of the Hudson, he led the squad to a 5-7 record, the most wins for the program in 13 seasons and came just one win shy of Army's first bowl berth since the 1996 Independence Bowl. It took little time for Ellerson's triple-option offense and double-eagle flex defense to prove their effectiveness. Army finished the 2009 season ranked 16th in the nation in rushing offense (203.6 yards per game) and 16th in the NCAA in total defense (304.7 yards per game).

The Black Knights built on that success in 2010, posting a 7-6 mark and earning the programs' first postseason win since the 1985 Peach Bowl. Army's triple option produced the nation's eighth-ranked rushing attack (251.62 yds/game), while its 3,271 total rushing yards were the 10th most in program history. Defensively, the Black Knights ranked third in the nation in turnover margin (+1.23/game) while keeping five opponents to 21 points or less.

His success at West Point comes as no surprise. Ellerson was named NCAA Division I-AA Independents Coach of the Year in 2003 and a year later was honored as Great West Football Conference Coach of the Year as well as AFCA Region 5 Coach of the Year during his tenure at Cal Poly.

Prior to his selection as Cal Poly's 15th head football coach on Dec. 6, 2000, Ellerson served as the defensive coordinator at Arizona, holding that title from 1997 to 2000. It marked a return stint in Tucson for the highly regarded mentor. Ellerson assumed duties as the Wildcats' assistant head coach, while overseeing Arizona's defensive line and special teams during his first stay in the desert from 1992 to 1995. It was at that time that he first became associated with legendary former Army head coach Jim Young, who had retired as the Black Knights' mentor following the 1990 season and assumed a volunteer role on Dick Tomey's UA staff. Ellerson also assisted then-Army head coach Bob Sutton in installing his "Desert Swarm" defense at West Point, a stop unit that helped carry the Black Knights to a 10-2 record and a berth in the Independence Bowl in 1996.

Cal Poly closed the year at 8-3 and ranked No. 8 in the FCS Coaches Poll and No. 10 in The Sports Network Poll. In two of their most memorable performances of 2008, the Mustangs posted a 29-27



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victory over Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) member San Diego State at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego on Aug. 30 and suffered a heartbreaking 36-35 overtime loss to Big 10 Conference member Wisconsin at Camp Randall Stadium in Madison, Wis., on Nov. 22. In guiding the Mustangs to a fourth consecutive year-ending Top 25 national ranking, Ellerson earned his third Great West Football Conference Coach of the Year honor and finished second in the balloting for the Eddie Robinson Award, which is presented annually to the FCS coach of the year by The Sports Network. His team committed a total of just six turnovers through its 10 regular-season games in 2008 and listed 97th in the final Sagarin Ratings, ahead of such FBS schools as Memphis, Syracuse, Iowa State, Indiana, Washington and Washington State.

Cal Poly captured three Great West Football Conference championships, claimed a pair of NCAA Division I-AA playoff berths and registered 48 wins in its last 70 games under Ellerson's direction. The Mustangs' current streak of six consecutive winning seasons marks their longest span since ripping off 13 straight winning records from 1968 to 1980. Cal Poly has captured three of its last eight games against FBS opponents, notching wins against Texas El-Paso and San Diego State (twice), while falling in overtime to Wisconsin.

Employing an aggressive defensive set and an explosive triple-option offensive attack, Ellerson compiled a 56-34 record (.622) in eight seasons at the Cal Poly helm. The Mustangs posted a 48-22 record (.686) in their final 70 games under Ellerson dating back to the 2002 campaign. In 11 years as a collegiate head coach overall, Ellerson boasts a 72-54 record (.571).

The Mustangs' vaunted triple-option offense experienced unparalleled success in 2008, establishing school records for first downs (262), first downs rushing (162), points scored (488) and touchdowns (67). Cal Poly piled up at least 49 points in six of 11 contests, topped the 50-point barrier three times and registered a season-high 69 points in a home defeat of Southern Utah. In all, Cal Poly scored in

41 of their 44 quarters of action. The Mustangs finished the season ranked first nationally in both total offense (487.45) and scoring offense (44.36), second in pass efficiency (167.72) and third in rushing offense (306.45).

