

NYAPT Lifetime Achievement Award presented by Ann Beckley-Forest

In 2016, our branch established this award to honor long term commitment to our profession and the development of play therapy in the state of New York. The winner, nominated by a member and selected by the Board, should be a person whose commitment to developing the field of play therapy, whether through teaching, writing, clinical practice and or professional mentoring have set them apart as a model for others to emulate.

This year's winner began her social work career at Catholic Charities of Western New York with a background in family therapy, and 25 years ago began developing a specialty in play therapy. She would describe her work as having been heavily influenced by Eliana Gil. She has been in private practice since 2001, and she was trauma-informed before this became a buzzword. She is known in western New York in particular for her work with young victims of sexual abuse and has helped countless children and their families to heal. Along the way she has been recognized by family court as an expert witness in many difficult cases. For many years she travelled throughout the state providing trainings through Fordham University on the topic of child sex abuse to county Child Protection workers.

This is the person we refer our toughest cases to, or reach out to for supervision and play therapy consultation when we are stumped. She has mentored many play therapists in this part of the state, including -- I am proud to say, myself...and a number of people in this room, and at least a dozen over the years who have gone on to become fully credentialed play therapists. She also found time to work with the NYAPT board on volunteer on conference committees over the years.

Beyond all this, is a person of exceeding kindness, with a true heart for children. Nelson Mandela once said: "history will judge us by the difference we make in the everyday lives of children". By that measure, she stands very tall indeed, and I am pleased to introduce this year's Lifetime Achievement award winner – Marita Campbell.