

# Empowered Parents Invested in Change

## A MODEL OF PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

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GeorgiaCAN's Empowered Parents Invested in Change (EPIC) program convenes like-minded individuals to be active in improving the quality of education in their community and the state of Georgia. This seven-week program engages parents in understanding advocacy, policy and organizing with a specific focus on parent engagement and advocacy. Through training, GeorgiaCAN assists members to better understand their advocacy journey, tell their story, organize community members, evaluate school data and more. Graduates of EPIC can continue into our year-long Parent Fellowship program, where they receive a stipend to work on the ground in their communities to improve education and expand educational options for all children.



# PATRICIA'S GEORGIA CAN JOURNEY

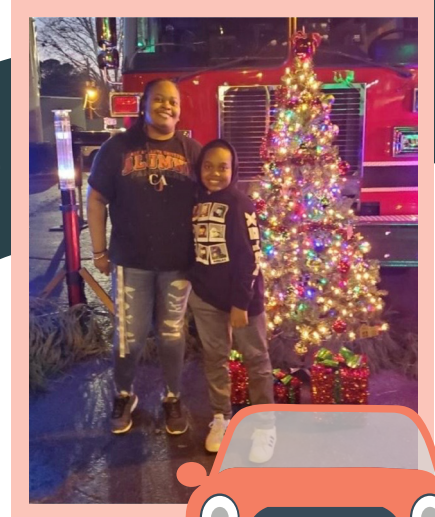
**January 2020:** Meets with our staff and expresses interest in improving the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship.

**October 2020:** Enrolls in GeorgiaCAN's EPIC program to improve her skills as an advocate for her son, who has autism.

**January 2021:** Joins GeorgiaCAN's Clayton County Parent Fellowship program. During the 2021 legislative session, Patricia testifies at the Georgia General Assembly in support of improving the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. Later that year, legislation (SB 47) passes, providing parents the legal right to appeal errors associated with the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship.

**2021-present:** Helps lead parent and community convenings in Clayton County and recruits parents to advocate at the Capitol.

**2022 legislative session:** Works with over 25 Clayton County parents to personally contact their lawmakers in support of GeorgiaCAN's legislative priorities.

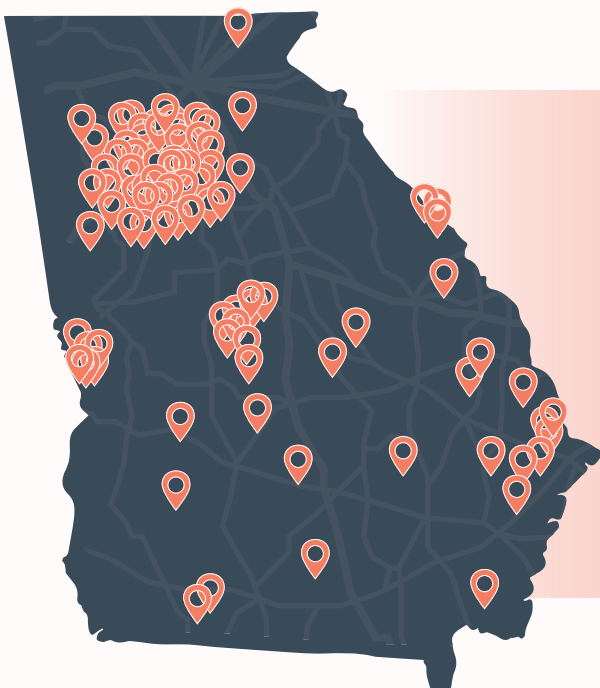
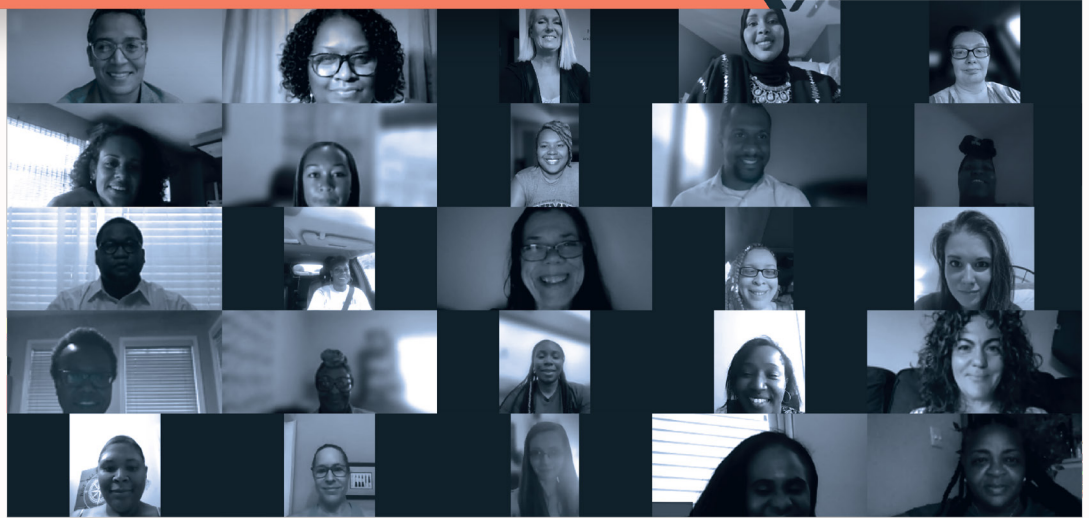


