



Lifetime Achievement Award Elaine Spaul

Elaine is committed to finding shelter, housing, and crisis assistance, as well as ensuring school-based and youth development services. There are many children in the Rochester area who need Elaine as an advocate.

Elaine Gallina Spaul is an educator, a lawyer, a Fulbright scholar, an elected official, a speaker, an author and a consultant, but most of all, she is a youth advocate and a determined social activist and innovator. Elaine earned an undergraduate degree in English Literature and a master's degree from George Washington University. She received her doctoral degree in Philosophy of Education and graduated magna cum laude with a Juris Doctor from SUNY Buffalo. In 2007, Dr. Spaul was elected to the Rochester City Council as a district representative and served in that role for 12 years.

She joined The Center for Youth as Executive Director in 2000. Under her innovative leadership and through her determined efforts, The Center has reached more than 30,000 young people each year in schools, in residential shelters, on the street, and in recreation and community centers. Most noticeably over the past 15 years, Elaine has focused her efforts on creating alternative paths to education for those for whom traditional education has not been successful, as well as expanding the residential sites to serve youth who are facing homelessness and trauma. Dr. Spaul embraces the vision of the teenagers who founded The Center 52 years ago as the dreams of those original youth continue to drive the mission which boldly removes barriers and offers opportunities in a racially and socially just environment.

Dr. Spaul has been the grateful recipient of many community awards including the Rotary Service above self-award in 2023 and the Willow Restore the Hope award for her advocacy for victims of domestic violence in 2019. She was also named a Woman of Distinction by the Rochester Business Journal. In 2016, she was the recipient of the prestigious Athena Award, the leadership award conferred by the Women's Council of the Rochester Chamber of Commerce.

The community has been generous to Elaine with its honors and awards including the Teen Empowerment Advocate of the Year Award, the Jennifer Koon Peace and Justice award from St. John Fisher College, the Humanitarian of the Year award from the Monroe County Bar Association, awarded the Executive Leadership Award from the National Network 4 Youth for her advocacy for homeless youth, the Monroe County Youth Advocate of the Year, the Italian American Educator of the Year, the Youth Services Quality Council Service Provider of the Year as well as a Woman of Influence Award given by the Girl Scouts of Genesee Valley.

She finds great satisfaction supporting young women in their dreams. Her greatest joys include her 3 grandchildren Gemma Rose, Bodie, and Cooper Lynn.