

NEWSLETTER

WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER



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Parent Training and Information Services

TNSTEP's vision is to ensure a brighter future for children and youth in Tennessee.

"We are experts at informing and empowering parents of children and youth with disabilities who receive education services."

-Karen Harrison, TNSTEP Executive Director



HELPING PARENTS FIND CONFIDENCE THROUGH KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT

Candice Weston is a dedicated wife, mother of three, and passionate advocate for families navigating the world of special education. Her journey with her own child, who has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), led her to TNSTEP.

While advocating for her child, Candice discovered TNSTEP's webinars and resources, which provided her with the tools and confidence to take meaningful steps forward. Wanting to be part of something bigger, she joined the Board to help other parents find the same support and empowerment she experienced.

Candice encourages families to “know your state and your school district—because when it’s time to advocate, knowledge is power.”

Candice is currently pursuing her bachelor's degree in Child Development with a focus on early intervention at the University of Arizona Global Campus. She also brings prior experience in the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) field, adding depth and perspective to her advocacy efforts.



Candice Weston

Board of Directors

“KNOW YOUR STATE AND YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT. WHEN IT'S TIME TO ADVOCATE, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.”

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITY

WORKSHOPS/TRAININGS

- July 8** The Next Step – IEP Planning: Preparing for Effective Participation in Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meetings Workshop
- July 10** Intro to Special Education Workshop
- July 16** Independent Living – Planning for the Future: A WAZE to Adulthood Student Virtual Training Session
- July 22** Independent Living – Planning for the Future: A WAZE to Adulthood Virtual Parent and Professional Training
- July 25** Transition to Adulthood Planning Workshop
- August 12** Six Principles of IDEA Virtual Workshop
- August 19** Intro to Special Education Workshop
- August 26** The Next STEP – IEP Planning: Preparing for Effective Participation in Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meetings Workshop

STOP BY TNSTEP'S BOOTH AT...

- July 26** Back-to-School Bash & Family Engagement Event (Boys & Girls Club of the Cumberland Plateau)



MEET THE 2025 ADVOCATES OF THE YEAR



TNSTEP was proud to attend the 2025 Tennessee Disability MegaConference in Nashville on May 22–23. Our team shared resources, met with advocates from across the state, and had the honor of recognizing three outstanding individuals who were selected as this year's Advocate of the Year Award recipients. These awards highlight the courage, leadership, and unwavering dedication of those who go above and beyond to advocate for individuals with disabilities and their families. We are thrilled to introduce our 2025 honorees:

Tracy Bock – Wayne Parker Advocate of the Year

With over a decade of partnership with TNSTEP, Tracy has empowered families to understand their special education rights and access the services they need. Her compassionate approach and commitment to collaboration have guided countless families toward better outcomes.

Skyy Jordan – Wesley Rice Youth Advocate of the Year

Skyy, a completely blind young adult, uses her voice and courage to inspire others. Whether singing the national anthem at major events or advocating for positive change in her community, Skyy is a shining example of youth leadership and self-advocacy.

Angela Burrows – Scott Finney Self-Advocate of the Year

Angela's advocacy journey began when she fought to secure proper dyslexia intervention for her child. Today, she continues to support families across Tennessee at no cost. Her strength, persistence, and leadership are changing lives every day.

We are honored to recognize these incredible advocates and to continue our work uplifting the voices of families and youth with disabilities across Tennessee.

NO PARENT OF A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY SHOULD HAVE TO WALK THIS JOURNEY ALONE.

We believe parents know their children best and CAN BE their child's best advocate. Families who receive TNSTEP services report these results:

- Increased skills to address their children's mental health and behavioral needs;
- Consistent and improved school attendance;
- Increase in functional skills that impact independent living;
- Improved academic achievement that leads to graduation and employment.



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Contact Us

To receive a printed copy of this newsletter, please send a request to tnstepcomms@gmail.com.

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YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT TELLS A PARENT,
"YOU DON'T HAVE TO WALK THIS JOURNEY ALONE."