

M'Lena Gandolfi



Title IX did not come into play until 1972, but M'Lena was still able to make an impact in sports during her high school career and while the teams she played for did not qualify for tournament play, she helped pave the way for future female athletes to succeed in their respective sports.

M'Lena was a three-sport athlete while at Stoneham High School, garnering 10 varsity letters during her playing days. She was a four-year varsity player in softball, three years in field hockey and three years in basketball, where she played guard. She was well-respected by her coaches and fellow athletes and as a senior was named Captain of the Field Hockey team. The culmination of her sports career at Stoneham High was capped off when she was awarded the prestigious Blanket Award, which at the time was called the Scholar Athlete Award.

Upon her completion at Stoneham High School, MarieElena attended and was a graduate of UMass Amherst.

After college, MarieElena taught for 40 years, the last 26 at Manchester Essex Regional High School in Manchester. As the Field Hockey Coach at MERHS, her teams were Cape Ann League Champs three times, Division 2 North State Semi-Finalists, Division 2 North State Finalists, Division 2 North State Champs and MA State Finalists. She was voted Cape Ann League Coach of the Year four times, Salem News Coach of the Year three times and Awarded Boston Globe Coach of the year twice. M'Lena was also inducted into the Northeast Women's Hall of Fame in part for her contribution of women in sports.

She is enjoying retirement and spending her time with her first grandchild. She also volunteers at her local library.