

## **Elizabeth Harrel, Woman of the Year 2010**



Betty Harrel is an educator, long-time community volunteer and member of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). For a number of years, she has made a commitment to Children's Literacy in Dutchess County. Her work with AAUW's Leading to Reading program is legendary. She has developed strong relationships with libraries, grants-makers and donors to bring in approximately 5,400 books for Dutchess County's children. Her goals for Children's Literacy are driven by a simple philosophy: All children should have access to books. Reading at an early age helps children build self - esteem, a thirst for knowledge and an active, growing mind.

She is active with The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie. Betty has served as Corresponding Secretary, Nominating Committee Chair, AdHoc History Committee member, Board of Managers' member and is now the Governance Committee Chair-elect. At Locust Grove, she was a development volunteer and member of the Friends' Board. At the Poughkeepsie United Methodist Church, she served on the Finance Committee and the Staff Parish Relations Committee. She also volunteers with Second Hand Rose, and the United Way of Dutchess County, where she recently was recognized with the Spirit of Dutchess Award.

In Poughkeepsie Branch of AAUW, Betty has held numerous positions including President and currently is the Community Chair. She is a past President of AAUW-NYS. Her strong skills in leadership training and grant writing have been a tremendous asset to all of AAUW.

Betty was Principal of Oak Grove Elementary School, where she facilitated development of yearly action plans, implemented Oak Grove Village, the school-to-work project, and supervised a staff of 50. She was a Coordinator for Special Education where she expanded the continuum of special education services. Other positions of note that she has held include Assistant Principal, Gayhead Elementary School, Assistant Coordinator, Special Education and School Psychologist.

She has a CAS from SUNY New Paltz, a Master's from Marist College and a BS from the University of Iowa.