



# Harbor Country Day School

*Embracing the extraordinary in every child.™*

## **2024 Spring Benefit Honoree**

### **Debbie Decker**

*Former HCDS Faculty Member & Administrator*

Debbie Decker joined Harbor Country Day School in the fall of 2002 and held a multitude of roles during her 19 years at Tulip Knoll. Most well-known for being one of Harbor's physical education teachers, Debbie also served as an Upper School Advisor, Head of Advisory, Athletic Director, Coach, Division Head, Dean, Leader of the Nissequogue/Nesconset competitions, Leader of the fall field trips, school psychologist and SEL teacher. You know you've made quite an impact on the school when at least 3 people are needed to fill your shoes when you retire!

Debbie always said the best measure of a teacher is by how they connect with their students, and by that standard, Debbie was a master teacher. Through the years, countless students came to Debbie for her advice and guidance, and entire classes of students were willing to talk out their issues with one another because of their trust in her. So popular was Debbie that anytime alumni would come back to the school, they would always make a stop to visit her because she had made such a difference in their lives.

Just as much as Debbie taught our students how to properly express their emotions and the importance of mental health, she also promoted and supported the mental health of the Harbor faculty. Aside from being a frequent speaker at faculty meetings and professional development sessions, Debbie also provided advice to colleagues on how to handle tricky situations, deal with a student who was having issues or was simply in need of an understanding listener.

Harbor and our entire community have been so very fortunate to have had Debbie on the faculty and for as many years as we did. If ever there was anyone who fulfilled the school's mission to *cherish childhood, cultivate wonder, and to inspire confident learners and leaders*, it was Debbie.