

## TOWN OF HAMDEN OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Lauren Garrett  
*Mayor*

**Hamden Government Center  
2750 Dixwell Avenue  
Hamden, Connecticut 06518  
Tel: (203) 287-7100  
Fax: (203) 287-7101**

May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

Melissa Kaplan  
Hamden Board of Education Chair  
60 Putnam Ave  
Hamden, CT 06517

**RE: Petition for The Hamden High School Pool Facilities to Be Named “The Laura Luzzi Aquatics Center”**

Dear Chairwoman Kaplan:

The Greater New Haven Italian-American Heritage Committee and the Hamden Heronettes Synchronized Swim Team have requested that the pool facilities at Hamden High School be named “The Laura Luzzi Aquatics Center” in memory of Laura Luzzi.

Laura Luzzi was a world champion swimmer. She won the gold medal at the Pan American Games in 1979. Laura was a founding member of the Hamden Heronettes from 1970. In 2021, she was inducted into the United States Swimming Hall of Fame in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Laura worked for the Town of Hamden for 27 years, serving as a Recreation Supervisor. She scheduled activities at the Hamden High School Pool and hired and trained lifeguards.

Laura passed away last September after a nine-year battle with cancer. She continued to work for the Town until days before she died, sending emails from her hospital bed. I am formally requesting that the Hamden High School pool facilities be dedicated and named “The Laura Luzzi Aquatics Center.”

I have included Laura Luzzi’s swimming and public service biography, letters of support, pictures, and awards for your review.

I urge this petition be submitted to the Operations Committee of the Board for their review and recommendation to the Board of Education. Your time and consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Garrett, Mayor

CC: Hamden Board of Education; Superintendent Gary Highsmith

## Lauren Garrett

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**From:** Sean Grace  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 4, 2023 10:52 AM  
**To:** Lauren Garrett  
**Subject:** Laurie Luzzi

**From:** [marisa329@aol.com](mailto:marisa329@aol.com) <[marisa329@aol.com](mailto:marisa329@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 27, 2022 8:33 AM  
**To:** [sgrace@hamden.com](mailto:sgrace@hamden.com) <[sgrace@hamden.com](mailto:sgrace@hamden.com)>  
**Cc:** [tgriggs01@hotmail.com](mailto:tgriggs01@hotmail.com) <[tgriggs01@hotmail.com](mailto:tgriggs01@hotmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Laura Luzzi - Hamden High School Pool

Hi Sean,

Thank you for meeting with us yesterday. We would like to formally request that the Hamden High School pool be named in honor of Laura Luzzi - The Laura Luzzi Aquatics Center. Her love, commitment, and dedication to the town of Hamden and the promotion of water sports, including synchronized swimming with the Hamden Heronettes, was her passion for over 27 years.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Teena Griggs & Marisa D'Amico

Thank You,  
*Sean Grace*  
Town of Hamden  
Chief of Staff  
203-287-7100 (office)  
2750 Dixwell Ave  
Hamden CT 06518  
[Sgrace@Hamden.com](mailto:Sgrace@Hamden.com)

## LAURA FLORIO LUZZI

Laura started working Part-Time for the Town in 1974 for the Parks & Recreation Department at the Hamden High School Pool as a Certified Life Guard and Teacher of Learn to Swim Programs.

In 1994 Laura was hired Full-Time to Hamden Recreation as Recreation Supervisor overseeing Pool Programming which included managing and scheduling the Open Swim at the pool, continuing her training and required certifications, hiring and instructing new lifeguards, CPR training, etc.

While Laura continued to teach Learn to Swim, she ran Summer Camps, hired & trained thousands of kids to work Summer Camps all while developing and overseeing various other recreational programs. Laura was instrumental in organizing Camp Rainbow for children along the Autistic Spectrum. In addition, she played an active role in organizing programs and young athletes to participate in the CT Special Olympics.

Laura was one of the original Heronettes when the team was organized in 1972 and coached by Linda & Jeff Liether. Laura's accomplishments as a Heronette are as follows:

- Won every State Match form 1972 – 1978
- Won First Place Solo in Canada & Hawaii
- Placed First Place Solo in Germany, Switzerland, West Berlin
- Carrying the Stars & Stripes USA - Representing Hamden CT

In 1978 Laura was chosen for the First All American Team representing Team USA in the Pan American Games in San Juan Puerto Rico.

Laura trained in Colorado Olympic Complex for 1 month then moved to Santa Clara, California before competing in the Pan American Games. In August 1978. Laura was the First Swimmer ever from the East Coast to make the Team earning her a Gold Medal – Representing Hamden, CT.

