

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD
CONGRATULATIONS

DCFS ALL STAR

HUYEN BUI

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD WINNER

January 2010

Huyen Bui has been working an FM/R case file since transferring to the Santa Fe Springs (SFS) office in July, 2008. When Ms. Bui arrived at the SFS office, she was given an existing caseload and quickly went to work on meeting her families, establishing a good working relationship and improving all performance measures to 95% and above. Within 90 days her caseload was transformed to one that had all documentation in the case file and in CWS/CMS. In addition, her supervisor and management were getting compliments from Ms. Bui's clients on how attentive and helpful she was. She quickly became known as a positive and extremely helpful person. On more than one occasion, Ms. Bui could be seen assisting her fellow CSWs on learning to maneuver CWS/CMS or simply assisting with long distance home calls. Recently, Ms. Bui's willingness to help children and families expanded beyond the scope of DCFS clientele.

When the earthquake struck Haiti on January 12th, Ms. Bui immediately knew she wanted to help the families there as well. Ms. Bui approached management offering to put together an office campaign to raise money for the victims of Haiti. By January 21st, Ms. Bui collected over \$3,400 in donations from staff and through a luncheon fundraiser for American Red Cross Haitian Relief. The experience showed again, Ms. Bui's determination and commitment at helping improve the lives and opportunities for all children and families. In addition, it allowed the Santa Fe Springs office and opportunity to work together and unite for an outstanding cause. Ms. Bui's efforts are greatly appreciated for all that she does and is truly deserving of the **Director's Special Recognition Award**.

CONGRATULATIONS

DCFS ALL STARS

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS

January 2010

Outstanding Administrative Manager

Frank Cruz, Interim Clerical Administrator

Emergency Response Command Post

Supervisor Frank Cruz shares his wealth of experience with anyone needing assistance, always finding a way to solve problems and do whatever is necessary to support social workers. Frank is responsible for providing clerical support for two huge 24-hour operations, the Child Abuse Hotline and Command Post. Frank arranges his schedule to be available as much as possible across the shifts. His staff processes and packages referrals, assists in mapping referrals to law enforcement, helps with data entry of referrals at peak hours, and makes sure follow-up referrals are mapped out to the regional offices the following day. As the Hotline is the "front door" to our Department, Frank's effective supervision is crucial to the smooth processing of referrals that come in after 5 p.m. everyday, on weekends and on holidays. He also tracks information manually that is not recorded elsewhere such as Skid Row referrals. He is an excellent leader and does a great job maintaining a positive attitude with the workers under his supervision. Congratulations to Frank Cruz, the January 2010 DERA Administrative Manager.

Outstanding Direct Service Staff

America Cuara, CSW Trainee

Metro North

America reported to the Metro North Office as a CSW Trainee in January 2009. In her first month, she was assigned a difficult case with 10 siblings who had had 29 prior referrals and numerous prevention services from schools and community partners. In working with this family, America faced significant challenges of intergenerational abuse and neglect, juvenile probation involvement, special education services, and immigration issues. Mother presented with anger management and attitudinal issues yet America established a positive rapport with her and guided her through the reunification path. At the same time, America was able to return the youngest child to his father, despite his disappointment and resistance to DCFS involvement and have that case terminated. America

also worked with Adoption staff in identifying permanent families for the children should reunification efforts fail.

On a separate voluntary case, America worked with a challenging teenager who refused to participate in services including Family Preservation. Minor's truancy, illicit substance use and violent behavior, generated multiple referrals resulting in detention. This teenager has a strong affinity for dogs and had rescued a golden retriever. The youth was refusing placement if she could not take her dog with her. America came back to the DCFS office, located and contacted a Golden Retriever Adoption Agency, and by the time America returned the same day, the agency had arranged care for the dog and the youth then agreed to go to placement. The agency included a write up in their newsletter and sent photos of the dog to America to assure the youth that the dog was being well cared for.

On a sexual abuse case with 4 children residing with their mother, America successfully worked with the perpetrator, who was the father of the youngest 3 children, to reunify with the 2 youngest children. The entire family was in turmoil. With multiple referrals, the mother had not exhibited an awareness of what role she was playing in the family's current dysfunction. America ensured that TDMs were held as necessary with Family Preservation informed and included to maintain the family and the safety of the children.