[Read more about Patricia's GeorgiaCAN journey here!](#)

# GROWING A ROBUST NETWORK OF EMPOWERED PARENTS

As of summer 2022, over **200** parents from all corners of Georgia have graduated from EPIC! Graduates have moved on to expand their voice in the education reform space through activities such as running for a political office position, launching new initiatives or organizations and conducting countless advocacy actions to ensure all Georgia kids have access to a high-quality, equitable education. GeorgiaCAN is proud of our growing network of strong parent leaders across the Peach State—from the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Coastal Plains.

## 2022 Spring EPIC Graduates



← Here's where our EPIC graduates are located.

# TESTIMONIALS

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“ GeorgiaCAN focuses on, and highlights, the parent voice. They work to increase parent knowledge through various training opportunities and discussions that are centered around parent concerns that are relevant to their child(ren)’s education. GeorgiaCAN has also made it possible to make connections and build relationships with parents across the state who share similar concerns and can provide different perspectives county-to-county, district-to-district.

My biggest takeaway from EPIC was the importance of sharing my advocacy story and journey with other parents and elected officials. In addition, the program highlighted the importance of cultivating relationships and engaging with local and state school board members, school district personnel, state legislative delegates and other elected officials. ”

**- Denise Cambridge**

“ GeorgiaCAN drives the power of parent voice to work in partnership with district leaders to create positive change for our communities...[Through EPIC], I learned how powerful my voice could be in the education space. There aren’t many who are talking, so when someone does, it makes waves... The power of the parent voice cannot be overstated. EPIC trains parents to use their voice in impactful ways. ”

**- Jae Harrsion Patterson**






# WANT TO JOIN EPIC?

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GeorgiaCAN hosts two EPIC cohorts annually—one in the spring and one in the fall. The fall cohort begins on September 15 and will be conducted virtually. Over seven weeks, parents will receive advocacy, organizing and policy training.

## Participant Requirements

### Participants must:

-  Apply and be accepted into the program;
-  Have a child or grandchild in the Georgia education system;
-  Attend at least six out of the seven training sessions (each session will be one hour to 90 minutes in length);
-  Be active on social media; and
-  Have a strong passion for advocacy and improving education.

*Please note current Georgia K-12 students can also apply for this program.*

**Apply via GeorgiaCAN's website to be considered for the next cohort!**

## GET INVOLVED



[gacan.org](https://gacan.org)



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