

The Voice Awards, Celebrating Those Who Make a Difference for Behavioral Health, is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Mental Health Services.

WINNER OF THE 2011 VOICE AWARD FOR
CONSUMER/PEER LEADERSHIP: TONIER CAIN

Tonier Cain's story serves as an inspiration not only to all those who live with mental disorders, but also the general public. Over the past 7 years, Cain has traveled nationally and internationally to speak about her experiences with the criminal justice system, social services, and behavioral health and trauma treatment agencies. In telling her story, she clearly demonstrates the importance of coordinated treatment for individuals with mental and substance abuse disorders, trauma, and criminal justice system involvement. She makes it clear that recovery is possible for anyone, no matter what obstacles they have encountered. Despite her years of abuse, Cain has managed to maintain hope and has strived to build a better life for herself and her daughter.

Cain's life story is one of extraordinary abuse, neglect, and despair, resulting in years of hospitalization, incarceration, and homelessness. With 83 arrests and 66 convictions, psychiatric hospitalizations, and substance abuse treatment, not to mention years of living on the streets, Cain excelled after someone finally asked, "What happened to you?" rather than "What's wrong with you?" Addressing the cause rather than the symptoms enabled her amazing spirit to shine.

Today, Cain shares her message of hope nationally and internationally, speaking at professional conferences as well as working with consumers and staff in psychiatric, correctional, and homeless facilities. Her advocacy work has underscored the importance of including consumers in all aspects of behavioral health treatment systems, and her work has made a significant change in the way services are provided. She is featured in the documentary film "Behind Closed Doors" and the newly released "Healing Neen." Her mantra "Where there is breath...there is hope" inspires and encourages both those receiving and providing support. Her journey to recovery is nothing short of remarkable; her message of hope is enlightening and profound.

[Read and learn more about the 2011 Voice Awards and Voice Awards' winners.](#)