After the Games, Laura was on the Olympic Committee Board serving Synchronized Swimming.

In February 2022 Laura, along with the Team, was inducted into the Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Laura loved working for the Town of Hamden - creating many bonds with swimmers, parents, residents – not only locally but internationally. Laura was proud to be a Heronette and Proud to represent Hamden CT to the World.

As her husband for 44 years, with my 2 sons – we are very proud of Laura's accomplishments swimming and working for the Town of Hamden. She was dedicated to the Town and helping every person she met along the way.

We would very much like to see the Hamden High School Pool named in honor of Hamden's Gold Medal Winning Heronette "Laura Florio Luzzi".

The Greater New Haven Italian-American Heritage Committee

March 17, 2023

Mayor Lauren Garrett  
2750 Dixwell Avenue  
Hamden CT 06518

Dear Mayor Garrett,

As the President of the Greater New Haven Italian American Heritage Committee I would like to recommend that the \_\_\_\_\_ pool be named in honor of our beloved Chairwoman who has recently passed, Laura Luzzi.

Being a life-long resident of Hamden, Laura graduated from Hamden High School and worked tirelessly for the Town of Hamden Parks and Recreation Department.

Naming the pool after Laura is fitting, not only because she was an excellent swimmer who received multiple national awards (the Pan American Games Gold Metal in 1979 in San Juan, Puerto Rico and inducted into the United States Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, FL), but was also a member of the Hamden Heronettes, synchronized swimming team.

Her genuine kindness, always willing to help attitude, has won the hearts of all that crossed her path. We lost a great leader last year, but would be thrilled to have her memory live on in an area of her life that brought her such joy – swimming.

Thank you for your consideration. Our committee is looking forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Theresa Vaillette  
GNHIAHC President

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SECOND FLOOR  
NEW HAVEN, CT 06510  
(203) 562-3718

DURHAM/MIDDLEFIELD/MIDDLETOWN  
(860) 344-1159

WEBSITE: [HTTP://DELAURO.HOUSE.GOV](http://DELAURO.HOUSE.GOV)



RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES  
RANKING MEMBER

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,  
EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

# UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**ROSA L. DeLAURO**

3RD DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

April 24, 2023

The Honorable Lauren Garrett  
Mayor  
Town of Hamden  
2750 Dixwell Avenue  
Hamden, CT 06518-3320

Dear Mayor,

I am writing in strong support of the request to have the Hamden High School pool be named in honor of Laura Florio Luzzi. Laura's recent passing had a huge impact on the residents of the Town of Hamden as well as surrounding communities where she served as an active member on various local committees.

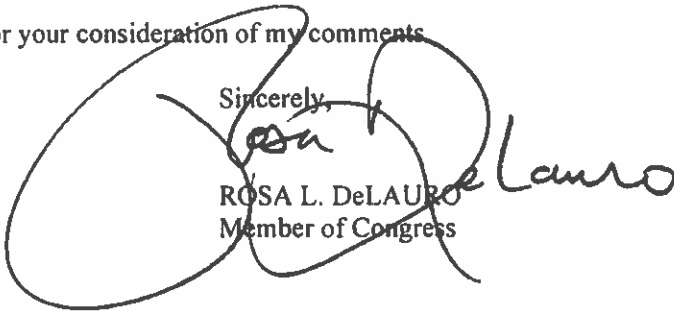
I have known the Luzzi family for many years. Throughout Laura's career at the Town of Hamden Parks and Recreation Department, she was the very definition of what a public servant should be. Laura was always branded as a strong and vocal advocate for the children and residents she served. Her enthusiasm for swimming was contagious and her devotion to teaching and training kids at the pool and summer camps became a passion. She easily made the needs of her students and their families her priority.

Swimming had always been a part of her life, but perhaps one of the most inspiring moments of her athletic career was being chosen for the First All American Team representing TEAM USA in the Pan American Games. She was recognized as the first swimmer to make the team from the East Coast and later inducted into the Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. What an outstanding accomplishment and proud moment for Hamden, Connecticut!

