Cheryl Powell – Nomination letters (3)

July 8, 2024

To whom it may concern:

Cheryl Powell is an extraordinary, outspoken, longtime advocate for people with developmental disabilities and their families. She has been a member of the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities and also served in a leadership position with them for multiple years. A tireless advocate, she is now co-chair of the Lived Experience Network Speaks (LENS) advisory group and LAND (Leadership Alliance for Neurodevelopmental Disabilities) Advisory Council. Cheryl is actively helping make system change through her leadership with LENS and LAND.

Cheryl lives with cerebral palsy and often says she forgets she is disabled because in part she was raised by parents who she says never lowered their expectations. She is married and lives in her own apartment with her husband and dog. She has a bachelor’s degree in social work. This advocate is just getting started. Please honor her work for others with this NCCDD Leadership Achievement Award.

Elizabeth Field, M.S.

Program Director,

Leadership Alliance for Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LAND), a program of Mental Health Transformation Alliance

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Meet the Need NC: Changing the I/DD landscape across the state

<https://meettheneednc.org>

July 9, 2024

To NCCDD:

     Cheryl Powell epitomizes what a leader should be.  Having known her for years, I have watched her serve on the NCCDD, state and family committees formed to improve the Direct Support Professional situation, train and inspire other self-advocates, and volunteer wherever she was needed to improve the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities.  She was chair of the North Carolina Empowerment Network for several years, encouraging self-advocates to organize and speak out and up to take more control of their lives.

     Cheryl has the power to control a room.  When she speaks, people listen.  She has lived experience which gives her voice credibility.  With her social worker and DSP backgrounds, she listens to and respects the opinions and wishes of others.  Her humor and knowledge are disarming, and she is able to recruit allies when she sets out to achieve a goal.  Cheryl is a gentle warrior who never backs down in her advocacy efforts.  She will not be intimidated, even by a member of the General Assembly.

     There are qualities that make Cheryl an effective advocate.  She speaks what’s on her mind (always respectfully) and is the person in the room who will ask the hard questions.  As a seasoned advocate myself, Cheryl continues to teach me.  She commands respect for her wisdom and abilities.  Through her untiring commitment to the IDD community and her passion for advocacy, I think Cheryl is deserving of the NCCDD 2024 NC Leadership Achievement Award.

Sara Potter

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July 10, 2024

Dear NCCDD:

I’ve known Cheryl since 2005 probably longer, she is the strongest self advocate ever known.  she does not mince words. . She tells it like she sees it. She’s always been about trying to get people to stand up for themselves even in group homes, but she has always tried to be there for them and trying to get them out of the situation that their in.

She was the chair of the new North Carolina Empowerment Network is self advocate, read organization that we were trying to get off the ground for self advocates state wide, but do not come to fruition,but that did not stop Cheryl. I’m glad she met you Beth, so that she can continue her life’s work on this earth.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Ellis

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