



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elaine Phillips

Senator Phillips Honors Childhood Cancer Fundraising Efforts In Memory Of Floral Park Resident

ELAINE PHILLIPS June 14, 2018



Senator Elaine Phillips announced today that the New York State Senate passed her resolution commemorating the 9th Annual St. Baldrick's Shave Off and the 4th Annual Ladies Night in honor of Aiden Binkley, of Floral Park, who passed away on December 30, 2010 at the age of 11 after losing his courageous battle against cancer.

"Aiden Binkley was truly a special young man who, faced with a life-threatening disease, could still light up a room or put a smile on anyone's face," Senator Phillips said. "Believing he

got cancer so he could help to find a cure, Aiden's illness was no barrier to his will to help others and search for an end to childhood cancer. With a tremendous impact on all he encountered, his work – even at the age of 11 – is still being carried out today by thousands touched by his story. His legacy will not only continue to inspire those dedicated to finding a cure for childhood cancer, but will help inspire children diagnosed with similar illnesses to keep fighting.”

Senator Phillips spoke on the resolution at the State Capitol with Aiden's family present, including Aiden's parents, Michael and Lisa Binkley; Judy Binkley, Aiden's grandmother; Terry and Ralph Binkley Paterno, Aiden's Uncle and Aunt who is the Chairperson of the St. Baldrick's Ladies Night; their son, Jack; and Bob GaNun, the volunteer organizer of St. Baldrick's Shave Off event.

“We are so thankful to be recognized by the New York Senate,” Lisa Binkley, Aiden's mom, said. “Having St Baldrick's Foundation and our Son, Aiden, honored in this way was so special and meaningful. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Senator Elaine Phillips for recognizing the Floral Park community on all its efforts to fund pediatric cancer research. We are all hopeful a cure will be found in our lifetime.”

“The St. Baldrick's Foundation is in awe of the state of New York, the Floral Park community and Aiden's family for their dedication to raising critical funds and awareness for childhood cancer research,” said Kathleen Ruddy, CEO of the St. Baldrick's Foundation. “I was honored to meet Aiden's family and volunteer leads at this year's Floral Park event and fundraiser and to witness first-hand how the community continues to be inspired by Aiden. Funds raised through their efforts continue to support research to find cures and better treatments so all kids can live long and healthy lives.”

In July 2008, Aiden was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer called Rhabdomyosarcoma. During his illness, the Binkley family learned of the St. Baldrick's Foundation, the largest private funder of childhood cancer research grants. St. Baldrick's is known for their signature head-shaving events where people shave their heads and raise money for lifesaving childhood cancer research. In 2009, Aiden participated in his first St. Baldrick's "Shave Off" event in Floral Park organized by Bob GaNun. At the event, participants shaved their heads in unity with children who have lost their own hair during cancer treatment.

The 9th annual Shave Off event held in Floral Park on April 28, 2018, attracted more than 200 people and raised \$400,000. This year's St. Baldrick's Ladies Night, which was hosted by the Wednesday Mother's Club in New Hyde Park, raised \$146,000.

Since the first shave event in 2009, Floral Park events have raised over \$2 million, making Floral Park the sixth top fundraiser in the world for the St. Baldrick's Foundation.

"In the memory of Aiden Binkley, the St. Baldrick's Foundation and community members have worked selflessly to continue searching for a cure for childhood cancer – and I applaud them for this," Senator Phillips said. "With more children losing their life from cancer yearly than any other disease, organizations like St. Baldrick's are paramount to finding a cure, and we must continue raising funds to do this potentially lifesaving research."

Shortly after Aiden passed away, his brothers Jake and Devin formed "Aiden's Army" St. Baldrick's team to inspire kids to shave their heads for the St. Baldrick's Foundation. Aiden's Army is unique because to 90% of those who get their heads shaved are children.

In 2014, Ladies Night, a St. Baldrick's Do What Your Want fundraiser, was formed when the Wednesday Mother's Club teamed up with Aiden's Army, and concurrently ran a cupcake sale, raising \$1,000 in a few short hours. Four years later, the cupcake sales evolved into an annual St. Baldrick's Ladies Night Dinner, which has raised more than \$200,000

cumulatively.