

2010 Spicy Speakers: Our Members Turn Up the Heat



RICK CARDENAS has been involved in civil and human rights issues since the 60's and has worked at **Advocating Change Together (ACT)**, a self-advocacy organization, for over 13 years. Rick presents leadership development using Common Vision, an ACT program, which focuses on leadership for persons with intellectual /developmental disabilities. Leadership development is often seen as a luxury. However, ACT sees leadership as an essential piece to becoming a self advocate. By learning and by working on understanding ones civil and human rights at your workplace, at ones living situation and throughout all of your interactions in society we can continue the process of becoming a strong self-advocate. Rick is able to make the connections between past civil and human rights struggles and the current struggle for disability rights.



JEFF WASHBURNE has been the Executive Director of the **CITY OF LAKES COMMUNITY LAND TRUST** since 2002. He previously worked at Twin Cities Neighborhood Housing Services from 1997-2000 and 2001-2002, serving as the Executive Director the latter two years. Prior to his nonprofit housing experience, Jeff worked as a construction supervisor and trainer for a residential construction firm in South Korea, a YMCA Program Manager in New Mexico, and served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Honduras. He currently serves on the boards of the Minneapolis Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD), Empowerment Zone, and the MN Community Land Trust Coalition. He has served on the boards of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and Center for Neighborhoods, and he lives in Minneapolis. He holds a MA in Public Administration from Hamline University and a BA in Psychology from DePauw University.



DONNA DUNN has been the Executive Director of the **MINNESOTA COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT (MNCASA)** since 2006. Prior to this, she served as the program manager of the Sexual Violence Justice Institute, the criminal justice arm of the coalition. An activist in the movement to end violence against women, Donna has more than 20 years of experience in community based private nonprofits. She was the director of Victim Services of Dodge/Fillmore/Olmsted Community Corrections and served as the Sexual Assault Program Director for the state of Minnesota. Donna has lectured on team collaboration and sexual assault response across the U.S. She believes that multidisciplinary collaboration brings together the community forces that need to be working in tandem to stop violence against women. She is a graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College and Vanderbilt University.



SUE ABDERHOLDEN is the Executive Director of the **NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS OF MINNESOTA**. NAMI is a statewide grassroots organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families by providing education, support and advocacy. Sue is well known in the disability community with more than twenty-five years experience fighting for the rights of people with disabilities. A fervent believer in the power of personal stories, she has helped thousands of people find their voice to speak up and out. Sue is a "go to" person for the media when it comes to stories related to mental illness and has an MPH from the University of Minnesota.



JUDY SANDERS is a member of the **NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF MINNESOTA**. She is employed by the State of Minnesota Services for the Blind. As a blind person, Judy knows firsthand that blindness can be a severe tragedy or it can be reduced to an inconvenience. She credits members of the National Federation of the Blind for teaching her to not set limits on what she can accomplish. Her careers have included being a teacher, a Congressional staffer and a professional in work with the blind. Her volunteer positions have included serving as president of the National Organization of the Senior Blind, secretary of the National Federation of the Blind of Minnesota, coordinator of the Federation's legislative efforts and as a Community Shares board member. Judy is available to speak about the National Federation of the Blind's social change work bringing blind and sighted people together and providing individual counseling, advocacy and education.



CAROL CUROE, a PFLAG Board member, has experienced first hand the positive impact of the organization's programs, resulting in a book co-authored with her father, *Are There Closets in Heaven? A Catholic Father and Lesbian Daughter Share their Story*. Her devout parents, Joyce and Robert, were devastated when they found out their daughter was gay. To deal with the news, they attended PFLAG meetings and were able to find resources and support during a difficult time in their lives. Eventually, they helped start a local PFLAG chapter and began speaking out on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) persons. Through their advocacy as a family they have helped hundreds of other parents and families learn to accept and love their GLBT children.



LINDA VANG is a St. Paul native and works at Wallin Education Partners, a nonprofit scholarship organization, as a scholar advisor. Passionate about social justice issues, she serves on the Board of Directors for two groundbreaking nonprofits: Hnub Tshiab: Hmong Women Achieving Together and our member group **YouthCARE** (Youth for Cultural Appreciation and Racial Equality). YouthCARE has long been a part of her life and represents values that align closely with her own beliefs. When she was just four years old her brother was a Camp Sunrise counselor and while in high school she participated in the Young Women's Mentoring Program. In college, Linda became involved with Camp Sunrise and served as a Head Counselor, Junior Counselor Crew Leader and Assistant Director. Linda is a graduate of Carleton College.