

Quinn Nystrom

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Minnesota House 10A

### **Section #1: About Yourself**

Question 1: Please provide a short background about yourself.

I was elected to the Baxter City Council in 2014, the top vote getter in a four candidate field, and one of the youngest councilmembers in Minnesota. I've served as the Commission Liaison on the Brainerd Lakes Area Sex Trafficking Taskforce, Baxter Community Behavioral Health Hospital and the Baxter Parks & Trails Commission. After my younger brother was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at 5, I committed my life to working to find a cure for diabetes. I was then diagnosed with diabetes at 13 and redoubled my efforts to find a cure and help people living with diabetes. At 16 I was chosen to serve as the National Youth Advocate for the American Diabetes Association. Through this role, I spent a year traveling across the country to diabetes camps, conferences, corporations, Congress and even the White House. I was the youngest recipient at 15 to receive the American Diabetes Association's Star Award and received their 2016 Advocacy Award this past month. I serve on their Community Leadership Board and Advocacy Sub-Committee. The Brainerd Lion's Club awarded Quinn their highest honor for her work for diabetes with the Dreamcatcher Award. I've spoken to over 275,000 people in North America. I'll receive my Masters of Science degree in Communication Management from Syracuse University in January and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communication and Political Science from Hope College in Holland, MI. I'm a 2004 Brainerd High School graduate.

Question 2: What do you hope to accomplish by running for office? What will your main priorities be at the Capitol if you are elected?

Rural Minnesotans deserve a vibrant, local economy, livable wages, and strong public schools. Serving on the Baxter City Council, it's been a privilege to move our city forward. I am an advocate rather than a politician, speaking up for those I represent. With 20 years of patient advocacy, I have worked with both political parties to discover common ground. If elected, I would continue my lifelong advocacy to reduce prescription drug prices, ensure health care coverage and invest in medical research that would benefit millions of Americans.

Question 3: What experiences or connections, if any, do you have to the disability community?

Being someone who's lived with type 1 diabetes for 17 years and having a younger brother who's had it for 20 years, I know what it's like to be considered "disabled". In college I stood up and fought for my rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act. I've traveled North America speaking professionally about life with a chronic disease and being an avid patient advocate in Washington, D.C. since I was 16 years old fighting for the rights of people with disabilities.

### **Section #2: Our Workforce Crisis**

1. The care of our elderly and disabled is precious and we must not as a government support cuts and/or not keeping up to pace with inflation year over year. Our HHS budget needs to be carefully reviewed

every year, but it cannot afford cutbacks. We must support a higher livable wage for direct support professionals and caregivers.

2. Absolutely. Now with incredible technological advances, better broadband access, it makes several things more accessible, especially in the more rural areas of Minnesota.

### **Section #3: The Sustainability of our System**

1. My role as a state legislator would be to ensure that Minnesota is keeping up with the standards that were put forth with the Olmstead Plan. Because of my background of 20 years of patient advocacy on the state and federal level I would want to be closely involved in making sure that people with disabilities are experiencing the highest quality of life possible.

2. It's unfortunate and disheartening that we saw no additional funding passed this past session by the state legislature. Affordable housing is an issue that is still very much an issue. People with disabilities should have options to live as independently as they are able. We need to make incremental increases in funding each year, or else we'll have to pay more in the long run if we don't do a little each year to make sure that we have accessible, affordable housing for people.

3. I think transparency and open communication between government entities should always be a high priority. If the legislature is going to enact a new mandate that affects another entity, positively or negatively, they must give ample time to receive feedback as to how this would affect them. My time serving on the City Council has taught me to take the time to sit and listen with residents and business owners before casting any vote, since these issues do affect them and they are ultimately my boss.