



# 2022 OMBUDSMAN OF THE YEAR

## Eileen Driscoll

Eileen Driscoll has served as an outstanding volunteer in the New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) since 2013. During this time, she has successfully assisted numerous nursing home residents in disputes, resolving cases of neglect or abuse, inadequate staffing, poor food, and issues related to medical treatment.



In her advocacy on behalf of residents, Driscoll has helped resolve financial issues, found transportation to community doctor and shopping appointments, and advised staff who are conducting New York State Department of Health surveys. She has helped residents create nursing home Resident Councils and a resident Family Council. She has participated in resident care planning sessions and used her generous spirit to build positive relationships with resident families, health care coordinators, and resident health care proxies/power of attorneys. Driscoll's passion and skill even helped her prevent a facility from evicting residents on Christmas Eve!

"The residents become part of your extended family, and it is very rewarding to hear people's life stories," she says. "When I have a success or make someone's life a little better, it is the most important, rewarding, and difficult use of my time."

Originally from Ohio, Driscoll came to Ithaca in 1973 to attend graduate school at Cornell. She majored in statistics and never left. After graduating, she stayed at the ILR school and worked for Cornell for 30 years. Driscoll has a voracious love of learning, which is evident in her hobbies: gardening, reading, weaving, cooking, traveling, hydroponics, world religions, socializing and spending time with her extended family and her beloved dog, Bella. She is particularly interested in how things work and enjoys creating items from scratch, such as making cheese, ketchup, and textiles. She also incorporates motifs from her travel into her weaving. One of her current goals is to weave garments for an upcoming international fashion show. She is also currently on a mission to visit all of Ithaca's religious places of interest, in addition to staying current on topics such as climate change, elder care, social justice, women's issues, and aging issues.

"Eileen has been an outstanding role model to all of our volunteers and a true advocate for local long-term care facility residents," says her nomination for Older New Yorkers' Day. "Her warmth and integrity have been a support and comfort to all those touched by her light. Through her tireless service, Eileen has proven her commitment to her community and the greater good time and again. She has been an invaluable asset to LTCOP!"