

Judith A. Lombardi, Woman of the Year 2012



Judy Lombardi is the quintessential embodiment of the woman who reflects the AAUW mission statement. Her personal and professional life reflects her commitment to providing equity to women and girls, positive societal change and lifelong education.

Judy received her BA in Psychology from the University of Connecticut and joined the staff at the Grace Smith House as a child counselor in 1987. During her two year tenure, Mary Lou Heissenbuttel served as a mentor and role model. Judy realized she needed additional education and training to achieve her goal of effectively assisting women, their children and families to leave dangerous/debilitating situations and subsequently realize their potential.

While earning her Masters of Social Work at SUNY Albany, Judy worked as a graduate assistant/resident director in addition to her social work intern positions. She was responsible for the selection, training and supervision of the student staff, on call duty including crisis intervention, and managing and supervising the Quad Office with associated administrative responsibilities.

Upon graduation in 1991 from SUNY Albany, Judy returned to Dutchess County to work at the Astor Day Treatment Program as a clinical social worker. She provided play therapy and individual and family therapy to emotionally disturbed children and their families as well as performing administrative duties.

Concurrent with her work at Astor (1991-1994) and her return to Grace Smith House (1994), Judy worked as a senior group facilitator in the Alternatives to Family Violence at Family Services of the Mid-Hudson Valley (1991-1997). She co-facilitated psycho-educational groups for men who batter, performed administrative tasks and trained facilitators. Judy was the Shelter Director/volunteer coordinator with Grace Smith House for 10 years.

In August 2004, Judy was appointed the Executive Director of Grace Smith House, serving in that position until June 2010. As Executive Director, she provided leadership and supervision for a staff of 35 located at three sites with four programs ensuring a high quality of services for victims of domestic violence. She very effectively promoted the visibility of the Grace Smith House and the issue of domestic violence. Currently, she is the Director of Outreach and Support Services at Grace Smith House.

Judy has devoted the bulk of her professional work to the issue of domestic violence with a particular focus on community work and public policy. Judy is also on the Board of Directors of the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She has testified before

Assemblywoman Deborah Glick and the Committee on Social Services regarding welfare reform and its impact on families experiencing domestic violence.

Judy strongly believes that a large part of women's advancement includes increasing activity in the political realm and serving as candidates and office holders. To further this cause she served as Dutchess County Co-chair of Hillary Clinton's historic 2000 race for the Senate in NY and is a Founding Board Member of the Dutchess Democratic Women's Caucus.

Other volunteer work has included serving as the Chair of the Dutchess County Legislature Citizen's Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence (2000-2004), Mills Mansion Volunteer Docent (1997-1999), and the Planning Committee for the 1996 Violence Against Women Conference. Judy served as a volunteer for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Dutchess County for over four years and has maintained regular contact with her little sister for over twenty years.

In 2011-12, Judy has helped develop the Poughkeepsie AAUW Court Watch Monitors program and provided much of the training. The project, part of the Community Outreach "Stand Up to Violence" highlights the AAUW beliefs that the prevention of violence toward women and children and the fair and thoughtful treatment of victims within the court systems are integral to our mission to promote gender equity.

In 2011, Judy was very proud to receive the Woman of Grace Award from Grace Smith House.

Judy's accomplishments, interests, efforts and choices exemplify AAUW's values. She is an extremely worthwhile recipient of any honor concerning advocacy for women's issues. She does it 24/7.