Under Ellerson's direction, the Mustangs won 18 of their last 30 games on the road and 30 of their last 36 home contests. They posted six shutouts during Ellerson's eight years as head coach and did not get shut out during that same time. In all, nine Mustangs earned Sports Network All-America honors, including several players twice, and three earned Walter Camp Football Foundation All-America honors under Ellerson. Cal Poly has had a player in the East-West Shrine Game four of his last five years. Since becoming an inaugural member of the Great West Football Conference in 2004, Cal Poly had 40 players named to the all-conference first team under Ellerson's watch.

Among the standout players coached by Ellerson during his tenure at Cal Poly is "big-play" wide receiver Ramses Barden, who registered 67 catches for 1,257 yards and 18 touchdowns in 2008 en route to becoming the school's career leader in all three categories (206 receptions, 4,203 yards and 50 touchdown catches). Barden recorded at least one touchdown reception in his final 20 contests, surpassing Jerry Rice's NCAA FCS mark and Larry Fitzgerald's all-time NCAA record. Barden caught a touchdown pass in 32 of his 46 games for the Mustangs, six more than Rice's NCAA standard and five more than Ryan Yarborough's all-time NCAA mark. He was a three-time first team All-Great West Football Conference selection and was the fifth Mustang in 55 years to play in the East-West Shrine Game. Barden was selected in the third round of the National League Football Draft in April, equaling Cal Poly's highest NFL draft pick ever.

While Ellerson has built a solid reputation as an innovative offensive mind, he garnered national acclaim as a defensive trend-setter last decade at the University of Arizona when he created the pressure, gap-control "Desert Swarm" defensive scheme.

One year before its 2008 breakout showing, Cal Poly finished 7-4 in 2007, and finished in third place in the Great West Football Conference standings. Barden became the fifth Mustang in as many years to land a spot on the American Football Coaches Association All-America Team and swept every other first-team award as he caught 57 passes for 1,467 yards and 18 touchdowns.

Cal Poly ranked first nationally in total offense, fifth in rushing offense and sixth in scoring offense en route to a No. 24 final ranking by The Sports Network. Junior center Stephen Field also was an All-American and 13 Mustangs were named to one of the Great West Football Conference all-star teams. Cal Poly scored 30 or more points seven times, broke or tied 18 all-time school records.

Ellerson's 2006 Mustang squad narrowly missed its second straight NCAA FCS playoff berth. Linebacker Kyle Shotwell became the third Mustang in as many years to win the Buck Buchanan Award, which is presented to the Defensive Player of the Year in the FCS, and played in the East-West Shrine Game. James Noble became the first running back in Cal Poly history to rush for over 1,000 yards in consecutive seasons, Chris White was named to the American Football Coaches Association All-America Team and the Mustangs' defense posted three shutouts as the team finished ranked No. 16 nationally by The Sports Network. Twelve different Mustangs earned All-Great West honors and three were accorded All-America citations.

## THE ELLERSON FILE

**Year at Army:** 5th

**Career Year:** 14th

**Hometown:** Tucson, Ariz.

**Family:** wife, Dawn; sons, Sean and Andrew; daughters, Shea and Leta; granddaughter Betty; grandson, Emmett

### EDUCATION

B.A., Hawai'i, 1977

M. Ed., Hawai'i, 1978

### COACHING EXPERIENCE (Last position held is listed)

**Army, Dec. 26, 2008-Present**

*Head Coach (17-32)*

**2009 (5-7):** Most wins by an Army head coach in his first season since Tom Cahill in 1966

**2010 (7-6):** Guided Army to its first winning season and bowl berth since 1996

**2011 (3-9):** Defeated a BCS AQ conference opponent (Northwestern) for the third straight season

**2012 (2-10):** Ended six-year losing streak to Air Force, and defeated Boston College

**Cal Poly, 2001-Dec. 25, 2008**

*Head Coach (56-34)*

► Seven winning seasons

► 2005 FCS Playoffs

► 2005 Eddie Robinson Award Finalist

► 2008 FCS Playoffs (No. 8 final national ranking)

