Why Does This Work Matter to You?

Response by Eva Stevens, Human Services Program Consultant, NC DHHS

I am a person of lived experience, like others, both personal and familial. I believe that knowledge is power and hopefully if people know better, they will do better. This work matters to me because I am personally connected to so many communities that are impacted by the stigma that says it's taboo to ask for help. My brother lives with SPMI, my son is on the spectrum, my queer daughter has Tourette's, my veteran husband has untreated PTSD, and my mom has dementia caused by Alzheimer's. I balance all these while I deal with my own mental health issues.

One of the main things our team does is get people to the right place so they can get the help they need. People often call exasperated because they have been given so many numbers or given the run around so many times. I want to be the second to the last number they must call to get themselves connected. Because I know firsthand how it feels to be brushed off or given misinformation. I know how it feels to sit in an ED for days and be told that there is no placement in sight. I know how it feels to be dismissed by a "professional" and be misdiagnosed because you were not being heard. And I don't ever want anyone to have to feel that. That's why this work matters to me.