

# *Port Washington Youth Activities*

## HALL OF FAME

### JOE GIL



In the early years of PYA following its inception in 1963, PYA was run by a small group of dedicated volunteers who parlayed a modest budget into very effective, basic sports programs for boys only – tackle football, basketball, baseball, and lacrosse. Joe Gil -- who grew up in Manhasset, played in that town's various youth programs and participated as a high school varsity athlete in basketball, cross country, and track and field -- arrived in 1991 at the cusp of great change in the organization.

That year, Joe registered his oldest daughter Danielle, then age 6, for the inaugural season of PYA girls basketball. Joe joined too, first as an assistant coach, then as a head coach for 2 years, and then served as the sport's commissioner for 7 years. In all, Joe spent 14 years mentoring the program, which broke ground as PYA's first organized sport for girls. That program grew from 20 girls that first season to 180 players within 6 years. This past year nearly 300 girls participated in the basketball program.

That type of progression was noted by the PYA Board of Directors, which Joe joined in 1993. A father of 6, Joe has followed his children up the ladder of PYA's burgeoning programs. In addition to his roles with the girls basketball program, Joe has coached boys basketball, flag and tackle football, and baseball for countless seasons. Joe also was commissioner of the boys basketball program for 8 years, commissioner of the flag football program for 2 years, and commissioner of baseball for 6 years. Joe has shown similar dedication to the St. Peter's CYO basketball program, coaching both boys and girls from 1994 to this day. These CYO teams won two Long Island championships in the late 1990's, and were also cited for sportsmanship awards 3 times in that era. Joe even managed to find time to coach his children's soccer teams.

As the PYA girls' programs continued their exponential growth, Joe was there assisting with softball and lacrosse. This type of dedication was noted by the Board, which elevated Joe to the position of Treasurer in 1995, a position he still holds today. This responsibility has provided Joe with his greatest sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. As a Certified Public Accountant with a local practice, Joe has helped impose and modernize the appropriate financial controls for an organization the size of PYA. These controls were instrumental in allowing PYA to procure the private and public government funding for the "Field of Dreams" Lions Field project. From its modest budget of the early 1990's, PYA now has \$1.4 million in assets including an endowment fund, and an annual operating budget of \$800,000. The 4 boys' sports PYA started with in 1963 in turn have morphed to a total of 16 for boys and girls, serving over 3,000 children annually.

Amazingly enough, Joe has found time to give even more of his time to PYA as a member of the Finance, Field, and Dinner Dance (he was the Master of Ceremonies for 11 years) committees.

In addition to his daughter Danielle, almost all of Joe's children -- Joseph, Thomas, Suzanne, and Sean, have participated in PYA sports, or are currently active. Once his youngest child Sophia steadies herself with her first steps, you can bet that in a short time, Joe and his wife Pamela will have her on the fields and courts of PYA too.