

Stacey Sennas McGowan

Community Service-Lacrosse, Tennis, Swimming

1977-1981

Stacey Sennas McGowan was a member of Nyack High School girls' inaugural lacrosse team in 1978. She received the Most Improved Player Award in 1979 and became one of its tri-captains her senior year. While at Nyack, Stacey also competed in Varsity Swimming and Varsity Tennis which she co-captained her senior year. Stacey was Class President, voted Best-All-Around in the Tower yearbook and was beloved by her classmates. Stacey loved lacrosse. She brought passion, competitiveness and good sportsmanship to the game.

During the 1980 interscholastic girls' season, Stacey scored 14 goals and led the team to a 6-6-2 overall record with a 5-4 in the "Association" (League). In 1981 she served as a captain and had 18 goals, 9 assists and led the team to an 8-3-2 overall record with a 7-2-1 Association record. This was the same year the lacrosse team made an appearance in the first Section IX Girls Lacrosse Championship Game. Unfortunately, the team lost to Suffern 10-6.

Her former lacrosse coach, Al Pesner, was quoted some years ago in the Journal News as saying "She was dynamic-just dynamic. She was something else. She did everything in sports, had great grades. Everybody liked Stacey." He credits Stacey with being instrumental in creating the highly competitive and intense level of play for the Nyack Girls Lacrosse Program.

Stacey's high school teammate Laura Cahill Graham commented on those early Nyack High School lacrosse years:

"Our uniforms consisted of knee-length wool-blend kilts and white cotton numberless button-down blouses, and of course our wooden sticks which even the goalie used! We were largely a grass-roots effort; impromptu practices were held on weekends wherever we could find space to play. The few girls, who had some lacrosse experience, spent hours working with and encouraging those of us who had none, and through sheer determination and raw athletic ability, we improved exponentially. We reveled in our sore knees and bruised forearms, played extremely loud music, worked very hard and laughed even harder. We had fallen in love with the game and were thrilled to be lacrosse players!"

Stacey graduated from Nyack High School in 1981 and went on to play lacrosse at Boston College. She was a team captain her senior year. Stacey graduated from Boston College in 1985 and launched her career in finance at Sandler O'Neill & Partners where she took the leadership skills she developed through sports at Nyack High School to the board room and became a Managing Director. She married her college sweetheart, Tom, and became the mother

of two beautiful daughters, Ryan and Casey, who now attend Boston College. Stacey was working in the South Tower of the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11, 2001. Stacey lost her life that day and the world lost an outstanding young woman. Stacey's Nyack High School "48" lacrosse jersey is retired and hangs in the high school display case.

Stacey's spirit and love of lacrosse lives on through the Stacey Sennas McGowan (SSM) Foundation and is celebrated each year at the annual SSM Memorial Games. The Games are a community event and over the decade since they started, have included play by youth girls' teams, Nyack High School alumni, junior varsity, and varsity teams. They seek to honor Stacey's belief in excellence, commitment and above all, fun: qualities fondly known as "Staciness". In Stacey's memory, the foundation's goal is to support, empower, and inspire young women in the community to do their very best. Each year, a scholarship is awarded to a female lacrosse player who embodies Stacey's best qualities. In addition, the foundation strives to support the high school's lacrosse program and other community endeavors which inspire others to "Feel the Spirit".

The SSM Games remind players and spectators alike to embrace the qualities that made Stacey who she was. These games serve as a reminder to our players that each moment they have with their families or each moment they are granted to play the game of lacrosse is precious. Boston College also holds a similar annual SSM game played against Boston University the first week in May

This is part of the impact Stacey and her legacy has on our players each year. Stacey serves as a role model in reminding the girls of the importance that hard work and dedication to something you love are what matter most. She exemplified living life to the fullest and her story and spirit will be forever sustained through the girls of Nyack Lacrosse.