

CONGRATULATIONS

DCFS ALL STARS

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS

February 2012

Outstanding Support Service Staff

Toby Iland, Senior Typist Clerk

**Child Welfare Mental Health Services Division Administration
Headquarters**

Toby Iland has been selected for the Director's Employee Recognition Award for his outstanding work as the Senior Typist Clerk for the Child Welfare Mental Health Services (CWMHS) Division Administration team in the Bureau of the Medical Director. Toby can be counted upon to take ownership of every task assigned to him and for taking extraordinary pride in his work. He provides support to the Coordinated Services Action Team (CSAT) CSA III, D-rate, Multidisciplinary Assessment Team, and Service Linkage Specialist CSA II's. He manages and tracks several tasks, understands changing priorities, and meets challenges with a calm demeanor and good humor. Toby takes it upon himself to learn about social work practice and mental health issues to better understand the roles and responsibilities of DCFS and the CWMHS Division.

Toby is one of the CWMHS staff that DMH Psychiatric Mobile Response Teams (PMRT) contact as required by the DCFS and DMH Field Response Operations Expedited Response Protocol. He facilitates communication between DMH PMRT teams and Children's Social Workers (CSWs) to expedite coordinated responses for children experiencing psychiatric emergencies. His Division Chief has commended him for his willingness to go above and beyond his regular duties and schedule to ensure children's safety. His "can do" attitude, excellent skills, team work and desire to succeed contribute to successful resolutions to challenging assignments. As a result of his expertise, he has been asked to train both colleagues and managers.

In addition to organizing Bureau and CWMHS events, Toby has been instrumental in coordinating DCFS department-wide morale-building and community events. During 2011 Cesar Chavez Community Service Week, he volunteered to coordinate and promote the food drive. It was due, in large part, to his promotional efforts that 2080 lbs. of food was collected for the LA Food Bank, a 5% increase from the previous year. He also volunteers as a 5th floor coordinator for the Building Emergency Response Team, assisting in all emergency drills and evacuations, ensuring that all staff and visitors have safely left the building. As a result of his history of leadership and coordination of successful campaigns, he was selected in August 2011 to promote, coordinate and supervise blood drives that are held at DCFS Headquarters. Lastly, for the third year in a row, Toby has been an integral committee member for DCFS

Family Fun Day for both Headquarters and on behalf of all DCFS regional offices. He is involved in every aspect of logistical coordination ensuring that all DCFS staff enjoys what have been very successful Department celebrations. Toby organizes and tirelessly promotes creative and successful fund raising activities so that all Headquarters staff are treated to catered meals and receive giveaway items. He works with other committee members to ensure that giveaway items and festive activities are in place for all DCFS staff, making Family Fun Day a truly memorable event and more popular than ever during a time when staff needed a morale boost. For everything that Toby does day in, day out, he is a most deserving DERA winner.

Outstanding Direct Service Staff

Rodney Loudon II, SCSW

West San Fernando Valley

Upon transferring to SCSW Rod Loudon's unit, an overwhelmed CSW was on the brink of quitting and possibly being written up for failing to submit court reports on time, stabilizing cases, and limited implementation of policy. Rod provided hands-on support, helping the social worker better manage their caseload, complete and submit their court reports on time, provide effective family reunification services, and achieve permanency for those youth not reunifying. Rod preached a positive mindset; "an attitude of gratitude," that enabled his worker to see issues from the client's perspective while demonstrating skills resulting in more effective communication with clients.

On one case, a father was defiant and distrustful of his assigned CSW. Rod was able to effectively help the father understand how he and his family might benefit from services. The father was extremely gratified, feeling understood for the first time, and was subsequently willing to cooperate with the Department.

Rods proved most helpful in assisting one of his workers develop effective time management skills. With Rod's assistance, a system was created to keep his worker on task resulting in increased efficiency with court reports submitted 10 days before the scheduled court date. With increased organizational skills, this worker was more effective in reunifying children with their families, providing permanency, and documenting those efforts in his reports. The CSW credits his supervisor with helping achieve more positive outcomes with his clients, resulting in increased child safety and well being. SCSW Loudon has earned the respect and gratitude of his workers while demonstrating his genuine empathy for both clients and workers.

Outstanding Team Staff

The Torrance Prevention Team

Joan Marks, Lorraine Cavuoti, Mylene Muldrew, Kasaundra Young, June Jackson, and Da'Shaun Charles

Torrance

Supervising Children's Social Workers Joan Marks, Lorraine Cavuoti, Mylene Muldrew, Kasaundra Young and June Jackson along with Children's Social Worker Da'Shaun Charles (Team) are champions of prevention.

The Torrance office receives the highest number of child abuse referrals and removes a higher number of African American children from the cities of Hawthorne and Inglewood. In addition, 39.9% of the removals from the Torrance office and 45.2% of children in care are African American children. To reduce the number of African American children removed and in care, the Team worked to change the perspective of the Emergency Response social workers, and challenged social workers to work harder in finding solutions to alleviate the risks that brought the families to the attention of the Department. They encouraged staff to use best practice social work skills to find individualized solutions, putting a safety net in place using the strengths of the family and surrounding the family with support and resources.

Although they were successful in developing admirable solutions to prevent removals, the Team was convinced that a decline in the number of referrals and removals can only come through prevention. To reduce the disparate and disproportionate number of African American children removed and in care, the Team dedicated themselves through volunteerism to bring awareness of the resources within each community to its residents. The Team was instrumental in holding a resource fair in Hawthorne on July 9, 2011, and in Inglewood on September 24, 2011. The Team recruited agencies and residents to attend the fairs. To ensure that the targeted residents were able to attend the fairs, the Team volunteered on three separate Saturdays, prior to the events, to post flyers on storefronts and at local elementary schools. The Team recruited volunteers to facilitate games and crafts for the children and ensured the venues were safe by posting volunteers at strategic locations. Both events were successful and included 1300 attendees and 75 community agencies.

In addition to the resource fairs, the Team adopted a 110-unit apartment complex in the city of Hawthorne to start a grassroots prevention movement. The Team, along with faith volunteers, hosted a Bar-B-Q kick-off on October 8, 2011, where all the residents were invited to participate. A needs assessment was completed and the residents identified three areas they wanted to improve: after school activities for their children; improve academic performance; and employment. The Team, in collaboration with their faith partners, decided to start a homework club with the intention of training parents from the complex to assist and be future leaders of the club. The club began with seven children and they have grown to an average of 27 children each Wednesday. As they continue to assist the children with their homework, the parents are beginning to become familiar with the Team and the trust between the parents and the team is increasing. It is

anticipated that other programs will follow as the parents become more open to participating in job development, domestic violence, anger management and parenting classes.

The Team's dedication, diligence and tireless efforts in prevention are evident as they continue to volunteer their time and efforts to reducing disproportionality and improving outcomes for children.

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

NOMINATE Someone NOW!