



**United Way  
of Washtenaw County**

Media Contact: Pam Smith  
President/CEO of United Way of Washtenaw County  
734.677.7204

**United Way of Washtenaw County Announces  
Eileen Spring Woman of the Year  
Food Gatherers CEO to be honored  
at “Power of the Purse” event March 10 ,2021**

November 10, 2020 (Ann Arbor, Mich.) – Food Gatherers CEO, Eileen Spring, has been selected by the United Way of Washtenaw County (UWWC) Women United group as the 2021 Woman of the Year. Ms. Spring will be honored at the UWWC’s Power of the Purse event on March 10, 2021. The event will be virtual because of the COVID pandemic.

“Eileen Spring exemplifies what the Power of the Purse initiative is about: women taking action to address community issues,” said Pam Smith, President of the United Way of Washtenaw County, and member of the Power of the Purse committee. “Eileen displayed exemplary leadership during the pandemic and went above and beyond every day to make sure our community was food secure.”

Ms. Spring was chosen by the Power of the Purse committee for her exemplary leadership role in the community and her accomplishments in community leadership, food system security and innovation.

“I am humbled to be included in a group of women who have enriched our community so broadly through education, health, financial stability, and philanthropy,” shared Ms. Spring. “Access to the right amount and types of food needed to be healthy is a basic human right, and it has been my privilege to work with our network of partners throughout Washtenaw County.”

Ms. Spring has led Food Gatherers for 27 years and helped to develop the Food Security Plan, a blueprint to create greater capacity. The Plan was an integral part of our community’s response to the immediate spike in demand for food as a result of the pandemic, preventing the long lines at distribution sites seen in other parts of the country. In FY 2020 (ended June 2020) Food Gatherers distributed 7.8 million pounds of food – the equivalent of 6.5 million meals - throughout the county and even called in the National Guard to keep the supply chain secure for more than 170 community partners and programs.

Women United is a United Way national network of some 55,000 members in 137 U.S. communities, and the most successful philanthropic effort of its kind. Locally the UWWC



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Women's Leadership Initiative has granted over \$260,000 through the Power of the Purse event for programs that promote women's success and self-sufficiency.

The UWWC established the Woman of the Year honor in 2009. Previous recipients include Molly Dobson, Dr. Lori Pierce, Cecilia Fileti, Cynthia Wilbanks, Verna McDaniel, Beth Fitzsimmons, Martha Darling, Pat Warner, Denise Rabidoux and Lucy Ann Lance. The 2021 Event Chair is Stacy Collick.

**About United Way of Washtenaw County**

United Way of Washtenaw County connects people, organizations and resources together to create a thriving community for everyone. The Community Impact model focuses on health, education and financial stability issues to create opportunities for families and strengthen Washtenaw County. Over its 99-year history, UWWC has invested more than 250 million dollars to support over 60 successful local human services agencies in a comprehensive, integrated way that created positive lasting change in Washtenaw County.

**About Food Gatherers** Food Gatherers' mission is to alleviate hunger in Washtenaw County. As the food bank and food rescue program for the county, we distribute more than 7.8 million pounds of food to 170 non-profit programs serving low-income adults, seniors, and children every year. For a list of our partner programs, or to learn how you can become involved in the fight against hunger locally, please visit [www.foodgatherers.org](http://www.foodgatherers.org) or call 734-761-2796.

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