

BALDWIN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION

HISTORIANS REPORT

June 2023 – May 2024

In June 2023 the Baldwin Foundation for Education began its 32nd year. For over three decades the organization has continued to maintain a strong bond between the Baldwin alumni and the school district, and also help support the students through grants and scholarships.

The presiding officers for this fiscal year remained unchanged with Robert B.A. Schoen (class of '65) as President; Susan Fixler Aksionoff (class of '68), Vice President; Roberta Baylis Angelillo (class of '56), Treasurer; Marion O'Keefe Dickey (class of '52), Corresponding Secretary; Ina Fletcher, Recording Secretary; and Sharon Moon Knoernschild (class of '74), Historian. Besides the Officers and Trustees, we want to acknowledge William Cooper (class of '66), Counsel for the BFE; Mary Jo O'Hagan, representative from the Baldwin Board of Education; and Dr. James Robinson, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Administrative Services for the Baldwin School District.

The BFE Board of Trustees meetings are held just about each month at the Baldwin Public Library on a Monday evening. Those who live out of the area can still participate through a Zoom link. We welcome Kevin McGee (class of '73) and Molly Schoen Quigley (class of '96) to the BFE Board and look forward to their future participation.

On a sad note, it was announced of the passing of two long-time members of the BFE: William (Bill) Fay (class of '44) and Barbara Duffy Fullerton (class of '64). Bill and his wife Miriam were on the BFE Board since its inception, were originators and keepers of the BFE's data base, and served on so many committees and involved with so many activities it would be hard to list all their contributions. Barbara had also served on the Board for so many years and happily served on numerous committees. She was also instrumental in arranging her class reunions. Both Bill and Barbara will be fondly remembered for their character, talents, many achievements, and exemplary service to the organization.

It is noteworthy to mention several alumni who have made headlines in the news: locally, nationally, and even out of this world.

Steve Carroll (class of '78) played football during his high school years. In 1982 he returned to Baldwin as the assistant football coach, and then in 1987 he became head coach. After an illustrious 33 years as head coach, he retired in 2020. Steve authored a book entitled "100 Years of Baldwin Football." The book features the long history of Baldwin football from 1921 to 2021. It includes stories along with a compilation of photographs of past games, coaches, and players. Steve attended the BFE's board meeting in December to make a presentation on his book. He is now working on another book highlighting Nassau County football.

Mandy Krauthamer Cohen is a Baldwin graduate from the class of 1996. In fact, as a senior she was the recipient of one of the BFE's scholarships. She attended prestigious universities and earned a medical degree and a master's in public health. Known for her leadership and developing "innovative and nationally recognized programs," she was considered one of the nation's top physicians and health leaders. In June 2023 President Joe Biden appointed Dr. Mandy Cohen as the new director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Jasmin Moghbelli (class of 2001) served with the U.S. Marine Corp, received a master's in aerospace engineering, and then began training to be an astronaut with NASA. She was selected to be the mission commander of the SpaceX Crew-7 and flight engineer on-board the International Space Station. Jasmin was able to address the Baldwin students live from the ISS, and then when visiting Baldwin she stopped by several schools to personally speak to and interact with them. Jasmin has been a great inspiration to the students and has encouraged them to follow their dreams.

The Baldwin School District should be proud of the educational and athletic foundations these alumni received, and success they achieved.

One of the most important events for the organization is the Alumni Beach Party. In 2023 it was held Saturday, September 7th, at Lido Beach Town Park, better known as "The Mushrooms." It was a nice day and nearly 170 alums attended.

A dedication for Peggy Hillsgrove Spirakis (class of '50) took place the morning of the beach party. It was held by the entrance to Baldwin High School. The program consisted of a number of speakers, a presentation of a plaque with the inscription "In Memory of Peggy Spirakis," and a performance by the high school band. Refreshments followed the event. The BFE donated a large rock for the plaque to be affixed to, which will then be placed on the high school grounds.

In January 2024 the BFE Board Members approved three Mini-Grants totaling \$1,480.00: \$500.00 to Superintendent Shari Camhi for “In Recognition of Excellence”; \$500.00 to Psychologists at several elementary schools for “The Wellness Initiative”; and \$480.00 to the Science Department (grades 6-12) for “National Science Teachers Association Case Studies for High School Science.” Due to a glitch in getting out the Maxi-Grant letter to staff and teachers throughout the district, Maxi-Grants were not approved in this fiscal year, but will be addressed again in the new fiscal year. To date, the BFE has awarded over \$272,000.00 towards grants and programs.

Twelve scholarships were presented to Seniors in June 2023: one at the Sports Award Ceremony and eleven at the Senior Awards Night. The total amount of scholarships presented to well-deserving students was \$19,500.00. Since the BFE’s inception, the organization has presented over \$225,000.00 in scholarships.

The Nexus newsletter is printed twice a year. Approximately 10,700 copies of the summer issue were mailed or digitally emailed. After taking over as sole Editor in 2014, Marylou Hillsgrove Taylor (class of ’56) announced her retirement as Editor. Completing 21 issues of the Nexus, the Winter 2024 publication was her last. She said how much she enjoyed working on every issue, but felt it was time to step down and pass on the baton. From the bottom of our hearts we thank you and are so grateful for the commendable job you have done all these years. In moving forward, the new Nexus Editor will be Molly Schoen Quigley. We thank Molly for taking on this responsibility and will be supportive in her new role.

Tim McDermott (class of ’75) does a tremendous job as the Data Base Administrator and also the BFE Webmaster. Besides keeping the data base up-to-date, Tim also digitally emails copies of the Nexus to those who prefer email delivery. He emailed copies to over 1,400 alums which has helped to keep printing costs down. Tim is continuously updating the BFE Website and has spent countless hours adding class photos and pictures from different events. Upon Tim’s recommendation, a new rapid scanner was purchased. The new scanner will make the process of uploading information go much faster, and will keep data more organized and easier to find. He has been busy scanning complete yearbooks, booklets, programs, folders, and paperwork. The Website has so much content and really looks great. We thank you Tim for all your hard work and dedication.

Roberta (Bobbi) Angelillo has the challenging job of taking care of all the finances. At each month's meeting Bobbi prepares a printed financial statement and also gives an oral report. At the beginning of this fiscal year she noted that our revenue was down, but as the months progressed, the organization ended up in the black. The financial books were audited and found to be all in order. Great job Bobbi!

The BFE closed its 32nd year on May 31st, 2024. The Treasurer's Report showed the sum of \$294,758.08 in restricted funds, and a total balance from all the bank accounts of \$46,441.88. A new proposed budget was presented and approved for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

In March 2024 a Nominating Committee was formed. At subsequent meetings a Slate of Officers was presented. All the current officers consented to serve again in their same position. At the May meeting the Slate was approved and all officers were re-elected. Installation will take place at the June 2024 meeting.

Mary Jo O'Hagan reported that the mural in the high school commons is in poor condition as the wall behind the mural is in terrible shape. The Baldwin School District and School Board will be adding a special bond vote when the school budget is presented. A portion of the funds included in the bond will go towards repairing the wall and restoring the mural. We are pleased to report that the bond issue was approved and the mural will be preserved.

After a discussion, Board Members decided not to participate in the Baldwin Grand Festival in 2024 nor in the future. It has been difficult to get volunteers to staff the table and there has not been any benefit from participating.

In this day and age of cyber attacks and data breaches, the BFE made a decision to purchase Cyber Insurance to protect all of the organization's accounts.

As we look towards the future, we will continue to work together and remain committed in helping to sustain Baldwin's tradition of excellence in education.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Moon Knoernschild
BFE Historian