

Regional Quality Council Transcript - Keynote

Shawn: The Arrowhead Regional Quality Council is where you monitor and work to improve the quality of services for folks with disabilities. My role is to give feedback on what the Council is doing, what I am passionate about such as Northern Lights Express, which is a high-speed line train that connects my city to the Capitol allowing more freedom for people like who don't drive; the affordable housing issues facing our region and bringing them to the state legislator. I attend a monthly meeting with other members of ARQC, I meet monthly to help design and implement a plain language person-centered practices overview

Becky: Yes Shawn has been a very vocal and active member of our regional quality council. He joined our council about a year ago now. he cornered me at our annual meeting telling us he wanted to be on the council because he was passionate about the what's called the Northern Lights Express which he has talked about which is a rail line that connects the twin cities to Duluth -which is our town - because as someone with a disability who doesn't drive it was very important for him ...to make sure that that happened and as Shawn said he recently went in front of the....Minnesota....uh...cab...

Shawn: Congress

Becky: Yeah...The Minnesota congress and gave some testimony in support of that. We were wonderfully fortunate to be able to support him in that. The coordinator for the ARQC also went down. He has brought up a number of issues including...

Shawn: The post office, the

Becky: The post office, the staffing shortage, the lack of public transportation in our town and how that affects you...He recently spoke at the disability policy seminar and gave a great speech on why affordable housing and accessible housing is so important for folks with disabilities. Yeah, so these are all issues that the RQCs and the ARQC ...specifically are able to bring to the public and we are...work to monitor and improve the quality of these services and that includes a lot of what Shawn just talked about.

Amanda: And I think what's really cool about the regional quality councils is that they are self-advocate led. So that equity inclusion piece is all done through the eyes of self-advocates, people with lived experience... and lastly I think our Arrowhead Regional quality council is unique because we are serving very vast rural areas but also metro areas so looking at those issues that Shawn had mentioned housing, transportation, plain language....those affect everybody...so then we are able to look at it from a lens of, you know, what's going on the rural areas, what's going on in the metro settings...and so Shawn's been super helpful in bringing advocacy forward and talking to our legislators and making things happen...so we appreciate that

Becky: and Shawn has working hard to also advocate for self-advocate leadership. He has stepped up in a number of ways...not just bringing us issues but with help with our technology foibles and leadership within the meetings themselves. So like as Amanda has just said as well

like we find that self-advocate leadership is what makes us a better regional quality council because we are responding to what matters to the people who are receiving these services

Shawn: I agree

Becky: Great, that's what matters.