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Local Mom Appointed to National Parenting Advisory Board

Baldwin - Jessica Demulling, a longtime parent partner with Family Resource Center St. Croix Valley (FRCSCV), has been appointed to the Children's Trust Fund Alliance's National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC). This national body is made up of parent leaders who bring lived experience and expertise in family support programs and strategies to the Alliance's work on behalf of families across the country. Wisconsin's statewide Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board (CANPB) nominated her for the role.

"We are so pleased that CANPB nominated Jessica to become a member of the ANPPC," said Teresa Rafael, Alliance Executive Director. "We are thrilled to have Jessica join this important council as she brings a wealth of knowledge and experience with prevention programs. We are looking forward to working with Jessica and other members of the ANPPC to help inform the Alliance's work related to policies and practices that help strengthen and support families."

For Jess, a mother of three, the news came as a surprise. "I was honestly surprised, shocked, humbled, and really excited," she said. "Being chosen for this opportunity means a lot to me because it feels like my voice and experiences as a parent can be used to help make a difference for families across the country. I'm grateful for the trust that was placed in me, and I'm excited to learn and be part of something bigger than myself."

Jess's journey with FRCSCV began 17 years ago, when Program Manager Marla Butler encouraged her to attend a Baby & Me group. Since then, she has grown into a leader in her own right, currently serving as chair of FRCSCV's Parent Advisory Council, working with early childhood programs, and serving as a trainer and parent partner in other prevention efforts.

"My experience with FRCSCV and the Parent Advisory Council really opened my eyes to how important early childhood support and prevention are," Jess said. "It gave me an opportunity to listen to other parents, share my own experiences, and understand that sometimes the smallest support can make a really big difference in a family's life."

That perspective is exactly what she hopes to carry into her new national role. "I hope to bring an honest, real-life parent perspective. I'm not afraid to ask questions, listen, or speak up when I feel something could benefit children and families," she said. "I also hope to learn from the other people around the table. There is always more to learn, and I'm looking forward to gaining a better understanding of the bigger picture and how we can work together to make positive changes in our lives and in children's lives."

Asked what she'd want other parents to know, Jess didn't hesitate: "You don't have to have it all figured out. Parenting can be messy, and every family has challenges. Asking for help doesn't make you a bad parent or that you failed, it makes you human. Sometimes having someone listen, provide a resource, or simply remind you that you're not alone can make all the difference. I've learned that supporting parents is one of the best ways we can support children and each other."

Jess was quick to share credit for the milestone. "I'd really like to thank Marla Butler for getting me to go to a Baby & Me 17 years ago, and to FRCSCV, the Parent Advisory Council, and everyone who has trusted me and encouraged me along the way," she said. "I'm especially grateful for the people who have given me opportunities to use my voice and share my experiences and truths. I want to thank my family for supporting me and encouraging me to learn and grow. Being a mom is who I am, and so much of what I bring to this role comes from my experiences. I have failed only to learn that I can succeed from my failures, with my children, my family, and myself."

The Alliance created the ANPPC in 2007 to serve as a national model for partnering with parents and elevating parent leadership within state children's trust funds and community-based programs. Council members work alongside Alliance committees, and the two ANPPC co-chairs also serve on the Alliance's Board of Directors.

FRCSCV congratulates Jess on this well-deserved recognition and is proud to see her voice, and the voices of the parents she has championed, reach a national stage.

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Jessica Demulling