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Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES



Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw
COMMISSIONER

Sept. 8, 2017

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lee County parent to join ADRS board

MONTGOMERY – A Lee County woman will be sworn in Sept. 8 as the newest member of the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services.

Penny Foster, an Auburn resident and Tuscaloosa native, will represent the 3rd Congressional District. Foster is the mother of three daughters, including 13-year-old Maggie, who has Down syndrome. Foster was appointed to the board in March by then-Gov. Robert Bentley and confirmed by the Alabama Senate.

ADRS Commissioner Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw said she is pleased to welcome Foster to the board.

“Mrs. Foster’s personal experience as the mother of a child with Down syndrome provides her with a unique perspective on disability services in our state,” Burdeshaw said. “She has been a vocal and tireless advocate for her daughter and other children with special needs, and it is heartening to have such a strong voice of unwavering support for people with disabilities serve on our board.”

Foster is the founder of The Journey School, a nonprofit inclusive preschool, as well as a co-founder of TEAM 21, a networking group for parents of children with Down syndrome; and Blessings on the Plains, a nonprofit day program for adults with disabilities now known as the Exceptional Foundation of East Alabama. She also played an instrumental role in the creation of a Sunday school class for children with special needs at Auburn United Methodist Church.

“I am excited to take an active role in promoting disability and rehabilitation issues through this appointment,” Foster said. “I know first-hand the challenges faced by the parents of children with special health care needs. My journey started with my own child, and as I learned to deal with my own challenges, I filled the void in my community by helping those around me.”

Foster will join board members Stephen Kayes, District 1; Board Chairman Jimmie Varnado, District 2; Andrea Collett, District 4; Eddie Williams, District 5; Roger McCullough, District 5; and Mitch Strickland, District 7.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services is the state agency whose mission is to enable Alabama’s children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.

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SERVING ALABAMA’S CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES