

Employee of the Year Nomination – Yvette Huff

“I would like to nominate Yvette Huff for Employee of the Year.

Yvette helped an individual move into a new apartment, and the outreach worker at Hennepin County who was involved sent the following email about their experience with Yvette:

Yvette has been incredible to work with from start to finish, particularly on this specific case. As I'm sure you know, this person who lives with schizophrenia just recently had his Medicaid turned back on and had his rep payee paperwork finalized. Thus, his situation has always been pretty complex. Further, there have been genuine concerns about family members taking advantage of him, or at the very least, being emotionally manipulative toward him.

Yvette has had to navigate all of these familial dynamics on top of his ever-changing supports in place, given how long the various processes have taken. His psychotic symptoms have made the search more complicated as well. All of his convictions can be chucked up to him having been taken advantage of by others, secondary to his psychotic symptoms, leading him not to pass background checks everywhere we have looked.

Yvette has handled his situation with patience, compassion, and grace. She has met him where he is at every step of the way and has been sure to emphasize his agency as much as possible, such as when navigating buildings with stairs, which has scared him. There was a time that he called her in tears because he was worried about how long the process was taking, and she was able to talk him down very effectively before I even realized what was going on. Please let whoever needs to know that Yvette has transcended her role, gone above and beyond, and lived out the values of your organization, particularly with this specific person, from start to finish. She has always responded promptly and has been collaborative in terms of ensuring that she and I can each use our specific roles to best serve the client rather than running in circles past each other or stepping on each other's toes. It has been an honor to work with her, especially regarding this client. If you could let the people up top, that would be great.

Beyond this, I have had the opportunity to witness Yvette's compassion personally. One day, she helped problem-solve an issue for a family that was evicted. She was trying to find resources for a damage deposit, working with the client on new housing options, and let the client lead the process (or allowed her to feel in control) regarding new landlords, rent amounts etc. The client had stopped in for signatures, but was really upset by her family dynamics. Yvette kept her from escalating even more. She didn't try to tell her what would and wouldn't work, because at the point it was clear the client would not want to hear that. She just did a really nice job with this woman's mental health while remaining professional.

I have also seen Yvette welcome new staff so openly. She helps people feel connected to a team. You sort of feel like you have known Yvette all along! She's a great asset for Phoenix!”