

## 2013 SISTER MARY VERA AWARD NOMINATION

### SUSAN K. GRIFFITH

In 1993, Susan Griffith began her career with The Frank J. Hiscock Legal Aid Society. She was hired 20 years ago to fill a newly created position as the first Supervising Attorney in the Civil Unit. In 1998 HLA became the first poverty law agency in NYS to provide specific legal assistance for victims of Domestic Violence.

Since 2005, Susan has been attached to the Family Court unit first as a collaborating supervisor and now as the sole Supervising Attorney. She provides on-going representation of individuals as well as training and support for staff and the community. Susan is always gracious and available to Vera House advocates as she nurtures our professional and personal understanding of the function and limitations of the Family Court system. She is a "first responder" when we are confounded by a legal quandary and provides specialized training to Vera House staff and volunteers to expand our knowledge and skills.

Sr. Mary Vera was a stalwart advocate for those affected by Domestic Violence- she exemplified the quiet, capable spirit that has provided a legacy of hope and healing in the Agency and in the community. Susan is a large part of that continuing legacy. Her dedication to social issues and the needs of the oppressed has led to her tenure on the Board of the local NYCLU as well as serving as a trainer for the Onondaga County Bar Association - Pro Se Divorce Clinic. The on-going collaboration between Vera House and HLA is a strong one due in large part to Susan's presence.

# 2013 VERA HOUSE SPECIAL APPRECIATION AWARD NOMINATIONS

## **ANNE BURLINGHAM**

Anne has worked for Vera House for 24 years providing services to victims of domestic and sexual violence and facilitating classes for men who have been abusive. She has also been active in legislative and policy changes for nearly 30 years at the state level advocating for better laws for victims of violence.

## **LINDSAY CARUSO**

Lindsay connected with us back in 2010 sharing that she would like to organize a donation drive to support Vera House. Since then, this donation drive has grown into an annual diaper drive with Lindsay collecting over 24,000 diapers along with other baby items (wipes, pacifiers, bottles, and sippy cups). Lindsay coordinates the entire event, reaching out to friends, family and colleagues to help her reach her goal; which she surpasses each and every year.

## **LAYNE CLARK**

Layne is Project Superintendent for Hueber-Breuer Construction Company. Layne has supervised as well as physically worked at shelter over-seeing the kitchen and bathroom renovations. Layne voluntarily helped the Vera House staff with various tasks outside of his construction work. He assisted with moving a resident to her new apartment and helped with repairs at the north shelter.

## **SALT CITY RIDERS**

Salt CityRiders is a Syracuse based motorcycle riding club in CNY with members from diverse professional backgrounds. The club supports various charities. Each February, the SCR host a Valentine Toy Party to benefit Vera House's shelter and the MDA. Vera House has been honored to be a recipient of the SCR's overwhelming generosity for over 5 years. The group collects toys, clothes and other necessities that are needed by residents living in the shelter and those starting over.

## **GLEN STONE**

Glen is an Onondaga County Probation Office - DV unit with over 20 years of experience. Glen has been a strong supporter and advocate of the Alternatives to Domestic Violence Program and has been one of the top referral sources. This year Glen will be retiring. His years of dedication, knowledge, and experience are unparalleled in probation.

## **ERIC AND ANTHONY MCGRUFF**

Eric and Anthony are twin brothers in their sophomore year at Syracuse University. The McGriffs got involved with Vera House early in their high school years as active participants in CNS' White Ribbon Campaign and volunteering their time to play cello and violin at several Vera House events. They continue to volunteer their time playing beautifully at Vera House events and are now leaders in violence prevention work at Syracuse University. Eric and Anthony are MVP peer facilitators and active in A Men's Issue, Sex Esteem, a campus Twelve Men Model and the Take Back the Night Planning Committee. The McGriffs have spoken publicly on violence prevention at various forums and events on and off campus. They are also active in their church working with youth in violence prevention.