► 2008 Eddie Robinson Award Runner-up

**University of Arizona, 1997-2000**

*Defensive Coordinator*

► 1997 Insight.com Bowl Champions

► 1998 Holiday Bowl Champions

**Southern Utah University, 1996**

*Head Coach (4-7)*

**University of Arizona, 1992-1995**

*Assistant Head Coach*

*Defensive Line/Special Teams*

► 1992 John Hancock Bowl

► 1993 Fiesta Bowl Champions

► 1994 Freedom Bowl

**University of Hawai'i, 1987-1991**

*Defensive Coordinator*

**Calgary Stampeders (CFL), 1986**

*Defensive Coordinator*

**British Columbia Lions (CFL), 1984-1985**

*Defensive Line*

► 1985 Grey Cup Champions

**University of Hawai'i, 1981-1983**

*Defensive Line, Outside Linebackers, Special Teams*

**Cal State Fullerton, 1980**

*Defensive Line, Special Teams*

**University of Idaho, 1979**

*Linebackers, Special Teams*

**Arizona Western College, 1978**

*Defensive Secondary*

**University of Hawai'i, 1977**

*Defensive Line (Graduate Assistant)*

One year earlier, Cal Poly finished 9-4 and earned a berth in the 2005 FCS playoffs, reaching the quarterfinal round before falling at Texas State. The Mustangs won five of six games against Big Sky Conference schools, the most in school history, and went 6-0 at home. Defensive end Chris Gocong earned the Buck Buchanan Award and played in the East-West Shrine Game. Gocong also was named to the AFCA All-America Team, following David Richardson in 2003 and Jordan Beck in 2004.



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## ELLERSON YEAR-BY-YEAR

YEAR	SCHOOL	RECORD
1996	Southern Utah	4-7
▶ Led nation in rushing		
<b>Record at Southern Utah 4-7 (.364) 1 season</b>		
2001	Cal Poly	6-5
▶ First winning season since 1997		
2002	Cal Poly	3-8
▶ Played two FBS teams		
2003	Cal Poly	7-4
▶ Ranked 24th nationally in rush def.		
2004	Cal Poly	9-2
▶ Won Great West Conference title		
2005	Cal Poly	9-4
▶ Reached FCS quarterfinals		
2006	Cal Poly	7-4
▶ Finished ranked 16th in the nation		
2007	Cal Poly	7-4
▶ Led nation in total offense		
2008	Cal Poly	8-3
▶ Finished ranked 8th in the nation		
<b>Record at Cal Poly 56-34 (.622) 8 seasons</b>		
2009	Army	5-7
▶ Most wins in a season since 1996		
2010	Army	7-6
▶ Program's first bowl victory since 1985		
2011	Army	3-9
▶ Won three of four games at West Point		
2012	Army	2-10
▶ Defeated Air Force for first time since 2005		
<b>Record at Army 17-32 (.347) 4 seasons</b>		
<b>OVERALL RECORD 77-73 (.513) 13 seasons</b>		

## CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ 2010 Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl champion
- ▶ 2010 Liberty Mutual Coach of the Year finalist
- ▶ Three conference championships (2004, 2005, 2008)
- ▶ Two NCAA FCS playoff appearances
- ▶ Three-time Great West Conference Coach of the Year
- ▶ Coached three Buck Buchanan Award winners (FCS top defensive player)
- ▶ Mentored nine Sports Network All-Americans & three Walter Camp Football Foundation All-Americans

Beck (Atlanta Falcons, 2005) and Gocong (Philadelphia Eagles, 2006) were both chosen in the third round of the NFL Draft in successive years.

A total of 17 Mustangs were named to the 2005 All-Great West first or second team all-star units and six earned All-America honors. Ellerson, meanwhile, attracted national attention as he was chosen as a finalist for the Eddie Robinson Award.

In 2004, Cal Poly finished 9-2 overall and posted a 4-1 league record, capturing the inaugural Great West Football Conference championship. Cal Poly won its first seven games overall, closed the year with the school's highest victory total in seven years and ended ranked 15th nationally (after ranking as high as fifth during the course of the season). Beck was one of nine Mustangs to earn first or second team All-Great West laurels.

