

FCC TASKFORCE SPOTLIGHT



LATOYA BLUEFORD

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Postpartum Doula
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NICU Parent of Skylar

Meet Latoya! She serves as an Executive Council Family Partner and Organizational Partner for the Family-Centered Care Taskforce.



How were you personally activated to advocate for and support NICU families?

My personal experience as a NICU mother has profoundly shaped my commitment to advocating for and supporting NICU families. I understand firsthand the exhaustion, devastation, and trauma that this journey can entail. This firsthand experience has fueled my mission to assist and uplift as many families as possible during their time in the NICU.

How does your organization/company/hospital support NICU families?

Our organization is dedicated to supporting NICU families by providing direct peer support, financial resources, and hosting community events and fundraisers.

What insight or advice do you have for healthcare professionals who want to implement/strengthen FCC practices in their hospital?

My advice for healthcare professionals is to empower families through hands-on care by encouraging them to actively engage in tasks such as bathing, diaper changes, and feeding. This will boost their confidence and foster a deeper connection with their baby. I would encourage parents, especially those of the most medically complex babies, to learn as much as possible about their child's health conditions. Approach parents as valued partners in the process, providing them with compassion, patience, and guidance as they navigate their new normal

What are the greatest needs of families in maternal-infant health you observe through your work?

The most pressing needs of families in maternal-infant health include financial resources, coaching for self-advocacy, and an empathetic healthcare team.

What does being part of the FCC Taskforce mean to you personally?

Being a member of the FCC Taskforce is a true honor. It allows me to leverage my own experiences to identify what has been effective for me and share those insights as tools to promote more compassionate, family-centered care.

What is your greatest wish in terms of the positive impact the FCC Taskforce members can make together in maternal-infant health?

To develop effective strategies that empower parents in the NICU. I envision creating an environment where parents feel seen, validated, and deeply involved in their baby's care. By fostering this involvement, we can ensure that when it comes time to transition home, parents feel fully supported and prepared to be their baby's primary caregivers.

Is there anything you want our community to know?

Raising awareness about the profound lived experiences of NICU families is my life's mission. Many individuals have preconceived notions about what a NICU journey involves, but these perceptions often fail to capture the reality. It's essential to share these authentic experiences to foster a deeper understanding and identify collaborative strategies that empower families to achieve the best outcomes for their babies.

