

BIO FOR KAY L. GRIER

I am a graduate of South High School, Columbus Ohio and a graduate of Knoxville College, Knoxville Tennessee. My employment with the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (OSILC) began in August of 2001 as the Office Manager. My tenure as the Executive Director started on a permanent basis in June 2010. I served as interim Executive Director from November 2009.

My story involves family. I had two sisters, both deceased, both older than me and both children with disabilities. Judith had Down Syndrome and Carolyn had a stroke when she was a baby. My mother was not aware of organizations that could offer her assistance and she did the best she could with the hand she was dealt. Judith passed away before she was six months old with a heart condition (not uncommon for children with Down Syndrome). Mom took care of Carolyn as long as she could, physically carrying her up and down stairs while taking care of my brother and me who were both toddlers. I think it was too much for my father, so he left. Carolyn spent most of her life in an institution and her death left a very bitter taste in my mouth and an overwhelming sense of helplessness. I knew nothing of Independent Living until I came to work for the OSILC. As politically incorrect as it may be, I often use a line from one of Stevie Wonder's songs that says, "God knew exactly where he wanted you to be placed," as my reason for being here. Working with the OSILC and other disability-related organizations is the most important work I have ever done.