

Remembering Council Member Lauren Womack November 20, 1985 – October 25, 2024

October 31, 2024

It is with great sadness the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council announces the passing of Council Member Lauren Womack. Lauren was an incredibly dedicated member of the Council who was appointed by then Governor John Bel Edwards on August 11, 2023. She quickly demonstrated to her fellow Council members her passion and commitment to positively impacting all Louisianans with disabilities.

Lauren was always one of the first to volunteer to serve on Council committees. She served as the Chair of the Council's 2024 Legislative Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee. She also contributed her knowledge and expertise to the Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee, Act 378 Subcommittee, 2025 Planning Committee, By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee and the Council's Membership Committee. Through these committees, Lauren worked to ensure the success, health and safety of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life. She was fiercely passionate about fixing the Direct Support Worker staffing crisis and ensuring people with disabilities had competitive and integrated employment opportunities.



Lauren, her husband Troy, LaCAN Leader Kristie Curtis and Council Executive Director Ebony Haven meet with Senator Gerald Boudreaux following Lauren's testimony before Senate Finance Committee.

Lauren was an accomplished advocate and professional. She received her Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Southern University and helped numerous people with disabilities realize their career goals through her work as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at Lafayette Consolidated Government. Lauren also served on numerous boards and councils including the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council, the National Employment Networks Association (NENA) and Chaired the State as a Model Employer (SAME) Task Force for the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs. She also represented the Council on the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities' (NACDD) National Self-Advocacy Committee.

Lauren was very supportive of and active in the Council's advocacy network, LaCAN. She frequently followed up with her regional LaCAN Leader to ensure she was informed about upcoming advocacy opportunities and issues impacting her area. Lauren also recognized in order to create systems change, she must share her story as a person with a disability. She provided testimony at her local LaCAN Legislative Roundtable and during Louisiana's 2024 Regular Legislative Session. Her advocacy and testimony helped convince the legislature to appropriate over \$10 million to increase the night rate in I/DD waivers to match the day rate. If you are interested in watching Lauren's testimony before the Senate Finance Committee, click [HERE](#). Her testimony begins at 57:10.

While we mourn Lauren's passing, we also celebrate her life. We will forever be grateful to Lauren for her contributions to not only the Council, but to all people with disabilities. Her passion was contagious, and her eagerness to make Louisiana a better place for all was clearly evident. We ask that you please keep her husband, Troy, her parents, siblings, extended family and faithful service dog, Sydney Princess Fluffy Bottoms, in your thoughts and prayers.

Contact Us

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