

Ginny Margolies Fields '63

Ginny Margolies graduated from BSHS in 1963. She recalls riding bikes to Main Street with her friends, shopping and going to the Bay Shore Theater (now YMCA) where they watched two movies for a quarter. Summers were spent visiting friends' families on Fire Island (which is now part of her Assembly District), swimming at Benjie's Beach, and fishing in the bay.

“Some of the greatest years of my life were spent in Bay Shore High School. I feel that much of what I experienced in school has been the foundation of my success”. She was taught an exemplary work ethic, follow-through, camaraderie and teamwork, the drive to achieve, leadership skills, and individuality—by teachers who had great expectations for the students. She was a reporter for the Maroon Echo and her ninth grade teacher, (Ellen Riccobono), was someone Ginny admired inspiring her to want to become an English teacher. Unfortunately, her father tragically died right before graduation and Ginny then worked after school to help her mother support the household. Ginny worked in a doctor's office during her senior year and spent a total of 37 years in various Bay Shore private-practice physicians' offices as an Administrator.

Ginny married Wally Fields in 1971, moving to Oakdale raising two sons and two step-daughters. They have three grandchildren. While raising her family, she worked full time while volunteering in her community. She founded the Oakdale Civic Association and the Friends of Connetquot for the State Park Preserve, and worked with Great South Bay Audubon Society, serving as President of all three. She served on the Executive Board of Audubon New York and was appointed to the NYS Open Space Advisory Council. She helped form South Shore Estuary Reserve Council (a group whose purpose was to create a Comprehensive Management Plan for the Great South Bay). Ginny championed a ten year fight to protect 127 acres of wetlands in Oakdale. In 1999, the Governor announced the acquisition and preservation of the property for future generations.

In 1999, Ginny's health care career changed when she was drafted as a candidate for elected office. Elected as Suffolk County Legislator for the 9th District, after serving two terms, she was redistricted. In 2004, she ran as a NYS Assemblywoman, winning the Special Election for the 5th Assembly District. She has a reputation for “serving as a non-partisan public servant—not a politician”. Among her many accomplishments, she has brought state aid to LI schools including Bay Shore, even though it isn't in her district.

As a Suffolk County Legislator she served as Chairwoman of the Health Committee and the Parks Committee. She revised the 'Suffolk County Women's Advisory Commission' and served on the 'Women's Caucus'. She was able to continue the work she began as a private citizen, acquiring and preserving hundreds of additional acres throughout Suffolk County. She wrote and passed 'Smart Growth Plan' legislation and many bills that have improved the quality of life for her constituents. She has funded numerous deserving not-for-profits enabling them to accomplish their work in communities across the region and the state.

Ginny brought the Islip Chapter of 'Business and Professional Women' to the district. She introduced 'Women's Outdoor Weekend', where women learn outdoor skills. She brought 'Casting For Recovery' to LI, a group that provides weekend retreats to learn fly fishing for breast cancer survivors. She secures funding annually which has provided the retreats to hundreds of breast cancer survivors.

As an elected official and as a grass-roots volunteer, Ginny has been honored and received countless awards from environmental, conservation, business, women's, civics; chambers of commerce; agencies; and recreational fishing and hunting groups for her determined commitment and dedication to the community, environment, outdoor sports, and others.

Ginny is proud of her record as an elected official and believes that striving to 'make a difference' gives her the energy, passion and enthusiasm to continue accomplishing much for the residents and constituents of NYS.