

CONGRATULATIONS

DCFS ALL STARS

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS

June 2010

Outstanding Administrative Manager

Tricia Denson, ASM I

Bureau of Finance and Administration

Tricia Denson is recognized for her tireless efforts in fundraising for the March of Dimes (MOD). In the year since Tricia joined the Bureau of Finance and Administration (BFA), she has placed the Department on the Countywide Workplace Program's radar. After years of lackluster performance, under Tricia's stewardship, DCFS has joined the ranks of other departments in MOD fundraising.

As an ASM I in the BFA's administrative office assisting the Administrative Deputy, Executive Assistant and members of the Administrative Team, Tricia's duties are varied and carry a great degree of responsibility. She is also responsible for coordinating the Department's nominations for awards including Quality and Productivity, National Association of Counties, and California State Association of Counties, to name a few. In this role, she reviews applications and revises submissions, as needed, to ensure that each application is given the greatest opportunity for selection. So far this year, the Department will receive 10 countywide awards, plaques or certificates for Productivity and Quality and has received three (3) statewide awards for achievement. Despite having all these responsibilities, Tricia dedicates time, effort, and resources to a program which provides little opportunity for personal gain or recognition due to its minimal impact on the business needs of the department, and which consequently, often gets short shrift. However, this has not deterred Tricia in any way. She is committed, hardworking and goes above and beyond what is expected in her role campaigning for MOD.

Prior to Tricia's arrival, MOD contributions were modest, participation was minimal, and program information available to employees was limited at best. Tricia changed all that by rallying support from program representatives in outlying bureaus to get the word out and encouraging employees to participate and contribute to the various campaigns throughout the year. She used all methods of advertising available including posting flyers, sending e-mail blasts, and using her personal contacts to spread information through word of mouth. As a result, MOD 2010 campaign totals have reached record levels, approximately \$12,000, thus far. This is a huge increase (6,000%) from the \$200 raised last year. Most notably, Tricia campaigned hard for and won a countywide competition for the 2nd highest number of Dodger tickets sold on "County Night at Dodger Stadium." This garnered recognition for the Department

when Director Ploehn was invited to participate in the "first-pitch" ceremony at Dodger Stadium on April 30, 2010. Ms. Ploehn and Tricia were also awarded field level seating in appreciation for Tricia's campaign efforts raising money for MOD.

Tricia's other notable accomplishments this year include driving the MOD T-shirts sales to even higher levels and drawing in unprecedented numbers of DCFS employees to participate in the "Blue Jeans for Babies" campaign. This surge in participation was in large part due to Tricia's personal efforts at creative marketing which included attractive packaging, token gifts, and personalized thank you notes. What sets Tricia's accomplishment apart from other candidates being nominated for recognition is that she accomplished most of this using her personal resources, including but not limited to, her own time, finances, creativity, enthusiasm, and determination to drive these campaigns.

In providing these various forums for DCFS employees to work together towards a common goal, Tricia has brought positive attention to the Department and its employees. Her reward thus far has been the satisfaction of making a sizable contribution to MOD on behalf of DCFS and knowing that the Department received recognition at the County level. This comes at a time when positive recognition within the Department is welcomed as we all work to shift perceptions about the Department and DCFS in a positive direction. Congratulations to Tricia Denson, the June 2010 DERA winner for Outstanding Administrative Manager, for the outstanding work she has done in helping bring recognition to DCFS and its employees.

Outstanding Direct Service Staff

Kimala Lewis, SCSW

Pasadena

Kimala Lewis is a SCSW/TDM Facilitator in the Pasadena office. As a SCSW, Kimala always makes herself available to facilitate a TDM case or to provide support to an overwhelmed CSW or colleague. As a lifelong Pasadena resident, she knows many people within the community and has been instrumental in developing key partnerships with faith-based and community organizations. Kimala has worked with community partners to establish and maintain visitation centers in the Pasadena area.

The Pasadena/Covina Annex offices have participated in three Breakthrough Series Collaboratives on Risk and Safety, Permanency through Reunification and the Georgetown Breakthrough Series Collaborative and Kimala has been a key participant in all. Working with Casey Family Programs, she researched Disproportionality efforts within the Pasadena Office, developing a strategic plan for the office. She convened a "Disproportionality Team" consisting of the Pasadena administration and faith and community based partners. This effort led to a countywide workgroup that is addressing Disproportionality.

Kimala has acted as an Admin Deputy/ARA within the office. She was the co-lead for transitioning 50 additional staff into the Pasadena office. She also served as office co-lead in efforts to address the ER over 60 issue, and volunteered to be a supervisor for the ER over 60 task force.

Kimala handles all of these duties and responsibilities while facilitating TDMs when the TDM team has been overwhelmed. More impressively, she has been able to perform these tasks while maintaining her positive attitude and demeanor. All of her efforts have helped the office keep children safe and maintain families. Her social work skills, work ethic and dedication to community is exemplary and deserving of the 2010 DERA Award for Direct Services.

Outstanding Team Staff Award

Psychotropic Medication Authorization Unit

Isabel Bautista, Jessica Blackwood, Jodi Chen

Mental Health Child Welfare Services Division

The Psychotropic Medication Authorization desk, staffed by Senior Typist Clerks Isabel Bautista, Jessica Blackwood and Jodi Chen, works tirelessly to ensure that Psychotropic Medication Authorization (PMA) requests and approvals are processed in a timely matter. The Psychotropic Medication Authorization desk is labor intensive and involves manually processing over 450 Psychotropic Medication Authorization requests monthly and well over 5,400 requests annually. Their job doesn't stop there; the PMA team constantly communicates with physician's offices, D-rate evaluators, regional staff, court staff, and providers who are inquiring about approvals. The team prides themselves on efficiency and customer service. Even when they are overwhelmed, the team remains calm and solution-focused to complete the work at hand. The PMA team is always willing to work overtime and step in to assist each other when needed. The PMA team ensures approval for medications as soon as possible, supporting the department's goal to increase safety for children in out of home care. The PMA team's work ethic is truly outstanding and deserving of the June 2010 DERA Award for Outstanding Team Staff.

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

NOMINATE Someone NOW!