

Mary Holmes Reid'54

Retirement is usually a time of relaxation and rest from the many stresses of life. However, that is not the case with Mary Holmes Reid. After working in various positions at Pilgrim Psychiatric Center for forty years, Mary Holmes Reid retired in 1995. Yet, she has not slowed down in her efforts to improve life for all people in her community and surrounding areas. Now as a community activist, Mary continues to be involved on many fronts.

In her Bay Shore hometown arena, Mary is a very active supporter of the First Baptist Church. Through her church Mary has worked with the Partners to Potential Program, set up a Political Education Committee, and a Revitalization Committee. She is also a member of the Bay Shore Interfaith Council, a member of the Bay Shore Summit Council, and she contributed a key narrative in the film “The Bay Shore Story” in 2008.

As we expand beyond our Bay Shore borders, we find Mary also active and in demand. She is a member of the NAACP, serves as a Board of Trustee of the Brentwood Public Library, sits on the President’s Council of Stony Brook University, acts as a Tax Aide Counselor for AARP, and is a member of the Suffolk County Citizen’s Police Academy Alumni Association.

At the Long Island level, we find Mary a steering committee member of the LI Association of Retired Americans, a grants committee member of the LI Fund for Women & Girls, a subcommittee member of the LI Housing Partnership, and on the Board of Directors of the Nassau Suffolk Housing Partnership, and a member of the Town of Islip Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.

New York State has also reached out to Mary as she became President of the Nassau / Suffolk chapter of the NYS Public Employees Federation of Retirees, as well as statewide Vice President of the same organization.

Mary's community involvement has been appreciated and recognized. In 2005 Mary was selected as Woman of Distinction by the Islip Town Democratic Committee for creating community connections. In 2006 she received the First Baptist Church Woman's Day Award for service to church, family and community; and was honored by the Better Schools of Brentwood and North Bay Shore for her support of educational empowerment, equity and excellence. She was also recognized by the Central Islip S.D.A. Church for services to youth of community, and by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development for leadership in promoting home ownership within the housing community. The highlight of 2006 was when Mary was selected as a NYS Woman of Distinction by Senator Owen Johnson for promoting workforce issues. In 2007 Mary was presented with the Suffolk County 100 Black Women Advocacy Award, was inducted as a Jewel of the First Baptist Church of Bay Shore, and received the Trailblazer Award from the Suffolk County Alumnae Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Her community activity was further recognized in 2008 when Mary was honored by the Long Island Coalition of the NAACP for her lifelong commitment to community service.

As stated in the article, "Under the Oak Tree: An Interview with Mary C. Reid," by her niece Aliya Holmes, of Brentwood, New York, "Mary C. Reid has been a positive role model in my life, as well as, in my community.... She has demonstrated an interest in the youth and has encouraged others to do the same. She has taken the initiative to place herself in the decision-making organizations to help her community grow in a positive direction.... A voice that is heard throughout Long Island and New York State representing and defending her people"

Mary Holmes Reid was born in Clinton, North Carolina. Her family (Mother, Mrs. Mamie Holmes and siblings) has lived in Bay Shore, New York since 1947. She and her late husband Steven Reid have three children Karl, Stefanie, and Stacey and eight grand children and one great grand child.

