



Christian Abraham/Staff Photographer

## A hero among us

Editor's Notebook

Published: 01:02 a.m., Friday, March 26, 2010

Even though I have gotten to know [Ginger Katz](#) over the last couple of years through her work with the Courage to [Speak Foundation](#), I had actually never heard her Courage to Speak presentation until last Thursday evening at the sixth annual Courage To Speak Empowering Youth to Be Drug-Free Family Night.

Ginger shared her pain of watching drugs take her child's life and the heartbreak that followed--and still continues.

I don't know where she finds the strength and fortitude to tell that story over and over again, but like Mayor [Richard Moccia](#) and Police Chief [Harry Rilling](#), I am glad she does. Because in listening to the 13 student speakers read their thank you essays to Ginger, I believe her message is helping these kids reach out to people they trust when they are in a compromising situation, and that despite peer pressure, some of these kids will continue to develop ways to resist drugs.

That's why Dr. [Lynne Moore](#), principal of [West Rocks Middle School](#) nominated Ginger for the 2010 Distinguished Friend of Education Award given by the [Connecticut Association of Schools](#). The award is given to an individual outside of the field of education who has made strong contributions to public

Every year CAS receives dozens and dozens of nominations from schools around the state, and every year it is a challenging process to select a winner.

The fact that Ginger was chosen from such a strong group of nominees is testament to the scope of Ginger's influence.

Chief Rilling may have said it best.

"There is no greater tragedy than the loss of a young life. When you lose someone very close to you, the normal process is it makes you feel like you can't go on. You feel weakened....But Ginger and Larry took this horrible tragedy and turned it into a powerful message."

As one learns from your presentation, drug addiction is powerful, but so too is your message.

The community is grateful you continue to share it.