

## BIOS

### Executive Committee Nominees

*(Based on what nominees submitted on their Consent to Serve)*

**Describe your qualifications, experience, or other reasons for seeking consideration to the stated elected position(s). Provide information on (1) How many years have you served on the Council; (2) Any leadership positions you have held with the Council, including Task Force and Committee roles; and (3) Your plans for the direction of the Council in the next 2 years, including three things you feel are the top priorities facing the Council.**

#### **Christina Cordova**

My goal in serving on the Executive Committee is to provide leadership and integrity in moving our Council toward our next 5-year plan. I have served the last 2 years on the council sitting on the Home & Community Based Task-Force, as well as currently serving as Co-chair for the ASK Task Force. Beyond our Council Committees, I have been a part of the Behavioral Curriculum Development Task Force and First Responder Training Task Forces, to be a voice for those we as a council serve and to ensure our Council's commitments and finances are being used accordingly. I know our Council is currently faced with some challenges and feel I can help us navigate the current status toward an efficient and effective future, as we continue to advocate, serve, and lead our initiatives to help individuals and families who are affected by IDD.

#### **Yolanda Herrea**

Qualifications: In our family-owned retail business, my principal duty was to keep our accounting up to date, keep track of invoices, payment of obligations, and payroll for 25 plus employees, while being supervised by our business Accountant. Our family business duties were not limited to any specific title, as we were always available to assist in any other duties such as inventory control, sales, deliveries, just to mention some.

Experience: For the past 40 years I have been educated on the needs of families who have children with significant developmental disabilities. In earlier years I enrolled on committees within our School System. Later, my education came from organizations that educated the same population with the goal of improving their lives, among them I served in the Superintended Special Education Committee, Florida Rehabilitation Council, Statewide Transition Panel. Later years I found to be most useful in advocating for better opportunities in education that would lead to employment for those individuals who had little chance to succeed given their difficult challenges.

I have had the honor of serving in the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council since November of 2018, since the moment I arrived, I joined the Task Force groups where I felt I could contribute given my personal experiences. The last three years, I have participated in about all of the Task Force groups where I have served in leadership positions for the most part.

Plan for the next 2 years. The present climate is presenting us with critical challenges all around. It is imperative that our Council be unified, healthy, well-educated and connected with those who are in positions to foster positive change to improve the lives of those who the Council is charge to serve, In order to meet the above mentioned challenges, building trust thru communication and education on procedures becomes very important. Begin planning for the companion projects to the next 5-year State Plan, heavy on community participation and to provide clarity of those activities, with the objective to build capacity. I would love to find a way to encourage ALL Council members to provide opinions through the meetings, in order to include their expert knowledge and different perspective on any given topic being discussed.

Lastly, I appreciate the opportunity to be considered for any of the positions I applied for given my life experiences.

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### **Carla Mercer**

As an Army veteran who served in leadership roles for 8 of my 11 years of service, I have continued my commitment to service well beyond my military career. From 2022 to 2024, I served as Treasurer and Interim President of my chapter of the Women's Army Corps Veterans Association—the only female veteran organization chartered by Congress. During an emergency, I stepped into the role of Interim President and led the chapter through to the next election. I was subsequently re-elected as Treasurer for the 2023–2024 term and ensured a smooth and successful transition to the incoming Treasurer.

Since 2021, I have served as a board member of the Autism Society of Florida and currently hold the role of Treasurer.

My service on the DD Council began in January 2024. Over the past two years, I have contributed as a Council member, including serving as Co-Chair of the Aging Caregivers Taskforce and as a member of the ASK Taskforce, as well as the Bylaws, State Plan, and Public Policy Committees.

Looking ahead, my priority is to strengthen and stabilize the Council's foundation by reinforcing a clear, consistent structure grounded in our bylaws and policies. Implementing annual training on policies and procedures will better equip Council members to serve effectively and confidently, while promoting transparency as we move forward.

### **Jean Sherman**

I have been a member of the Council for more than 12 years. For the first two years I was appointed as a family member. The subsequent years - until now - I serve as the representative of the UM Mailman Council UCEDD, designated by Dr. Daniel Armstrong, Director of the Mailman Center. I was a long-time member of the Health Care Task Force, where I played a significant role in overseeing several important training products for the Council. For the past six years I have been a member, and then Chair, of the State Plan Committee - a position I presently hold. I served as an At Large member of the Executive Committee for two years. I have also been a member of the Public Policy Committee in the past, as well as serving on numerous ad hoc working groups. At present I am a member of the Aging Families and HCBS Task Forces.

As a registered nurse for 52 years and holding a doctorate in adult education, I have a wealth of health and training experience, having worked professionally for ten years in the Florida Aging services network, before joining the faculty at the University of Miami, where I served for 22 years in the Aging and Developmental Disabilities fields.

During the next two years, I believe the Council has three important priorities. The first will be stabilizing its position as the leading Florida voice for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. This must be accomplished within a local and national environment that is often fraught with political and fiscal uncertainties.

The second priority will be to assure the successful completion of all projects in this last year of the current five-year state plan. Such activities will include the widespread implementation/dissemination of several important information/training products, as well as finalizing the goals and activities that will be carried out in the new Area Plan.

The third priority will occur in the second year as the Council begins its new five-year Area Plan, seeking qualified providers to implement key projects and activities that will meet the identified needs of individuals and families. These will include such things as providing better means for identifying local community resources, assisting with navigation of formal state service networks, and identifying new resources and technologies for future planning and maintaining aging individuals and families within their chosen residential settings.

**Charlotte Temple**

I have served as a Council Member for 2 years. I currently serve on the Public Policy, Finance, Access to Services Committees, and the Managed Care Ad hoc Committee. I believe that the focus of the Council during the next two years should be on the foundation and implementation of the 5-year plan, building upon the work that has been accomplished during the last plan and moving forward toward the future for those with developmental disabilities in Florida.