

CONGRATULATIONS

DCFS ALL STARS

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

February 2008

Outstanding Administrative Staff Award

***Caroline Han, Assistant Regional Administrator
Lakewood Office***

Caroline Han has worked quietly for DCFS for decades, without receiving much well-deserved fanfare or recognition. Her quiet, steadfast service has encompassed many service components including a long stint in emergency response.

After serving in the Lakewood office as an ER SCSW for many years, Ms. Han successfully completed the Los Angeles County Learning Academy's 100-hour section head program in order to prepare for possible advancement to management. Based on her extensive experience and leadership ability, she was promoted to Assistant Regional Administrator on 6/01/05.

Anyone who has worked with Ms. Han knows that she always employs a "strengths-based" approach to social work, and believes detention should be the last possible resort. Ms. Han does not follow a "flavor of the month" approach to social work, but works from an innermost spiritual drive to help others. In ER, as both a CSW and SCSW for many years, Ms. Han always focused on providing up-front services, making creative solutions to alleviate safety factors, and working with families' existing support systems to prevent detention of children. As an ARA, she continues to maintain her instinctive focus on the key 3 of Improved Child Safety, Reduced Reliance on Out-of-Home Care, and Decreased Timelines to Permanency.

M. Han effectively conveys her knowledge, her philosophy, and DCFS policies to her staff. She understands and utilizes SDM and is very willing to send children, even young children, home to their parents at the earliest possible opportunity consistent with child safety. She uses SDM and her own expansive clinical experience to examine the past and present growth of a family coupled with their existing support systems and strengths.

Ms. Han is extremely supportive of her supervisor staff and is always ready to lend a hand, a supportive ear, or words of wisdom whenever needed. She trusts her supervisor staff and empowers them to make decisions that best assist families. She is extremely well liked by staff at all levels and is adept at mediating difficulties among other staff in the office.

Ms. Han is continually focused on staff development and constantly encourages and helps staff under her to seek advancement. She also encourages her staff to branch out with special projects and workgroups that pique their interest, rather than merely delegating tasks to them.

Research on leadership across the world has shown that the 4 most common characteristics of effective leaders are honesty, inspiring, competence, and a forward-looking disposition. Ms. Han remarkably possesses all these qualities and to such an extent that her staff are good performers, loyal, motivated, are not afraid to make creative and/or cutting-edge social work decisions, and work based on family strengths.

Overall, Caroline Han is an outstanding leader and is deserving of formal recognition and it with pleasure that we bestow her with the February 2008 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Administrative Staff.

Outstanding Direct Service Staff Award **Michael Darajon, Children's Social Worker III** **Compton Office**

Michael Darajon is a hard working and very dedicated Children Social Worker III who always goes above and beyond the call of duty. He is currently the lead worker in his unit and despite his extra responsibilities as a lead worker, Mr. Darajon is always 100% on top of his job. He enjoys sharing his experience and knowledge by training new Children's Social Workers that come into his unit. Mr. Darajon's is a team player who supports his colleagues by accompanying them in the field to provide them with support and guidance in difficult situations.

Mr. Darajon demonstrates excellent work habits. He is able to balance his workload and set priorities. He possesses the ability to see the positive in all situations. Mr. Darajon is able to build constructive relationships with his clients and service providers. His positive attitude facilitates a working relationship, which makes it easier for an open, honest, and reliable communication. He is well-liked and respected by the families he serves; service providers; and his colleagues.

In addition to his "above and beyond" work as a social worker, Mr. Darajon volunteers his time after work hours and weekends to work with foster children. He assists with all the activities set up in the Compton office for foster children (i.e. Teen Club, Teague Holiday party, Spark of love, Fishing at Kenneth Hahn Park, HerShe etc.). Many times Mr. Darajon will transport children to these events providing them with the opportunity to attend where they otherwise would not be able to. Mr. Darajon is fun-loving, carefree and genuinely caring individual who is a great asset to all the children he serves.

Mr. Michael Darajon is an excellent example to his colleagues and is a very deserving recipient of the February 2008 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Direct Service Staff.

Outstanding Support Service Staff Award

Ryan Ragland, Human Service Aid

Wateridge-South Office,

Mr. Ragland is a friendly, caring and dedicated Human Service Aid in the Wateridge-South office. He is perceived by his colleagues as an organized worker who is extremely efficient, very dependable, and just an all around nice guy.

Mr. Ragland can be given any assignment and you can be sure that when it is complete it is very thorough and well thought out. He is always quick to complete assignments and then stands ready to support his colleagues with anything they may need help with.

Mr. Ragland is admired and respected by his colleagues. He is very respectful to clients and his co-workers. He is approachable and he never says no to tasks that are required on a last minute basis. He has a very pleasant demeanor and always has a smile on his face.

For these and many other reasons Mr. Ragland deserves to be recognized and honored with the February 2008 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Support Service Staff.

Outstanding Team Award

ARA Araceli Barrett, SCSW Norma Dison, CSWs Patricia Osborn, Charles Mathews, Kevin Timmons, Deborah Marsh, Mercede Webb, and Joyce Johnson-Cattenhead.

Pasadena Office Staff

Team work is an essential component in working with the families that are served by DCFS. The following team of individuals performed well beyond expectations when they encountered a challenging situation that, thru team work, they were able to find a solution for. *ARA Araceli Barrett, SCSW Norma Dison, CSWs Patricia Osborn, Charles Mathews, Kevin Timmons, Deborah Marsh, Mercede Webb, and Joyce Johnson-Cattenhead*

This team from the Pasadena office, encountered the need to find an appropriate placement for a very hard to place youth. The youth was of transition age with multiple behavioral problems that included the following: frequent AWOLS, defiant behavior, and disrespect for authority figures. Consequently, this youth had been in a large number of placements that included foster homes and numerous group homes. In this particular situation, the youth had returned from an AWOL and the carrying CSW was having a very difficult time finding a placement that was willing to accept this youth. This youth was in the Pasadena Office, all day, for two or three days. It was during this time, that this team demonstrated their value of team work by providing their assistance in searching

for placements, helping with the care of the youth' and professionally dealing with the youth's behavior. After several days and with the assistance of the RUM liaison and ARA, a placement was finally secured with a regular foster home. In this particular situation, it was the values and work of this team that made this placement successful.

As a team, they worked diligently and tirelessly toward finding a much needed placement for a youth in need, therefore, this team is being honored as the recipient of the February 2008 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Team.

**An Outstanding Colleague
Of Yours Could Be the Next Winner.**

NOMINATE Someone NOW!
