



CARLA SPECTOR

How long have you been a social worker?

I started with DDD in April of 2006 with the Early Intervention Unit.

Please list any degrees, licenses, etc.

I graduated from ASU with a Bachelor's in Social Work in 2005.

Why/How did you get into social work?

I explored several interests while attending Mesa Community College. The career exploration inventory revealed my true interest was to help people. My childhood experiences were key factors that led me to pursuing a degree in social work. My mother had 7 children. My sister is the oldest, 5 brothers and I am the youngest of 7. My mom was a single mother. Mom did not go to high school. She was a minority and dependent on the social welfare system. My mom was 19 when my oldest brother, Tony, was born in 1960. Tony was born with Spina bifida and hydrocephalus, which was piggybacked by an intellectual disability. Mom was told that Tony wouldn't live more than 5 years. Mom was living with family. When Tony turned two years of age, she decided to give him up for adoption. My mother felt she was not equipped to care for my brother's special needs. At that time, supports and services were not available for individuals with disabilities. Unfortunately, my brother Tony spent his young life in foster care until he aged out at 18. Tony did have several foster families that cared for him. Tony passed; he was 38 when he died. My mother passed when I was 3. After my mother passed, my half siblings went to live with their father; my oldest sister was already married and a young mother herself. I was raised by my father who struggled with alcohol and drug dependence. He did his best to parent, work and raise me. All these experiences equipped me to work with the vulnerable population I serve today.

What motivates you to do social work?

The love of working with vulnerable populations. Especially infants. What's not to love about babies?

What advice would you give someone considering social work?

Do your homework first. Interview professionals in the field to determine where you would like to see yourself working as a professional social worker. The possibilities are endless depending on your interests. Pursue a master's in social work if you want to become licensed, have your own practice or see the monetary return of the time invested in your education.