Barbara G. Toomer

Barbara G. Toomer, who used a wheelchair after contracting polio in 1956, was a trailblazer who worked to champion civil rights for people with disabilities here in Utah and across the nation. She helped organize and lead many disability advocacy groups including Community Shares, the Utah Independent Living Center, ADAPT/Utah, and the Disabled Rights Action Committee (DRAC) among others.

She was a tireless advocate who wrote letters, made phone calls, gave testimony, and met in person with many leaders in Washington D.C. and at the Utah legislature. When diplomacy was not effective, Barbara and her army of volunteers turned to non-violent protest to champion the causes of equality, accessibility, and civil rights for people with disabilities.

Barbara passed away in 2018 and will be greatly missed by her friends in the disability community. We continue to honor her legacy through the establishment of a fellowship to pass the torch to a new generation who will continue her important work.

The Disability Law Center is pleased to announce the first round of its Barbara G. Toomer Disability Rights Fellowship Program.

The Disability Law Center Barbara G. Toomer Fellowship is a nine-month intensive immersion experience in disability advocacy and policy. The purpose of the fellowship is to prepare emerging leaders to assume leadership roles in the disability advocacy and public policy arenas at the state and/or national levels. During this nine-month fellowship, the successful applicant will learn how the organized disability community works to shape public policy impacting people with disabilities and their families.

The experience is a unique chance to understand the intersection of public policy, disability advocacy, and the political process.

Ongoing mentorship will be provided by the Disability Law Center and by a network of disability advocates. The initial commitment will be for nine months.

The 2019 Barbara G. Toomer Fellowship will focus on developing leadership capacity in the disability rights advocacy and public policy arena.

The expectation is that fellows will become future leaders in the field of inclusive community supports for people disabilities. During and after their fellowship, it is anticipated that Barbara G. Toomer Disability Rights Fellows will make significant contributions to disability policy and program development in Utah or nationally. The fellowship includes a stipend ($10,000).
QUALIFICATIONS

We seek applicants with distinguished involvement in efforts to improve the lives of persons with disabilities at the local, regional, or national level, particularly in low and middle-income settings.

Qualified applicants must identify as a person with a disability. You will not be required to disclose your specific disability; however, your application for this program will signify that you consider yourself a person with a disability. The Barbara G. Toomer Disability Rights Fellowship at the Disability Law Center seeks to amplify the voices of diverse communities and advance equity and inclusion, so please note that people with disabilities who also identify as part of other marginalized groups are strongly encouraged to apply.

Relevant experience may include:
1. Advocacy for people with disabilities and their families;
2. Development of inclusive community supports and services for people with disabilities;
3. Development of training programs for people with disabilities, families, and communities; and
4. The development or improvement of family support services, programs focused on increasing individual’s control of resources and decisions impacting their lives, and/or technology in support of people with disabilities.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDELINES

Applicants should:

• Submit a personal statement that outlines their background and history in the field of services and supports to people with disabilities, interests and accomplishments to date, as well as what they hope to do with the knowledge and experience gained from the fellowship. The statement should not be more than two pages in length, single spaced in 12-point font with 1-inch margins, clearly showing the candidate’s name, address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address on the first page. The personal statement can be submitted in alternative formats.
• Attach either a résumé detailing their work and educational experience or a summary of their involvement in the field.
• Submit one letter of support from someone familiar with their work and the name of a personal reference. Letters of support are encouraged via e-mail/ PDF file.

The application deadline is March 15, 2019.

Anticipated start date for the fellowship is April 1, 2019.

Questions and applications can be submitted to:
Adina Zahradnikova, Executive Director
(801) 363-1347 ext. 3220
azahradnikova@disabilitylawcenter.org