

**Award:** David LeRoy Anderson Community Building Award  
**Recipient:** Emily Evans  
**Presenter:** Jen Tayabji

Good evening! My name is Jen Tayabji and I am a Community Organizer with Champaign County Health Care Consumers. I have the pleasure of presenting one of CCHCC's dedicated volunteers, Emily Evans, with the David LeRoy Anderson Community Building Award. This award is given to an individual whose work goes above and beyond to not only advance access to health care, but unites and mobilizes a community for health care justice. And that is what David LeRoy Anderson embodied.

Dave Anderson was CCHCC's door canvasser for 15 years, until his death in August 2001. Dave was an intelligent, funny, compassionate, kind, sincere and charming man, who committed the last 15 years of his life to working to support social justice in health care. He went door-to-door all over Champaign County, talking with people in their homes. He would tell them about CCHCC and the latest health care issues, asking about the health care issues they were facing. He even took on the daunting task of asking them to give money to support the work for health care access that CCHCC is so heavily involved in. He is legendary among community organizers throughout Illinois for his excellence as a canvasser. Dave loved this challenging position, and his efforts resulted in thousands of people joining CCHCC as members. I did not have the pleasure to work with Dave, but I have heard so many stories about the true commitment to his work and I have met so many people who were introduced to CCHCC's work through Dave Anderson. The David Leroy Anderson Community Building Award honors members of the community who have lovingly dedicated themselves to building a movement and a community that will fight for what's right.

Emily Evans began volunteering with Champaign County Health Care Consumers as a Canvasser for the 5<sup>th</sup> & Hill Neighborhood Right Campaign about a year ago. Before she knocked on her first door, she took it upon herself to learn as much as she

could about the former manufactured gas plant on the Ameren property that has been poisoning the neighborhood. She took time to understand what had historically happened to the residents, how CCHCC got involved, and what the residents wanted to see. She has spent evenings, late nights, and Saturdays talking to as many residents as possible. Emily may seem quiet, but she always has a strong presence. She helps out as much as she can, does whatever is needed, and hits the ground running. Through her work as a canvasser, she has helped engage residents in the 5<sup>th</sup> & Hill neighborhood, earning their trust and becoming a reliable source of information. She is on the ground talking with the people whose lives are most affected by the toxic contamination, helping them get updates on the campaign, gathering feedback, and giving residents opportunities to stay involved. She has been key in helping bring residents to the Champaign City Council Study Sessions and meetings on the Groundwater Restriction Ordinance, which allows Ameren to get away with not cleaning up the contamination that has spread offsite. Most recently, she has been at the forefront of conducting surveys with the residents of what they would like to see in the redevelopment of the Ameren property. Being a great canvasser is no easy feat. It takes a lot of patience, determination, and the ability to really connect with people and earn their trust. It requires the commitment to what you are doing and believing in the change that can come from your work to stick with canvassing. The 5<sup>th</sup> & Hill Neighborhood Rights Campaign would not have gotten as far as it has in seeking justice without the pure dedication of the canvassers like Emily.

I have been amazed working with Emily by her continued desire to help any way she can. Not only does she canvass for the 5<sup>th</sup> & Hill Neighborhood Rights Campaign, she has started volunteering for the Health Care Access Task Force, furthering her commitment to environmental and health care justice. She is now studying Community Health and with her commitment to social change, her passion for health care justice, and her tremendous heart, I believe she will only continue to build communities for what is right. On behalf of Champaign County Health Care Consumers, I am honored to present Emily with the David LeRoy Anderson Community Building Award.