



Woman of the Year *Sister Diana Dolce*

Diana Dolce, SSJ is the Founder and Executive Director of Hope Hall School. Sister Diana has been an educator for more than fifty years. She is a pioneer in the field and works with students who learn differently. Her experience compelled her to develop and copyright the *Dolce Method for Learning Mastery*, published in 2023. Her goal is to help countless young people to overcome obstacles encountered in learning, and from there to experience and achieve personal and academic success. Sr. Diana believes the educational system can be change to help all students become responsible, productive members of society no matter what the learning style or level learning is. She believes in the principle that all children can learn. Some need more time and the right environment conducive to learning for any one student. The *Dolce Method* is a holistic approach to education. It uses a time tested 4 Step Study Method, which has proven to be successful.

More than 25 years ago, Sr. Diana welcomed the first students to Hope Hall. These students were bullied, the ones let out of sports, not invited to parties, and unable to learn no matter how hard they tried. Traditional schooling didn't know how to handle their differences. From the beginning Sr. Diana provided each student the means to face what they perceived they could not do. Each student would write down on a piece of paper one thing they could not do, placed the paper in the ground, and buried it. They planted flowers over the burial spot and watched as the flowers grew, as they themselves would grow.

Hope Hall has a 100% graduation rate considering that 85% of the students' families have significant financial challenges, and all the students have learning challenges,

Hope Hall has received national recognition as one of fourteen schools featured as part of a National School Choice Week tour of the United States, highlighting effective educational options. In 2018, Hope Hall received one of 16 nationwide "Community Thrives" Gannett Foundation grant awards. In 2019, Sr. Diana received the 2019 Rochester Business Journal ICON Award and a 2018 Rochester Women's Network 'W' Award. Sr. Diana considers the success of her students her greatest achievement. She treasures her students, Hope Hall, and the message of hope.

