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Melinda Samuels has been a Peer Supporter for the SE region of Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania since 2001. She has peer supported at least four callers throughout the years. In Melinda's case, what makes her an outstanding Peer Supporter is not the number of callers she supports, but rather the quality of the support she provides for them. Melinda lives in Philadelphia, and although she leads a very busy life, she has given of her free time to go above and beyond the expectations of a Parent to Parent Peer Supporter. Because Melinda is one of the few bilingual Peer Supporters in our database, she is often called upon to contact a caller who feels more comfortable using Spanish to communicate. I asked Melinda if she could support Miriam, a caller from New York City who was planning to relocate to Philadelphia, PA. Melinda and Miriam both had children with autism. Melinda made Miriam feel more comfortable when discussing problems about her child, because she could communicate in Spanish. Melinda not only gave Miriam support and information over the telephone, but when Miriam made a one-day trip to Philadelphia to investigate housing and other services, Melinda spent six hours with Miriam showing her around Philadelphia area and taking her to different organizations and resource services that might be able to help her once she moved. Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania recognizes Melinda and all our Peer Supporters who continue to inspire and make a

difference in the lives of Pennsylvania families who have children or adults with disabilities or special needs.

