

CCDDB Presentation 8/16/2023

1. Kentrell: What do you recommend we spend the money on and how?

Thank you for having us today. Together, we would like to tell you about the services we get and our advice to you. I'm happy with the support I get now, and I'd like for money to keep going to those supports. Someday, I'd like to get support in getting a job. Even though I'm not sure if I'm ready for that yet, I think it's important to give money to the programs that make that support possible. Also, I would like to be a part of more events out of town that give me the chance to be an advocate, like the Speak Up Speak Out Summit. I don't usually have the money to do this on my own, and I would prefer to have another advocate or staff member attend with me. One other thing to think about is getting music equipment or technology that allows music artists like me to express themselves. It may even be fun to be a part of professional classes for musicians.

2. Danielle: What would make your daily life easier or better?

One thing that could make my life a little easier is if I got help in traveling to other cities or attending events in town. I'm not sure how I would get to where I need to go on my own if I went to a different city or state. Having a staff person come with me to help with traveling around in a new area would be helpful, and it would be more fun if I could bring friends too. I'd also need to find out what my budget is, what kind of clothes to wear, and what to bring.

3. Danielle: When you are interested in finding a new opportunity or resource, what do you do?

When I want to try something new, there are lots of people I can ask. When an event is coming up that I want to go to, I will tell my apartment trainer so that they can help me with a budget and the things I need to bring, like when I went to Chicago for the Expo. When I wanted to get back into the workforce, I let AJ at Clark Road know, and he set me up with my supported employment supervisor who helped me find a job and trained me. I am still learning new things on the job from my job coach.

4. Kentrell: Do you feel you know what the DD Board does? How could we make our meetings more accessible to you?

I know that the board pays for the groups that I'm a part of, the community living program I use, and staff to help with employment opportunities. It would be great for us to learn where the details of these meetings are so we can organize attending. Also, I get nervous around large groups of people, so I'd prefer to have space between myself and others when attending. Lots of stimulation can be distracting. It would help if speakers were clear and spoke without going too fast.

5. Darrin: The DD Board can advocate to the County Board to better support people with developmental disabilities in the community. What would you like us to advocate for?

I'm aware that the DD Board can advocate to the County Board if we have anything we'd like to share. I'd thought about how useful it would be to have something similar to the subway system in Chicago where I'm from. I'm unsure what that would look like for our cities, but I know it was an asset to some people who use it in other cities. Also, I'd like the County Board to know how important it is for our community to be accessible. Like having sidewalks with slopes, talking crosswalks, plenty of lighting, and patched sidewalk cracks.

6. Kentrell: What do you think is your greatest need for participating in the community? Is the county helping with this? How could we better help?

When I want to do things in the community, I'm not always sure what kinds of events are happening around town. It would be helpful to me to have some way to get this information. I'd like to be taught how to find this information, and possibly be given updated lists of events each month. Through groups, I've been able to be a part of events like Comic Con. I went with a group of people who share my interests and got to experience something I've always wanted to. Although there were a lot of people, I enjoyed crossing that off my list of things I'd like to do. In order for this to happen, I needed help with my budget and transportation. If events like this happen near me, I'd like to get that information so that I can participate. Once I know the details, I would prefer to attend these events with friends or staff to help navigate the community.

7. Darrin: Are there supports or services that you have now that you would like to keep?

There are many services that I get that make a big difference in my life. I attend groups, which I enjoy most when they take place at The Crow or at the Champaign Library. I also have had job coaches who assist me with withdrawing money from my tip card and checking my work schedule on my laptop. My previous job coach helped me learn how to get to work on the MTD, which was useful for me. Apartment staff, Joni, assists me with my budgeting, shopping, and picking up fast food. She also helps me with my taxes which takes a big burden off of my shoulders.

8. Danielle: Conclusion

One thing we agree on as advocates is that we are happy to talk to funders like the Board about what kinds of services we enjoy, and what can be changed. We are always thankful for the chance to speak on topics like these, and we are glad you invited us today. Please continue to include us in your decisions on funding, and we will continue to give you our thoughts.