

CONGRATULATIONS

DCFS ALL STARS

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS

June 2009

Outstanding Administrative Service Staff or Manager

Rick Bryant, Regional Administrator

Palmdale Office

For nearly a year, Rick Bryant served as the Acting Deputy Director for two different bureaus. Initially, he was asked to be the Acting Deputy Director of Service Bureau 3 and faced the diplomatic challenge of supervising his peers knowing that his position was time-limited and he would ultimately return to working with them again as Regional Administrator in Palmdale. This assignment entailed a steep learning curve, balancing his many new responsibilities, interacting with the Executive Team, while overseeing six additional offices and Court as well as the Palmdale Office. Rick never complained and approached each new day as a "learning experience." His line experience was a source of considerable insight to the Executive Team and he was able to make meaningful suggestions as to which of their recommendations were viable. Several times a week, Rick would drive from Lancaster, AKA "God's Country", to Glendora to work with his administrative team. And all the while, he was connected to the workers, even advocating for CSWs to wear jeans in the office when appropriate!

After his tour of duty was completed for Service Bureau 3, Rick was asked to cover as the Acting Deputy for Service Bureau 4, again acclimating to a whole new set of managers. He was always the ultimate professional: eager to learn, committed to doing the best possible job, seeking advice when necessary, making corrections as needed and always keeping his sense of humor. For Rick to take on these huge assignments, covering the operations of two service bureaus for an extended period of time, in addition to his duties as Regional Administrator for Palmdale, and remaining his normal, delightful self, is remarkable and truly deserving of this recognition. Rick Brant is honored as the June DERA winner for Outstanding Administrative Service Staff or Manager.

Outstanding Administrative Service Staff or Manager

Agustin Martinez, ER SCSW

West San Fernando Valley

Agustin Martinez's extensive knowledge of DCFS policy, his focus on child safety and his effective and supportive leadership style is truly appreciated by his ER unit. Agustin is well-versed in ever changing policy and protocols and makes himself available to all in need of help or support. His calm demeanor makes an otherwise stressful and chaotic situation manageable. He listens to and values the opinions of his workers allowing them the latitude they need to provide the best services possible. Having found him to be fair and equitable in his decisions, his unit is motivated to work even harder under the most stressful circumstances.

Agustin places a high priority on safety protocols and maintains an up to date listing of community resources. He works diligently at TDMs to find solutions to avoid detentions of minors but never at the expense of child safety. Augustin is bilingual and effectively recruits extended family members to the TDM table while assisting non-Spanish speaking CSWs. His participation in providing families with up front services permits families to stay in tact when possible, reduces caseloads and allows CSWs to focus on families, reducing timelines to permanency. He demonstrates sensitivity and respect to all our racially and culturally diverse families. This same even-handed approach, lightened with a sense of humor, applies to his workers and everyone on the floor promoting a positive atmosphere that is contagious. His leadership style is calming and circumvents worker burn-out. Agustin leads by example inspiring everyone to do their best on behalf of the families we serve. We honor Agustin Martinez as the June Direct Services DERA winner!

Outstanding Support Services Staff

Renee Moreno, Unit Clerk

Adoptions, Belvedere Office

Since February 2007, Renee Moreno has been employed as a unit clerk with the same Belvedere Adoptions Unit. When Renee first came to the unit, she was faced with six weeks worth of adoption assessments that needed to be entered into the Adoption Information System (AIS) and piles of cases needing to be processed and sent to Suspense. Within two weeks of her arrival, Renee was able to navigate the AIS program and CWS/CMS and process all pending adoption assessments and cases ready for Suspense.

Renee always takes the initiative in helping CSWs complete assignments that may not be part of her regular duties. She completes court logs and updates

them with copies to the CSWs after obtaining the Minute Orders. The CSWs in her unit describe her as “helpful, respectful and cordial.” Her work is always completed in a timely manner. She is extremely organized with both records and supplies easily accessible to the unit.

Renee’s concisely documents all pertinent unit information including adoption assessment logs, cases sent to Suspense, closed applicant cases, completed Concurrent Planning Assessments (CPA) and home studies. She is personally familiar with the cases, able to recognize when there is more than one CPA submitted for a child. In such cases, she clarifies whether there is an additional applicant wishing to adopt the child; she checks the applications for correct information and consistently identifies and corrects information that has been entered in duplicate. Her CSWs have come to depend on her thoroughness knowing that Renee gets the job done quickly and correctly.

Her willingness to stop what she is working on and assist a CSW with a problem is greatly appreciated by all. All documents and medical records necessary for adoptive placements are copied and organized by Renee. Regardless of who she is talking to, be it a client, CSW or regional staff inquiring about adoptions, Renee treats everyone in a warm and respectful manner. She is highly regarded by the whole office and the fact that she finds time to help coordinate special events or celebrations, comes as no surprise to anyone in the office. In every way possible, Renee is the definition of professional. This definition of excellence has helped Renee Moreno earn the June Outstanding Support Services Staff DERA Award.

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

NOMINATE Someone NOW!