



Dave Toeniskoetter
Chair, Leadership Development Committee
c/o ANCOR
1101 King Street, Suite 380
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Dave:

I am writing to express my interest in serving as a member of ANCOR's Board of Directors. ANCOR has been one of the leading trade associations ensuring that the needs of individuals and families with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the staff and providers who support them have a voice. Over the last several years, ANCOR has been able to influence policy and legislation as it relates to our workforce, managed care, technology and service innovation. I believe the breadth of my experience, passion and commitment to the mission and effective communication and leadership skills make me a qualified candidate to serve as a Board member. I'd like to highlight those attributes and characteristics that are indicative of my qualifications for consideration.

- I am a professional with more than 35 years experience supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families and the staff who support them. My career, long before I had a plan, was working as a Direct Support Professional and Frontline Supervisor in various residential settings for 6 years. This experience, coupled with my education, taught me the importance of listening, empowering, training, advocating and collaborating in order to enable individuals to reach the goals they were setting for themselves. This laid the foundation for the work and activism I've been proud to be part of.
- Most of my career had been spent at YAI. YAI is a comprehensive network of not for profit organizations in the New York metropolitan area, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The Network provides supports to more than 15,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through various educational, employment, health care, family supports and long term support services. During my tenure, I'd held a variety of positions including Director of Residential Services, Regional Director, Executive Vice- President and Interim CEO. I'd been instrumental in the development of a quality residential services system supporting more than 700 individuals in various living models, established a strong regional network of comprehensive services, engaged families, and empowered our self-advocates while building a strong leadership team and mentoring future leaders. Leaders must be effective communicators and nimble during times of uncertainty. My ability to communicate effectively with various stakeholders was critical to managing during transformational times enabling the organization to position itself to manage during government retrenchment, strengthen a sound compliance program, prepare for managed care and innovate program design in a way that empowers the person seeking support.

- In January 2016, I became the CEO for Birch Family Services. Our organization provides early childhood education, school age services, residential, employment, other long term and family support services for individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. Based in New York City, Birch supports more than 1500 individuals across the lifespan through our more than 1000 employees. Our organization is recognized for providing quality educational, habilitation and other supports that enables each child, adolescent or adult to get the life that they want. Our services are located in underserved communities and we've also made a commitment to support the more complex individuals with autism, behavioral challenges or intense medical needs. During my brief tenure, we've been able to diversify our funding streams and increase our revenue by 18% to respond to the educational and long-term support needs of those we serve.
- I always believed that our trade associations are important partners in the work we do. It is essential that providers come together to be thought leaders, share best practices, analyze public policy, engage other stakeholders and strategize on solutions. I have been most active with NY trade associations (NYSACRA, IAC) serving on their Boards of Directors and/or important committees (Policy, Managed Care, Clinical and Finance). ANCOR has been engaging providers and providing leadership for some time. My first involvement in ANCOR was through attending the conferences. However, I became more involved with the initiation of the National Advocacy Campaign (NAC) and a focus on the workforce. I agree that we must have a trained and sustainable workforce. I became one of my organization's leaders on the NAC- coordinating efforts to bring DSPs to DC and following up locally in NY. This is just one of the reasons why I believed it important for Birch to become a member of ANCOR. In addition to this work, I participated briefly in the Policy Committee. I also participated in one or two preliminary calls on children's services prior to Renee's retirement. I know this is something the association continues to evaluate.
- I believe this is a perfect time for me to be considered for the Board of Directors. Throughout my career I've been recognized as a thought leader with expertise in public policy, advocacy and service design while having the energy, the vision and the ability to get things done. I'm a strong collaborator capable of working with all stakeholders. These strengths will enable me to provide an urban and suburban perspective on the impact of policy, share solutions through collaboration and innovate how education, long-term and health care supports are provided to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In the late 1970s, we were part of a social revolution that developed a comprehensive community based service delivery system. Today, we are part of a new revolution. This new revolution challenges us to empower individuals and families to have more control of their services; ensure a well-trained and sustainable workforce with leaders developed who can transform organizations and their services; and, advocate for sound educational and health care public policies that will have an impact on a national and state level. ANCOR is playing a key role in this revolution and I would be honored to serve as a member of the Board of Directors during this transformative period.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Sturiale, LCSW CEO