On another of America's family reunification cases, a legal guardian/maternal grandmother was court ordered to only do parenting education and 6 random alcohol tests. It became clear to America that there were other significant issues with the legal guardian who had completed the 6 tests and parenting and now was requesting overnight, weekend visits. America investigated and found a significant mental health history for which the legal guardian was currently receiving treatment. America promptly informed court who then made additional orders for the legal guardian and has remained in contact with the legal guardian's service providers to ensure that DCFS concerns are addressed.

America is an excellent social worker who exemplifies best practice social work. She goes above and beyond for her clients and genuinely cares about the children's safety. America locates the necessary services even when it may seem that resources are limited as many of her clients are undocumented and/or impoverished. Additionally, America maintains regular contact with service providers to ensure that families can be safely maintained or reunified in a timely fashion; she is resourceful and does effective concurrent planning should reunification efforts fail.

America is a true asset to DCFS and the families we serve and for these reasons, she is the January 2010 DERA winner for Outstanding Direct Service Staff.

Outstanding Team Award
GIS, Research & Statistics
Bureau of Information Systems

Cecilia Custodio, Division Chief
My Trinh, Supervisor
Omar Santos, Senior Application Developer
Thomas Nguyen, CSA I
Mohammed Azad, Senior Information System Analyst
Ming Lee, Research Analyst III
Rae Hahn, Supervisor
Chris Jarosz, Chief Research Analyst

As a team with high expectations to meet deadlines, the GIS and Research and Statistics staff are second to none. Their tireless efforts are often the driving force behind the development of tracking systems for measuring outcomes of DCFS projects/programs. It is the creation of these crucial tracking components that makes it possible for the Department to closely examine what steps are needed to ensure its main objectives of improving child safety, timely permanence, and reducing the reliance on out-of-home care are met.

The team often faces a variety of challenges in meeting the needs of internal and external stakeholders. They are asked to produce materials, such as ad hoc reports, utilizing numerous DCFS-operating systems (i.e. CWS/CMS, SDM) under strict time constraints. Further, they must communicate with DCFS staff at all levels in an effort to understand the needs of specific requests. They succeed at extracting pertinent information about a large array of topics and fulfill requests by working long hours to ensure deadlines are met.

Their team is often the backbone of the materials/reports produced for internal and external use. Their efforts have aided in the ongoing development of interventions and trainings, improved the efficiency of service delivery, and improved partnerships with communities, child advocacy organizations, resource providers and other departments.

Further, the team is relied upon to furnish materials/reports that not only have an operational impact but a fiscal one as well. Consequently, the team has made itself available for consultations, sometimes with minimal notification, to ensure that the most desirable and efficient systems are developed for the purposes of tracking outcomes. Tracking outcomes is a priority for most DCFS decision-making processes in regards to DCFS initiatives.

This staff, led by the Division Chief, Cecilia Custodio, always interfaces with DCFS internal and external stakeholders in a very helpful and very courteous manner and become fully engaged in an effort to meet the, oftentimes, very unique needs for data, ad hoc reports, etc. They have proved themselves invaluable and are deserving of the DERA January 2010 Team Award

Outstanding Support Service Staff

Brian Wong, Information System Analyst

Norwalk

DCFS employees regularly rely on the office Computer Assistance Technicians (CATS) to provide computer-related support, maintenance, and help with the many applications and computer malfunctions that occur. The Internal Affairs section is especially grateful for the timely assistance with computer problems relating to CWS/CMS provided by Brian Wong. The staff routinely reviews employee assessments on child safety and their older generation computers frequently malfunction resulting in down time and frustration. When a call is made to the IT Help Service Desk, Brian Wong always shows up immediately and more often than not ends up addressing a variety of computer problems existing on the floor at the same time. Brian is always gracious never refusing the many other staff that desperately needs assistance. He researches and troubleshoots systems, software and hardware errors to provide optimum computer performance. His professional knowledge permits the staff to do their jobs which in turn contributes to the safety and welfare of children as well as families served by the Department. His professionalism and warm helping attitude is invaluable and as such, he is the January 2010 DERA Award winner for Outstanding Support Service Staff.