Cal Poly notched a 6-5 record during Ellerson's first year at the controls in 2001, delivering the Mustangs' first winning season since 1997. Cal Poly also dramatically improved a defense that ranked near the bottom of the FCS in 2000 (279.0 yards rushing per game). In Ellerson's first year in charge, the Mustangs finished the regular season ranked 26th



nationally in the category, yielding just 122.6 yards rushing per game. Cal Poly's pass defense was just as stingy, allowing only 213.0 yards passing per game. Using the same "Desert Swarm" system that Ellerson had installed at Arizona, Cal Poly's defense wreaked havoc on opposing offenses all season as the Mustangs finished the regular season ranked sixth nationally in turnover margin at 1.6 per game. Ellerson's squad posted a plus-13 in the turnover department as Cal Poly registered 30 takeaways, while giving the ball away just 17 times.

In 2002, Cal Poly faced a challenging schedule with a pair of Division I FBS opponents and four Big Sky Conference members. The Mustangs slipped to 3-8 for the fourth time in five years, but won three of their final six games after an 0-5 start. Four of the losses were not decided until the game's final moments.

Cal Poly began its run of six consecutive winning seasons under Ellerson in 2003, posting a 7-4 mark. The Mustangs closed the year ranked 24th nationally in rushing defense, 30th in rushing offense, 58th in total offense and 29th in total defense among the 123 Division I-AA schools. Individually, Beck was a finalist for the Buck Buchanan Award and David Richardson was named to the AFCA Division I-AA All-America Team.

Ellerson left Arizona briefly, accepting his first head coaching assignment at Southern Utah University in 1996. He returned to Arizona as the Wildcats' defensive coordinator one year later after helping Southern Utah to a 4-7 record and a national rushing title during his only year in control of the Thunderbirds. Southern Utah managed just two victories the previous season.

During his initial stay in Tucson, Ellerson served as an assistant to defensive coordinator Larry MacDuff. The Wildcats' defensive system ranked second nationally against the run in 1992 and 1993. Arizona ranked in the top 10 nationally in total defense during all four of those years. He also helped improve Arizona's special teams play and coached placekicker Steve McLaughlin to the Lou Groza Award in 1994.

He capped his second Tucson tenure in 2000 by helping the Wildcats to a No. 8 national ranking in

rushing defense (88.5 yards per game). The Wildcats also ranked second in the Pac 10 Conference in total defense (317.5) and takeaways (33). Among the players Ellerson tutored at Arizona were future NFL stalwarts Ted Bruschi and Chris McAllister. The Wildcats combined to earn five postseason bowl berths during his two stays at Arizona (spanning eight years).

Ellerson spent four years as a member of the University of Hawai'i football program during his undergraduate days, splitting time between the center and linebacker positions. He graduated from UH in 1977 and began his coaching career at his alma mater as a graduate assistant during Tomey's first season as head coach in 1977.

The Tucson, Ariz., native went on to serve one-year stints as secondary coach at Arizona Western College in 1978, linebackers and special teams coach at the University of Idaho in 1979, and defensive line and special teams mentor at Cal State Fullerton in 1980. He returned to Hawai'i for the second of his three coaching stints, tutoring the Warriors' defensive line, outside linebackers and special teams from 1981 to 1983.

## ARMY COACHING RECORDS

Coach	Years (Seasons)	W	L	T	Pct.
Earl "Red" Blaik	1941-58 (18)	121	33	10	.768
Charles Daly	1913-16, 1919-22 (8)	58	13	3	3.804
Jim Young	1983-90 (8)	51	39	1	1.566
Bob Sutton	1991-99 (9)	44	55	1	1.445
Tom Cahill	1966-73 (8)	40	39	2	2.506
Gar Davidson	1933-37 (5)	35	11	1	1.755
Biff Jones	1926-29 (4)	30	8	2	2.775
Ralph Sasse	1930-32 (3)	25	5	2	2.813
Paul Dietzel	1962-65 (4)	21	18	1	1.538
Homer Smith	1974-78 (5)	21	33	1	1.391
Herman Koehler	1897-1900 (4)	20	11	3	3.632
John McEwan	1923-25 (3)	18	5	3	3.750
<b>Rich Ellerson</b>	<b>2009-pres. (4)</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.347</b>
Dale Hall	1959-61 (3)	16	11	2	2.586
Harry Nelly	1908-10 (3)	15	5	2	2.727
William Wood	1938-40 (3)	12	13	3	3.482
Robert Boyers	1904-05 (2)	11	6	1	1.639
Ed Cavanaugh	1980-82 (3)	10	21	2	2.333



