Re:  The Helen C. “Holly” Riddle Distinguished Service Award Nominee - Pam Shipman

July 1, 2024

Dear Committee Members,

It has been an honor and a privilege to get to know Pam Shipman the last few years.  I have heard about the incredible achievements and contributions Pam made prior to our arrival in North Carolina in 2005.  When I joined the weekly DSP Workgroup, I was able to see first hand Pam’s knowledge of and passion for people with IDD and their families.  Her dedication to the development of a healthcare system that focuses on equity and improved outcomes and access is worthy of recognition.

Because our family is relatively new to North Carolina, there was a lot that I didn’t understand about service options, waivers, providers, and funding.  The state was in the process of transitioning from Local Management Entities to Managed Care Organizations.  Pam was instrumental in expanding and adapting a new delivery system to improve access to needed services and to better manage available funding.  In our DSP Workgroup, she shared white papers and presentations to help us as consumers and advocates understand the intricacies of the system.  To understand the different roles of the General Assembly, DHHS, the MCOs, and providers, family advocates are better equipped to address barriers and needed changes more effectively and successfully.

Pam was part of the DSP Workgroup Steering Committee.  As a volunteer, she has attended our weekly meetings since 2020.  She was always available to answer questions, do further research, connect with critical partners, and above all, to support families who were struggling with aspects of care for their loved ones.  She even developed a comprehensive presentation on funding sources.  I have found it is so important to understand both sides of a situation in order to work together to find solutions.  I am grateful to Pam for helping me to understand how all the disparate parts of our system can and should work together to provide the best care for our IDD population.

Please consider Pam for this prestigious award.  She has worked tirelessly for many years in different roles, and she continues to do so by volunteering her time and expertise to help families navigate a complicated system.  Families often struggle to find appropriate services and to find answers and balance in their complex lives.  Pam is always there as a friend, a guide, and a teacher.  Holly Riddle was and is that as well.  Pam is deserving of such a prestigious award.  Thank you for considering her many contributions.

Respectfully,

Sarah Potter, Parent Advocate