



Volunteer of the Years 2022 & 2023



I am pleased to recognize Amy Breitenborn as Volunteer of the Years, 2022 and 2023. Amy has demonstrated amazing energy and commitment to SPIRIT NYS. As a founding board member, she has been actively involved in SPIRIT NYS from its initiation.

Amy readily undertook daunting tasks to launch SPIRIT NYS. Very self-directed, she ideated the Festival approach in Rochester, identified and procured materials needed for success, familiarized herself with various festival options and schedules, applied for SPIRIT NYS participation with festival organizers, organized volunteers to staff the booths, created engaging activities, brochures, and gift items, and even ventured out early in the mornings to set up and, at the end, dismantle the booths. That alone was a massive effort that stimulated significant interest in SPIRIT but she also established a record keeping system that used emails to maintain ongoing communications with SPIRIT NYS Supporters and enhance our outreach capabilities.

Amy also identified various social groups including Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Italian American Club, Universalist Church, and others to set up presentations where she could share the SPIRIT NYS story and solicit donations. She contacted restaurants, bowling emporia and other retail outlets to generate contributions and set up fundraising events. Amy single handedly developed the social media channels to further spread our reach, not to mention her work in Roc the Day, grant writing support, working with University of Rochester and RIT college students to help us in our marketing and outreach efforts. When Karen Loftus created an idea for backpacks for our students, a phenomenally well-received effort, Amy took that idea and actively generated donations of backpacks, goods, and materials, relieving SPIRIT NYS of the need to fund it.

Amy created a Rochester Advisory Board which runs Rochester SPIRIT NYS events and activities. She identified and recruited most of the members, schedules and runs the meetings and helps them carry out their ideas for community involvement communications. She has been active in expanding the Board's outreach to additional schools in the Rochester area.

Amy creates and publishes a monthly newsletter to keep the public apprised of SPIRIT NYS' continuing efforts and successes. The list could go on and on. I cannot think of an aspect of SPIRIT NYS activities where she has not made a significant impact, all while raising two children. She has high energy and a strong sense of commitment, combined with a great deal of empathy for homeless youth.

I am always reluctant to highly praise one individual, when so many have contributed their time, energy and funds to make SPIRIT NYS successful through the goodness of their hearts and commitment to charity, but I do believe Amy deserves special recognition for all she has done. I was proud to recommend her for this dual honor and the Board of Directors unanimously approved this distinction. Amy, we salute you as our Volunteer of the Year for 2022 and 2023. Thank you for everything and for your future contributions.

Sincerely,

John Thompson, SPIRIT NYS co-founder and chairman of the board