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Ellerson moved on to the professional ranks for the next three years, heading to the Canadian Football League. He served as defensive line coach for the British Columbia Lions from 1984 to 1985, helping to lead the Lions to a Grey Cup championship in 1985. He became defensive coordinator for the Calgary Stampeders in 1986 before accepting a similar role at Hawai'i during a third assignment with his alma mater.

As defensive coordinator at Hawai'i from 1987 to 1991, Ellerson was teamed with a young triple-option guru named Paul Johnson, who served as the Warriors' offensive coordinator at the time. Johnson would go on to experience highly successful head coaching terms at Georgia Southern, Navy and, most recently, Georgia Tech. Ken Niumatalolo, currently serving as head coach at Navy, lettered three times at quarterback (1987-89), and Ivin Jasper, presently the Mids' offensive coordinator, lettered three times at quarterback and slotback (1991-93) for Hawai'i during that time. Ellerson became intimately familiar with the triple-option ingenuity of Johnson during those years. He would successfully install the high-powered system at Southern Utah and Cal Poly in the years that followed.

The son of a career U.S. Army officer, the Black Knights' head football coach possesses strong ties to West Point, despite spending the majority of his life on the West Coast. While his father, Col. (Ret.) Geoffrey Ellerson, graduated from the

Military Academy in 1935, his oldest brother, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) John, lettered for three years on Army's football team and served as team captain for head coach Paul Dietzel's Black Knights in 1962. His other brother, Col. (Ret.) Geoffrey D. Ellerson Jr., also graduated from West Point in 1963, and his nephew, Geoffrey Ellerson III, is an Army Colonel who has served in Iraq.

"I will never receive, nor have I ever received a finer compliment professionally or personally than to be entrusted with the Army football program at this point in its history," Ellerson offered upon taking the position. "I grew up with Army Football. I was part of a typical Army family. When I was a kid, I was watching those guys at West Point, my father was a West Point graduate and we were living on Army posts all over the world. I just grew up thinking that West Point was the center of the universe. It's a little bit of a catharsis.

"I know that the offense that we run was the hook that got me into the middle of the coaching search. The reason the offense is so successful and the reason it's so appropriate at Army is that it carries over to every phase of the game and carries over into recruiting. We're going to find some novel solutions to problems in order to give our cadet-athletes the best possible opportunity to be successful on Saturday. We're going to recruit and develop people that are absolutely in lock-step with the mission of the Military Academy and can be successful on

Saturday. It may be a bit unique, but that's okay. All that matters is getting the scoreboard right in the end."

Lauded for his ability to transform Cal Poly into a consistent winner, Ellerson expects to apply the same approach he used with the Mustang program to getting Army's football fortunes turned in a positive direction.

"Now that I am on the inside, we are going to find a way to be successful," Ellerson stressed at his introductory press conference. "I don't know exactly what that picture is yet because I don't know enough about the team that we have. I need to get smarter about the raw material that we have to work with. I do know that I can surround myself with the right kind of coaches and we will come up with a plan, given the resources and challenges in front of us, to give ourselves a great chance to be successful from the get-go. What form that is going to take, I can't say right now. There's too much to find out. Every football player and every football team in America wants to win. We need to win. It's just a whole other order of urgency. We need to."

Ellerson, who turned 57 on New Year's Day, was born on Jan. 1, 1954, in Yokohama, Japan, while his father was stationed there. He graduated from Tucson's Salpointe High in 1972.

He and his wife, Dawn, have four children: Sean, Shea, Leta and Andrew, and two grandchildren, Betty and Emmett.

## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT RICH ELLERSON

"Rich is an excellent football coach whose football mind speaks for itself. He's an individual that wants to be at West Point. He thinks there's something very important about Army winning on the football field as it carries over into the total military. I'm very high on Rich as a person, as a coach and as an individual that will do everything in his power to have a successful program at West Point." — **Jim Young, former Army head coach (1983-90)**

"Army just hired the best football coach in the country. If there was ever a perfect fit in your situation, Rich is it. I know all the obvious family ties, but I'm really not talking about all those things. I'm talking about the fact that I have such a high regard for Rich as a football coach, but even more so as a competitor. He's just a tough 'son of a gun' that will find any way he can to compete, and I just know that he will do very, very well at West Point. I couldn't be more thrilled for him and his family.

"When we were at Arizona, Rich was part of as good a defensive staff as there was in the country at that time. We played great defense and Rich was a huge part of that. He's taken it to a whole new level by putting in the spread-option attack at Cal Poly and making that offense his own. Very seldom do you get someone with that level of expertise on both sides of the ball. He's highly intelligent, but as I say, such a great competitor. If you'd ever played him one-on-one in anything, you'd know that. I just think this is such an exciting thing, because I know that Army is in a situation where you want to be more competitive, and I think you've made the right hire. I have no question that in an appropriate length of time, West Point is going to see tremendous growth in its program."

— **Dick Tomey, former head coach at Hawai'i (1977-86), Arizona (1987-2000) and San Jose State (2005-09)**

"In terms of the X's and O's, Rich is a guy that has been involved in offense, defense and special teams. He was really the one behind the whole 'Desert Swarm' defense at the University of Arizona. It was Rich that brought that whole concept. That concept was different to college football, and it really became a national defense. His history is a lot like Jim Young's. Jim was a defensive coach at the University of Michigan, and when he became a head coach he got involved in the offensive side of the game. That's what Rich did at Cal Poly. He is a very passionate football coach who is very demanding, but very fair. His players just love him to death because they know he has their best interest at heart. He wants to make sure they are able to be positive and contributing members of society when they leave the university. He talks and teaches about growing men. It's not just about X's and O's and first downs. It's about more than that. I think a lot of that is his military background. Trying to find acts of selflessness is always something he teaches. I've known him since we were in college, and he has talked about this job ever since then. It's West Point — it's the job he has always targeted. I could tell by talking to him leading up to it, that he was very ready to take this job over."

— **Duane Akina, Asst. Head Coach/Defensive Backs Coach, University of Texas**

"I know that Rich has always had a love for the Academy and for West Point. I knew that if he ever had an opportunity at some point in his career that it would be a perfect fit. My son, Tyler, played for him at Cal Poly. There is nobody I would rather have mentoring my son, not only in football. To have Rich Ellerson watching over my son at Cal Poly was very comforting because I knew that my son would be very well taken care of and required to be a good student, a good person, to follow rules and to do things as Rich set them up. There is nobody I would rather send my son to than Rich Ellerson. When your kid goes away, whether it is three hours away or across the country, you want to know that the man in charge is going to have a real positive influence on your son, and I knew that Rich was that person." — **Steve Mariucci, former NFL head coach and current NFL Network analyst**

"I am thrilled with the news that Rich Ellerson will be the new Army football coach. Being an 'Army Brat' with a dad and two brothers as graduates, he is familiar with the atmosphere and the challenges facing the cadets each day. He is a proven winner as a head coach, winning in an environment that is not unlike what he will find at West Point. In Rich Ellerson, we have someone who is an expert on both sides of the ball and knows how to get the job done. The triple-option expertise that he owns will be particularly important. Here's a man bringing in a lot of passion for the job, someone that has always wanted to be the Army coach."

— **Rollie Stichweh, former Army quarterback (1962-64)**

"I'm excited about Rich Ellerson's selection as Army's new head football coach. He's got ties to the Military Academy, with his father and two brothers having graduated from West Point. I like the fact that Coach Ellerson has taken a program that's been down and turned it around at Cal Poly. He's a winner and that's what we need. We need to bring back the winning tradition at Army. We need to get that back. The United States Military Academy at West Point represents our country and the football team represents our country." — **Ronnie McAda, former Army quarterback (1993-96)**