

Donna Stephenson Letter of Interest – IB & GC:

I wound up going to Waukegan Illinois and became homeless and pregnant with my oldest son. I was 17 scared but very determined. I discovered that I was very adaptable. I got a job as a magazine sales representative I went door to door selling magazines and travelled to different states. I became the number 1 seller in my group. I wasn't getting paid the way I was supposed to so I complained and I got a 1 way bus ticket from California back to Chicago Illinois. I was 5 months pregnant and they didn't even give me any money for food or water and it was June I spent 3 days on a bus going through desert heat. I got back to Chicago pregnant and homeless. Had my son in October of 94 went to Minneapolis Minnesota in November of 94 became homeless. Moved in with a friend became homeless in the summer of 95 lost custody of my son that summer due to not having housing. It took over 2 years to regain custody however I did. I had another son in January of 97 went to school to be a medical assistant graduated in 1999 with a 4.0 Had a sense of stability until 2004. I was married by then to an abusive cocaine addicted alcoholic and wound up experiencing homelessness off and on for the rest of my life. I have a lot more to share about my life and why I would be a good fit and if given an opportunity I would prefer sharing in person. I enjoy speaking much more than writing. Thank you for your time and consideration.

On Friday, March 22, 2024, Donna Stephenson wrote:

I am interested in being on the board because I have a lot of ideas and I know that I can make a difference. I would like to be considered for both boards. Currently my lived experience is that I have been homeless since February 5th of 2020 so it's been over 4 years that I've experienced homelessness and I have first hand experience of all the flaws in the system and so called services that are supposed to be available. How is it that I am 48 years old receive disability do not have a drug or alcohol problem who has tried to obtain help with stable housing consistently for over 4 years who has been on a waitlist for housing since 2018 still be homeless? Now rewind I was adopted as an infant my earliest childhood memory was of abuse I was locked in a barn at 18 months old for throwing dirt at my 14 year old brother. My adoptive parents went through a brutal divorce within a year after I was adopted followed by an intense custody battle in which my dad went broke. I found out decades later that if he had a 1000 more dollars he would have been able to get custody of me instead I was awarded to an alcoholic manic depressive paranoid schizophrenic OCD mother who was extremely abusive. I was taking care of myself by the time I was 5 I was able to cook. When I was able to start school it became my [escape.by](https://www.escape.by) the time I was in 5th grade I was testing at a college level. I was placed in foster care when I was 13 the first foster home I was in the were penecostal preachers and my foster dad tried to sexual assault me. I tried to commit suicide got placed back in the same foster home after I came back from the hospital for mental health. I went from a straight A student and social to being withdrawn and failing high school. I finally got the courage to tell what happened and my foster dad went to jail after I testified what happened it was a small town and nobody wanted me so I was placed in juvenile jail even though I hadn't committed a crime or was placed in the

hospital. I was emancipated when i was 17 and that was when I first experienced homelessness. I'll continue with my bio later on