

State Office: Assembly District: 2

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Questionnaire

1. As a legislator, what are the three issues you will prioritize in the next legislative session?

Candidate Position on Americans with Disabilities (District 4)

Healing Americas Yellow Closet
By Anthony Publitz

Living with a Disability is one of the toughest things to do. I'm a disabled Vet. And to make matters worse, my disability is under the mental handicap. The doctors say I'm Bi Polar, I just say "I get excited". But just the stigma attached makes ignorant people think the worst.

In Wisconsin studies indicate that one out of every four people have a diagnosable mental illness. I don't think most elected officials really care about that. In the past ten years in National, and State politics there has been no real action taken. But let me tell you with the heart of a real badger, if I was to be elected handling disabled citizens with honor would be my number one priority.

True story. Just this week I started school at Madison Edgewood, and within a day the campus staff was warned that I was Bi Polar and to contact security if I was hostile with them, or threatening. See one of my traits is: I come off intense. I can't help that.

When I was walking around the campus that Chris roamed, I ran into Madison Edgewood's assistant Athletic Director and asked him if there were any disabled athletics I was able to try out for. He asked me who I was, and I told him, he then replied, "I know about you?"

One of the problems with people in power is that they don't have no reform to fall back on. How does confidential information move so fast? I asked myself.

Well to make a long story short, I was kicked out of the VA Vocational Rehab program that paid for my schooling at Edgewood, because in the counselor's words, "my actions that day showed that I was too manic to participate in school, because of my actions".

So then I asked Mr. Wolfgram (my VA counselor) what actions made him think I was not ready?

Madison Edgewood is not my first college, I spent 4 years at William and Mary in Virginia, and three at MATC-Madison. I have a cumulative 3.0, and never been arrested in my life.

But when I heard about how my information was being treated like a cheese stick in a dipping basket, I started to do what I do best, I looked for an answer.

I went to Madison Edgewoods "Disability Resource Office" to file a complaint.

When I was in the office I could see that Edgewood had no barriers to protect my rights to confidentiality. The sitting area was in plain view to the entire school population with a sign that let everyone who didn't know, know that I had a disability.

I don't like everyone knowing my business let alone Assistant AD's that don't need to know at all!

So that was my second complaint.

When I was escorted to my disability counselor, I started to tell her that I wanted to file a complaint.

She stated " We do not have complaint boxes on this campus".

I asked why?

She said they are not required by law.

Then I asked why all the staff was warned of my arrival.

She said that's policy with mental disabilities on their campus.

She then stated that she thought my questioning was becoming threatening and she would have to call Campus Security.

I told her to go right along and do it, because I have a great lawyer, and I record all conversations with authority, and the play back will make her look like a fool in any competent person's eyes.

She didn't call Campus Security, but she did tell me that for my first day on the campus I wasn't making any friends with the staff.

I told her.

I don't make friends with people who would never be friends with my friends.

See one of the first issues I would prioritize would be helping in overturning the recently approved FISA Act. Surveillance needs to stop in this country. If its at all levels citizens with disabilities will never live a happy life.

Second I sponsor into legislation a bill that would freeze all citizens with Disabilities confidential files. In this bill the citizen would have the opportunity to look through his file, and be able to take out what ever he wanted so no one will ever be able to look at it.

Third I would put into legislation a bill that covered all citizens with any disability the right to free health care, free education, and full disabled benefits. 27.5% of people with a disabilities aged 18-64 live below the poverty line. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is three times higher than for people without disabilities. The SSI supplement for Wisconsin with disabilities has not increased in over ten years. As a country we dont take care of what really needs our attention. Government today does not help the everyday citizen. They rather spend trillions helping people of other lands, that dont like us.

See what Wisconsin doesnt know is that I have problems with people who look the other way when they see a citizen with a disability.

I encounter issues everyday with citizens in authority who think just because they have the capacity to know about someones past, they think they have the need to know. Thats how the campus at Madison Edgewood works, if elected I would work hard to see that Madison Edgewood receives no public funding until they prove they can handle confidential material.

Peace

Anthony

2. Studies indicate that one in four Wisconsinites have diagnosable mental illness and would benefit from effective treatment. In addition, mental illness is the leading cause of disability for working age adults in the United States. People often can not access effective treatment, frequently citing affordability as a barrier. What will you do as a legislator to increase access to effective treatment and community services?

3. Poverty is a reality for many people with disabilities in Wisconsin. Consider these facts, from the American Association of People with Disabilities.

- 27.5% of people with disabilities aged 18-64 live below the poverty line.
- The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is three times higher than for people without disabilities.
- The SSI supplement for Wisconsinites with disabilities has not increased in over ten years.

As a legislator, what will you do to address poverty for people with disabilities?

4. One of your constituents contacts you. She is a 68 year old woman whose 70 year old husband has just had a stroke and is now in a nursing home. They have a 46 year old daughter with cerebral palsy who has always lived at home.

Up until now, the family has been providing their daughter's personal care as well as help with mobility and transfers, for example in and out of the bathtub. Now with dad in the nursing home, mom cannot care for their daughter alone. The family is covered by Medicare and the daughter is Medicaid eligible.

All the family's available resources have been expended through caring for their daughter and dad's nursing home costs. Your constituent needs help to provide the assistance her daughter needs and she does not know where to turn. Please describe how you would handle this situation as a legislator and what specific steps you would take to assist this constituent.

5. Do you support expansion of Family Care statewide? Why or why not? If you support other initiatives to increase options for people with disabilities to live in the community, which ones and why do you support them?

6. A constituent in your district who is attending high school plans to attend college in the near future. Her high school offers college prep courses and other extra-curricular activities after school. Counselors often recommend that students participate in these activities to make their college applications stronger and to inform them about options and resources they have when it

comes to making a decision to attend college.

Your constituent has a physical disability and uses a wheelchair. She is not able to drive or take public transportation. Her high school does not offer accessible transportation for these after-school programs.

This constituent would like her college application to be competitive with students who can participate in these programs. How would you respond if she called to request your assistance?

7. The 2000 census showed that approximately one in every $6\frac{1}{2}$ Wisconsin residents has a disability. As a legislator, what specific steps will you take in order to reach out to the disability community and ensure you are proactively meeting the needs of this constituency?