One of the original Heronettes, I believe it is most appropriate and deserving that the Hamden High School pool be named in her honor -- a place where Laura started working in 1974 as a certified lifeguard and teacher of swimming programs. She has served as an inspiration to many young women and men pursuing a dream in athletics and is a role model as a public servant. This pool naming dedication would be a tremendous tribute to her incredible contributions to the Town of Hamden and surrounding communities. I am honored to write in support of this effort.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments

Sincerely,

  
ROSA L. DeLAURO  
Member of Congress



# *United States Synchronized Swimming Hall of Fame Athlete 2019*

*presented to:*

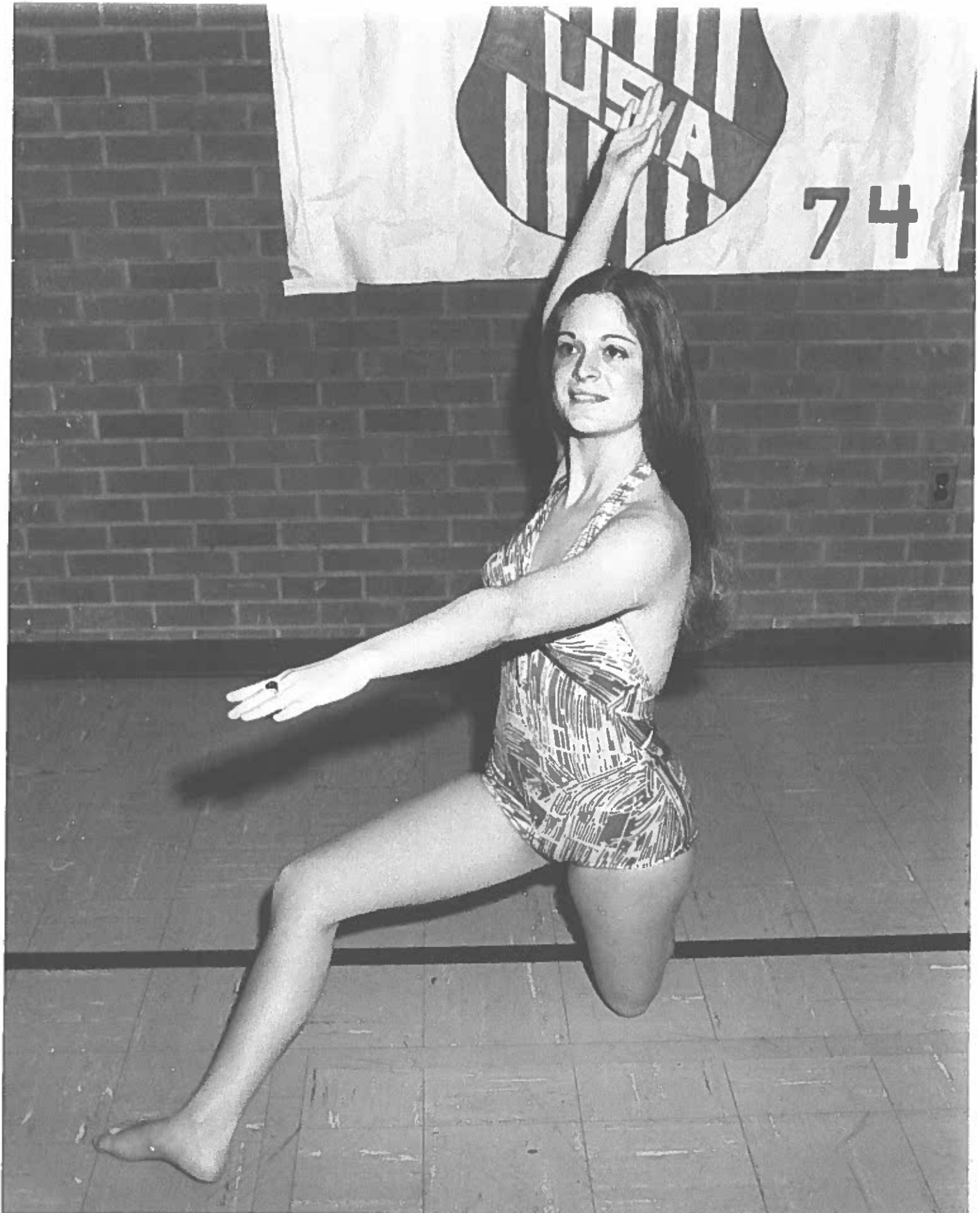
*Laura Florio*

*Member of the first USA Synchro National Team I and the  
1979 Pan American Games and World Cup champion teams of  
Michele Barone, Michelle Beaulieu, Gerri Brandly, Karen Callaghan,  
Suzanne Cameron, Tara Cameron, Laura Florio, Tracie Ruiz,  
Linda Shelley, Pamela Tryon and Marie White*

President: *Linda Loebudorf*

Vice President Marketing: *Michele Kraus*







# 1979 NATIONAL TEAM I



Michele Barone



Michelle Beaulieu



Gerri Brandy



Marie White



Pam Trvon



Linda Shelley



Karen Callaghan



Suzanne Cameron



Tara Cameron



Laura Florio



Tracie Ruiz

