Community Champions:
What is a Local Advocacy Champion?

A community champion is anyone - a public official, a community leader, a concerned citizen, a health or human service worker, a volunteer - who works hard and well to start and/or support an initiative or intervention, to bring a program or idea to reality, or to otherwise improve the quality of life of a particular group or of the community as a whole.[1]

Community champions are dedicated individuals who inspire and lead efforts to improve their neighborhoods. They catalyze positive change, fostering engagement, collaboration, and resilience within their communities.

What Makes a Champion?

Passion for the Community
Deep-rooted commitment to the well-being of their community.

Strong Leadership Skills
They can motivate others, rally support, and drive initiatives forward. They have clear intentions and dedication to specific issues within the community.

Effective Communicators
Embraces diversity and appreciates cultural differences within the community. Willingness to communicate with everyone, regardless of religion, language, gender identity, etc.

Problem Solvers
They identify local issues and work collaboratively to develop practical solutions.

Finding Your Local Champion

Local champions vary depending on community needs and issues and may be from varying roles. Some examples are:

Subject Experts
Knowledgeable and recognized by the community for efforts towards a specific issue (i.e. child development, substance use, social inequities).

Political Insiders
Elected officials deemed capable of elevating community voices and making legislative change.

High-Level Insiders
Individuals or groups with extensive knowledge and familiarity with the community. May include previously elected officials, faith leaders, private sector leaders, philanthropists, and non-governmental agencies.

Why Local Champions Matter

Community champions play a vital role in shaping vibrant, connected, and resilient communities. They serve as community advocates and ensure local voices are heard and valued. Investing in community champions is investing in community well-being, creating an equitable space for everyone.

1 https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/maintain/reward-accomplishments/honor-community-champions/main