

SPECIAL EDITION - February 2010

Dear WNUSP Friends,

This special edition of WNUSP-News, commemorates the life and times of Judi Chamberlin, former WNUSP co-chair.

JUDI CHAMBERLIN ☐ (1944-2010)



Much has been written about Judi Chamberlin, some of which will be quoted below, but not much has been written about Judi as co-chair and board member of the WNUSP.

Judi Chamberlin has been dubbed as the grandmother of the user/survivor movement.

She was the author of groundbreaking book *On Our Own: Patient-Controlled Alternatives to the Mental Health System* (1978).

The following is written about Judi in Wikipaedia:

Judi Chamberlin (October 30, 1944 in Brooklyn – January 16, 2010 in Arlington, Massachusetts) was an anti traditional psychiatry activist, speaker, educator and survivor. She was associated with the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at Boston University.

Chamberlin was Director of Education at the National Empowerment Center and involved with National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy and other national and international advocacy organizations. She was an influential leader in the Mad Pride movement.

Chamberlin died of pulmonary disease at her home on January 16, 2010.

The following quotation comes from <http://judi-chamberlin.virtual-memorials.com/> :

In her early 20s, Chamberlin was hospitalized in a state institution and diagnosed with schizophrenia. She soon discovered that, as a psychiatric patient, she had no legal rights. This realization was the catalyst for her activist career, which began in the early 1970s when she co-founded the Mental Patients' Liberation Front.

Judi worked tirelessly throughout her life to create client-run, non-coercive alternatives to traditional mental health systems, and to end rights violations and discrimination against people with psychiatric disabilities.

Obituaries for Judi has been published in various US newspapers:

- <http://www.nytimes.com>
- <http://www.washingtonpost.com>
- <http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe>

Her role in the WNUSP

Judi was elected as co-chair at the launching conference and General Assembly of the WNUSP in Vancouver, Canada in 2001. She served in this capacity until the next General Assembly in Vejle, Denmark in 2004.

During this period she also served the WNUSP as a member of the Panel of Experts, advising the UN special rapporteur on disability.

In Denmark she was re-elected onto the board and served on it until the third General Assembly in Kampala, Uganda in March 2009. She did not attend this conference as she was already very ill at the time.

At the following link are clips of Judi and others who attended the Denmark conference:

<http://wnusp.rafus.dk/videos-from-the-general-assembly-in-vejle.html>

Judi is well known to many in the disability movement and was one of the early participants (representing the WNUSP) at the Ad Hoc Committee which drafted the CRPD.

Below follows some of the well-wishes and remembrances of many of the people who knew her.

Messages of support

"I send our deep condolences to Judi's relatives and all who loved her , she will be always my inspiration."

Elena Chàvez (WNUSP - Perú)

"I take this opportunity to bring all my colleagues in TUSPO to join the psychiatric world in mourning the death of our beloved Judi Chamberlin. May God rest her soul in eternal peace. TUSPO going through her history came out with one lesson; that one person so committed like the late Judy can change the direction of the society than a million people who are non – committed. We have lost a great fighter. God bless her family."

Eliezer Robert Mdakilwa (TUSPO – Tanzania)

"I and MHU join the rest in mourning for a fallen hero whom I first met in Vejle Denmark. She was very focused; we will miss her. May her soul rest in eternal peace."

Daniel Iga (Mental Health Uganda)

"On behalf of myself and the USPKenya fraternity, I wish to join hands with family and friends of the late Judi Chamberlin, and the entire user/survivor fraternity, to mourn her death. May she rest in peace."

Susan Catherine Keter (USP Kenya)

"On my behalf and on behalf of Mental Health Uganda (MHU) would like to join you all to mourn the passing on of our own Judi the bold mental health activist from the US. She was an inspiration to many of us and her contribution to our struggle will always be remembered. It is my hope that we get many people willing to continue with her activism and other many of her efforts in the area of mental health. We are grateful and lucky to have lived with a person in the name of Judi in our life time, for her life and for the attributes she had that we were able to use in her and she positively contributed to our efforts in many ways. To the family members and the entire movement I wish strength amidst this moment of loss.

Bye Bye Judi our friend."

Julius Lutaakome Kayiira (Mental Health Uganda)

"It was unbelievable for me, that Judi already had that age, but even more, that she had to leave us so early. I feel sad to miss an open minded person, who has fought all her life for persons with psychosocial disabilities and also including many others. I remember having very inspiring talks with her. May her family and friends and all of us, who got to know her, keep in mind the good moments of being with her, her spirit and ideas."

Lex Grandia (World Federation of the Deafblind)

"Rehabilitation International conveys our condolences to the family of Judi Chamberlin whom we will always remember for her outstanding work to promote the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities. On the personal note, I had the opportunity to meet and work with Judy during the early stage of the negotiations for the CRPD and found her a good and extremely articulate person. We will miss her and thank her for her valuable contributions to the goal of advancing the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities across the world."

Venus M. Ilagan (Rehabilitation International)

"Inclusion International joins with others in mourning the loss of Judi Chamberlain. Those of us who had a chance to meet her could not help but be impressed by her dynamism and tenacity. Our thoughts and sympathy go out to her family and friends.

"Diane Richler (Inclusion International)

"RIADIS send its sympathy to the family and friends of Judi Chamberlain. This is a great loss to the movement. Our sincere condolences."

Regina Atalla (RIADIS)

"It's a very trying moment to lose a friend and a loved one. Our condolences to WNUSP and her family and friends."

Deborah Lyute (WFD)

MEMBERS' NEWS NOTICE

The WNUSP Newsletter aims to present the global struggles and achievements of users and survivors of psychiatry. We invite all members of the WNUSP to write in, sharing your views and giving news about your activities. News reports must be in English, brief (250 words) and giving your name and contact details. You may also submit ideas or proposals for articles to be considered for publication in the newsletter. Write to the Editor, WNUSP-News at editor@wnusp.net

Moosa Salie,
Facilitator WNUSP newsletter
Co-Chair WNUSP
Secretary PANUSP