



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

## Mary Herlihy Gearan

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO May 11, 2011



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**Award:** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

**Year:** 2011

Mary Herlihy Gearan is a model community activist in her community. Earning a Bachelor's Degree in both Political Science and Economics from Emmanuel College in Boston and a Juris Doctorate from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., Ms. Gearan went on to start a long and distinguished career in Washington, D.C..

Not only has she worked for two members of Congress, but she has also worked in the Office of the General Counsel at the Office of Personnel Management in Washington, D.C. In addition to her political positions, Ms. Gearan was a fundraiser, national delegate liaison and California Field Desk Officer on the Michael S. Dukakis presidential campaign and Vice President at the government relations firm, the Wexler Group, in Washington, D.C., where she worked until 1992.

Since moving to Geneva, Ms. Gearan has been an active volunteer with numerous local organizations, including the Boys and Girls Club of Geneva, Geneva Public Library-Geneva Reads, Geneva School District, Our Lady of Peace, the Women's Conference, the Annual Festival of Nations and Day of Service. She has served on the Board of Directors of Happiness House-Finger Lakes Cerebral Palsy Association for eight years, the past four as Vice Chair.

Ms. Gearan has been a major force in the creation of the Happiness House Gala, which has raised more than \$200,000 for children's services in the Geneva community. She and her husband, President of Hobart and William Smith, Mark D. Gearan, served as honorary chairs of the 2003-07 Capital Campaign, which raised \$1.5 million toward a new Happiness House building in Canandaigua and a 4,500-square-foot expansion project in Geneva, offering enhanced speech therapy and educational services to 30 additional preschoolers.

Because of her exemplary work, Ms. Gearan has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the “Happiness is Helping” Humanitarian Award, the Citizen of the Year Award by the Geneva Area Chamber of Commerce, a Sharing the Light award by Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes and in 2008, the International Student Association at Hobart and William Smith created and awarded the first annual Mary Herlihy Gearan Award for Outstanding Contributions to the International Community. Through her many achievements, Ms. Gearan is a true pioneer and an inspiration to all.