

Award: Aimee Olson Advocate of the Year Award
Recipient: Cope Cumpston
Presenter: Crissy Turino

Hello, my name is Crissy Turino and I coordinate CCHCC's direct service programs, the Consumer Health Hotline and the Dental Referral Program. On behalf of the CCHCC Board and Staff, I am honored to announce Cope Cumpston as the Aimee Olson Advocate of the Year for her outstanding advocacy work and dedication to helping her clients gain health and dental care access. The Aimee Olson Advocate of the Year Award is given to an individual that demonstrates a commitment to serving consumers and helping them receive access to affordable, quality health care through our Hotline.

Our Consumer Health Hotline is a free resource that provides in person and over the phone assistance, information, referral, and advocacy services to hundreds of community members each month. The Hotline is staffed by trained volunteer Advocates, like Cope, that help our clients navigate the health care system, and receive the health and other services that they need.

Cope began volunteering on the Hotline before I came on staff at Health Care Consumers, about two years ago. She had been a long time member of the organization, and after retiring from her job at the U of I, wanted to become more actively involved with CCHCC. We are so glad that she did! Each week, Cope rides up to the Lincoln Building on her colorful bicycle, and brings all of her strength and compassion with her to better serve the consumers that reach out to us for help. She is an asset to the work that we do on the Hotline, but more importantly, she is a great advocate and truly helps the individuals that she works with.

Over the past year, Cope has also begun to enroll people in our Dental Referral Program, and helps many low-income adults without dental insurance receive discounted dental care. Our Program has been growing, and without Cope's help, we might not have been able to enroll over a 120 individuals in the Dental Referral Program last year.

Cope is the Advocate that I would want on my side, because she is unfalteringly kind, to the point, and does what it takes to get people the services or information that they need – whether that means doing extra research, visiting our referral sites, or making many phone calls on a person's behalf. We are all truly lucky to have Cope as health care Advocate in our community, and I am very fortunate to work with her. I am proud to present Cope as this year's recipient for the Aimee Olsen Advocate of the Year Award!