



Fiesta® San Antonio Commission
THE ORDER OF THE CASCARÓN NOMINATION FORM

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name of Nominee: Melanie Cawthon

Address: 2002 W Magnolia Ave City: San Antonio State: TX Zip: 78201

Phone #: _____ Cell #: 210-643-8935 Work #: _____

E-mail: melanie.cawthon@gmail.com

Affiliated PMO's (if any) Reaching Maximum Independence, Inc. (Fiesta Especial)

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name of Person Making Nomination: Cynthia Hamilton

Address: 12715 Country Oaks City: San Antonio State: TX Zip: 78216

Phone #: _____ Cell #: 210-378-2782 Work #: _____

E-mail: chamilton.sa@gmail.com

On a separate sheet:

In 400 words or less, please describe the contributions that your nominee has made to Fiesta®. Please include:

- 1) Detailed information on the volunteer role that your nominee has played in the Fiesta® celebration. Give specific details on how your nominee's efforts have had an impact on the Fiesta® celebration in a positive and long lasting way. Elaborate on specific volunteer duties and responsibilities nominee has undertaken.
- 2) The length of time that your nominee has been involved in these activities. Give specific years nominee was active in these activities.
- 3) If your nominee served in a specific leadership role during Fiesta®, i.e., Fiesta® royalty, president of a Fiesta® organization, chairman of a Fiesta® event, etc., indicate how their volunteer involvement has gone beyond the normal responsibilities of that role.

Please submit your Nomination Form and essay by 5 p.m. on February 24, 2017 in person or by email to:

Fiesta® San Antonio Commission
 2611 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas 78215
alexa@fiesta-sa.org

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NOMINATION FOR MELANIE R. CAWTHON

Melanie Cawthon has taken her role with Fiesta Especial® above and beyond the call of duty...higher than anyone ever imagined. She works tirelessly bringing visibility to individuals with disabilities in our community throughout the Fiesta® celebration. Melanie took a 2-day carnival event created for children with disabilities to a full-fledged Fiesta® experience comprised of a royal court, parade and carnival...all the while performing her normal duties as the Education and Development VP for Reaching Maximum Independence, Inc. (RMI). Initially, Fiesta Especial® was incorporated by RMI as a fundraiser within the spirit of Fiesta®. While the events did not net proceeds for RMI, Melanie saw a different value. Fiesta Especial® created a platform for inclusion and learning, so she converted these events into community-based instruction programs serving children and adults with all disabilities living within and around San Antonio.

Melanie tackles traditional barriers restricting individuals with disabilities from participating in leadership roles, giving them an opportunity to be role models and not only be included in community-wide experiences, but become visible contributors to those experiences. She has identified pathways and opportunities for individuals with disabilities to shine, be recognized and impact others in a positive way.

While many Fiesta® events have large committees or entire organizations working on their events, the majority of the work for Fiesta Especial® falls on Melanie. Her team of volunteers is small, but her determination to give individuals with disabilities a comparable Fiesta® experience is huge! There are many nights Melanie goes without sleep to ensure the programs go on. Through numerous conversations, collaborations, appearances and sheer determination, Melanie is making a long lasting impact on the Fiesta® celebration, calling attention to a segment of our community that is a significant part of the diversity, heritage and culture of San Antonio...individuals with disabilities.

Beginning in 2011, Melanie is now entering her 6th year with Fiesta Especial®, creating an unduplicated experience for individuals with disabilities. Melanie has also contributed her time over the past three years as an Elected Commissioner for Fiesta®. While I can assure you that Melanie is making an impact on the Fiesta® celebration in a positive and long lasting way...it is more important to recognize that she's making an impact on the lives of individuals with disabilities in our community. She is changing lives...she is changing our community as Fiesta® continues to incorporate those with disabilities into the limelight of Fiesta® more each year.