

# CONGRATULATIONS

## DCFS ALL STARS

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS

### June 2012

#### **Outstanding Direct Service Staff**

*Monica Rivas, SCSW*

**Glendora**

With the shared Core Practice Model as the foundation for her work, Glendora SCSW Monica Rivas has repeatedly demonstrated that she can make the difference in promoting better outcomes for our children and families. She has developed close community partnerships within the San Gabriel Valley, especially with the faith-based community. She began working with local clergy, several churches, organizations and local agencies to establish a DCFS visitation center for families. To date, she has established four visitation sites with local churches. Additionally, Monica is collaborating with Spirit Family Services, a family preservation agency, to train volunteers to assist and monitor visits.

Monica, along with Adoptions CSW Jonathan Clark, has met with community leaders and potential partners, educating them about DCFS' shared core practice values and discussing recruiting, developing and supporting resource families. Thereafter, Monica was invited to be a guest speaker on several occasions at the Azusa Four Square Church and the San Gabriel Valley Consortium to talk about issues relating to the homeless.

In March 2012, Monica worked with Azusa Pacific University to sponsor "Night of Champions," an event at which professional athletes encouraged youth to succeed. She is currently working on a project with local law enforcement and the City of Industry Sheriff to help parents identify and intervene with high-risk youth. Monica has worked with local churches to provide care packages for DCFS children. She has compiled and developed a resource library for CSWs in the Glendora office. Monica has volunteered to be a part of the central team for Coaching and Mentoring in the Glendora office. She is also a Team Decision Making Facilitator who encourages and trains staff to participate in TDMs. She advocates that staff create trustful, working relationships, hearing the families' voice and choices in order to make the best decisions possible.

For National Foster Care Month in May, Monica reached out to the community to promote awareness and the need for foster homes and resource families. She contacted Azusa city officials who were very receptive and open to the idea of collaborating with DCFS.

Monica met with a professional designer who generously agreed to redesign the Glendora office reception area, creating a more welcoming environment for those

visiting the office. The designer agreed to offer her services free of charge and donations from the community have been offered as well. Volunteers from local churches are knitting shawls for Glendora's teenage girls. Through Monica's efforts, the community has sponsored foster youth to attend a fun-filled event, "Spirit Night" at Castle Park in Riverside. It is Monica's belief that these kinds of donations from community partners make the difference in affecting change in the lives of our youth and families.

Monica's efforts and commitment is a reminder to us all that partnership with our community is essential to improving better outcomes for families. She inspires all who come in contact with her and is undoubtedly deserving of the DERA award for Direct Service.

### **Outstanding Support Staff**

*Shima D. Bell, ITC*

**Torrance**

Everyday, Shima Bell goes beyond the call of duty to complete whatever task is required of her. Her work ethic is complimented by her pleasant and approachable demeanor. She is eager to lend assistance at a moment's notice, routinely walking around the office, quietly correcting problems as they arise. Whether it's adding toner to a copier, processing key cards, following up on office repairs, a Regional Administrator's instructions, or politely interacting with our families at the reception desk, Shima has it covered. She took it upon herself to organize all the units' monthly duty schedules. She organizes displays in the hallways promoting Rideshare options to and from work. Shima often posts humorous and inspirational emails to boost office morale in the kitchen area and sees to it that the area is kept clean. She routinely posts job notices and information on DCFS and community events such as Habitat for Humanity.

The Torrance office looks forward to seeing her engaging smile everyday. Shima tries to puts everyone else first, always making you feel like you are the most special person in the office. As one of her fellow staff commented, "Shima is our sunshine everyday, and no matter how you are feeling, she will brighten your day."

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

**NOMINATE Someone NOW!**