

TEAMFANSHOP
GET YOUR WOLVERINES GEAR HERE

CLICK HERE

Other editions: Mobile | News Feeds

Find it: Jobs | Cars | Real Estate | Apartments | Classifieds

HOMETOWNlife.com

SEARCH ALL

All Local News Businesses Coupons More »

go

SPONSORED BY: apartments.com

HOME NEWS WEATHER VOICES & VIEWS OBITUARIES COMMUNITY LIFE SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT CLASSIFIEDS CUSTOMER SERVICE

Observer Communities Eccentric Communities Mirror Communities Hometown Weeklies

Comment, blog & share photos
Log in | Become a member | Search people

POWERED BY YOU AND THE Observer & Eccentric mirror Hometown

From Rochester Hills to Capitol Hill: Congressman-elect Gary Peters launched political career here

BY ANNETTE KINGSBURY • ECCENTRIC STAFF WRITER • NOVEMBER 9, 2008

Post a Comment Recommend Print this page E-mail this article Share ?

Though he upset an incumbent in a predominantly Republican district, Congressman-elect Gary Peters has a lot of fans from Rochester Hills, where he grew up and where his parents, Herb and Madeleine, still live.

Peters, who graduated from Rochester High School in 1976, began his political career on the Rochester Hills City Council, where he was appointed to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Betty Adamo in 1991. He served until 1993, when he chose not to run for a full term.

Darlene Janulis, a supporter back then, was at Peters' headquarters Tuesday night to celebrate the victory.

"He did a wonderful job for us" on city council, she said. However, Janulis had no inkling then that he would run for higher office.

"I had hoped that he would. He really had a lot of talent," she said.

"Gary reached across the aisle to a lot of people, he really did. ... I think he appealed to a lot of people."

Barnett Jones, who served on the Hills council alongside Peters, remembers thinking that his colleague was destined for bigger things.

"You could tell right then that Gary used common sense," Jones said. "We both kind of worked the same. We would ... go out and talk to the people. ... And I believe he'll do the same thing when he goes to Washington."

Jones, a Republican who is now Ann Arbor's police chief, said Peters put listening ahead of ideology.

"He was there to represent the will of the people. ... His father was very, very much the same," he said. "Gary Peters, the man I worked with and discussed issues with, ... he represented the city of Rochester Hills and the constituency there. And he'll do the same thing in Washington."

FAMILY FOCUS

After leaving city council, Peters, 49, moved to Bloomfield Township and went on to serve two terms in the Michigan Senate, from 1995-2002. After an unsuccessful bid for attorney general in 2002, he was appointed state lottery commissioner in 2003.

When he claimed victory Tuesday shortly before midnight, his entire family was with him: wife Colleen Ochoa; children Gary Jr., 22, Madeleine, 13, and Alana, 11. Sisters and in-laws also joined him on stage at the Troy Hilton.

"When you run for office it is a whole family event. They went through an awful lot," Peters said.



Gary Peters smiles at his parents, Madeleine and Herb Peters of Rochester Hills, after claiming victory Tuesday night in the 9th District Congressional race. #8220;We #8217;re just kind of on cloud nine, #8221; Herb Peters said. (Lawrence McKee | Staff Photographer)

RELATED NEWS FROM THE WEB

- US Politics
- Alma College
- US News
- Barack Obama

Powered by Topix.net

ADVERTISEMENT

the fan shop
Your source for team merchandise



CLICK HERE TO SHOP

ADVERTISEMENT

tigers gear



CLICK HERE TO SHOP

ADVERTISEMENT

spartans gear



CLICK HERE TO SHOP

ADS BY PULSE 360 [Get Listed Here](#)

Refinance Rates at 5.5% FIXED!
\$160,000 mortgage for \$633/mo. No SSN reqd. Get 4 FREE quotes now!
www.lendgo.com

How I Lost 20 lbs in 2 Weeks - No Diets or Exercise. Read my true story on how I did it. As Seen on CNN & Fox!
NancysDiet.com

Globe Life Insurance
\$1 Buys \$50,000 Life Insurance. No Medical Exam, No Waiting Period
InsuranceFor1Dollar.com

Family, he added, "has always been what this campaign has been about ... Families who are worried about whether they are going to have a job, worried about whether they are going to have health care. ... That is why I'm so proud to be ... part of a bigger movement across America that elected Barack Obama."

Peters called his campaign "a real grass-roots effort."

"We knocked on almost 400,000 doors, we made over 300,000 phone calls, over 5,700 individuals contributed to our campaign," he said.

He told cheering supporters that his goals include reinvesting in the economy, creating jobs, "and get Michigan moving forward again."

"I think it's going to be an incredibly exciting time in American history," he said.

BROAD BACKGROUND

PETERS STARTED HIS CAREER IN THE FINANCE FIELD. AFTER GRADUATING FROM ALMA COLLEGE IN 1980, HE EARNED A MASTER'S DEGREE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT IN 1984. HE WORKED AT MERRILL LYNCH, WHERE HE WAS A VICE PRESIDENT.

He also earned a law degree at Wayne State University. After Sept. 11, 2001, he enlisted in the Navy Reserve and spent some time in the Persian Gulf. He has also taught at Wayne State University, Oakland University and Central Michigan University.

Along the way he's received the Champion of Justice Award from the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association, Public Servant of the Year from the Michigan Fraternal Order of Police, Environmentalist of the Year from the Michigan Sierra Club, and the Outstanding Legislator Award from the Michigan Association of School Psychologists.

Peters entered the race for Congress in August 2007, "when everybody thought that was a very tall mountain to climb," he said.

"We're just kind of on cloud nine," his father said Tuesday night. "We've watched Gary grow. ... We didn't know Congress was in the offing. ... Whatever he chose to do, we were there right behind him." Herb Peters said he can't wait to see his son on the House floor.

"You bet. I wouldn't miss that for anything."

'GLAD HE WON'

Scot Beaton, who also served with Peters on Rochester Hills City Council, remembers his former colleague as pragmatic and able to cut to the chase. He recalled an incident where a businessman came before council asking for a zoning variance to put a driving range on landfill property in the Hamlin-Adams area.

"This discussion went on and on," Beaton said. "I looked at Gary and Gary looked at me and said. 'This is a landfill site; nothing is ever going to happen there.' ...

"He really has this wonderful ability to see through all the nonsense and red tape ... and say, 'Let's make this happen.'"

"I'm really glad he won; I'm so thrilled," Beaton said. "We need change up there in Washington. He's going to be very open to everybody's opinion. He won't shut anybody out."

akingsbury@hometownlife.com (248) 901-2569

In Your Voice

[READ REACTIONS TO THIS STORY](#)

POWERED BY 

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

1000 characters left

TEAMFANSHOP
GET YOUR WOLVERINES GEAR HERE



CLICK HERE



Partners: Jobs: CareerBuilder.com Cars: Cars.com Apartments: Apartments.com Shopping: ShopLocal.com

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Weather](#) | [Voices & Views](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [Community Life](#) | [Sports](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Customer Service](#) | [Site Map](#)

[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Copyright ©2008 the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Mirror Newspapers and Hometown Weeklies
Use of this site signifies your agreement to the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, updated March 2007.