

Volunteer Spotlight



Monica Smyth

Monica Smyth has been a Stamford resident since 2007. She currently lives on Hobson Street in Shippan. A lawyer by training, Monica's first job was with the Environmental Protection Agency where she practiced environmental law. For the last 13 years, Monica has been with the non-profit organization Abilis that provides services and support for over 700 individuals with special needs and their families. She has worn many hats during her tenure there. She leaned on her legal training to educate families on their rights to equal education for their special needs children. She developed programs for siblings, recognizing that it's the whole family that needs support. She helped manage a theater and music program for special needs individuals that was a huge success. Lately, Monica has been working on employment opportunities through "Project Search," a collaboration between Abilis and Greenwich Hospital, where special needs students get skills training and job experience. "There are so many jobs people with disabilities can do, but getting your foot in the door is huge. This is how you change the world. It becomes the norm, not the exception," explained Monica.

Monica's commitment to volunteer service runs wide and deep. In 2009, she was appointed a member of the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities. The Council is a governor-appointed body of people with disabilities, family members and professionals who work together to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities in community life. For two years, Monica volunteered her time and expertise and traveled to Hartford for monthly meetings.

For the last 7 years, Monica has served on The City of Stamford's Board of Ethics (BOE). The BOE is a 9 member board appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Representatives. The BOE has the responsibility of investigating any complaints of violation of the Stamford Code of Ethics by an officer or employee of the City government. In addition, when requested, it issues Advisory Opinions to city employees who seek guidance about their contemplated actions which might be considered a violation of the Code. The BOE meets monthly or more often if cases before them warrant it. Monica enjoys her work on the board and sees it as a way to make government better for everyone. As a lawyer, Monica brings unique experience and knowledge in areas such as conflict of interest that often come before the board.

Monica is also passionate about helping immigrants. For three years, she volunteered with the Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants, a statewide nonprofit agency that provides immigration services to low income individuals. She currently volunteers for Building One Community, whose mission is to bring passionate people together to help immigrants and their families succeed in the community. She plans to increase her efforts in the area of Immigration Law, a much needed service given Stamford's large immigrant community.

We in Shippan are proud to call Monica Smyth one of our own!

The Shippan Point Association is proud to highlight Shippan residents who generously commit their time and talent to local non-profit or government organizations. Each month we will select one resident to profile. Residents are encouraged to submit nominations for outstanding volunteers who show a high level of commitment to helping others. Email info@shippan.com and include specific reasons/information on why you are nominating this person.