

CONGRATULATIONS

DCFS ALL STARS

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

March 2009

Outstanding Administrative Staff Award

Janis Williams, Children's Services Administrator I
Family to Family, West Los Angeles Office

Per Webster's dictionary, the definition of '*star*' includes 'one who excels, superior performer, leading lady/leading man, having great skill; outstanding. DCFS has a *bright 'star'* working in the Family to Family program! Her name is Janis Williams, CSA I.

In her CSA I role, Ms. Williams administers the Parents in Partnership (PIP) program as part of Family to Family. This program involves birth parent engagement work between DCFS and parent partners who are trained to support and advocate for current birth parents in the child welfare system. The outcome is to have a high likelihood of reunifying with their children and preventing future detention of their children. In addition, parent partners gain work experience and necessary skills to enter the work force.

Ms. Williams started with Family to Family in January 2007. The concept of birth parent engagement work in Los Angeles County via DCFS was re-introduced in 2005 under the F2F initiative. Ms. Williams' primary task was the development and implementation of birth parent engagement work in DCFS known as PIP. Ms. Williams was to take various ideas and mandates, study/research, existing background information on DCFS' earlier attempts to develop parent advocacy programs and to bring the PIP concept to an operational level. It would require that Ms. Williams needed to see PIP through clear eyes that would meet Los Angeles county needs (based on the paradigm shift in child welfare delivery) – a task that required vision, focus, imagination, collaboration skills, risk taking, and full understanding and knowledge on how to best implement this program.

Because of Ms. Williams' great organizational skills, analytical abilities, common sense, resourcefulness and stamina, PIP evolved and became operational within a two year period. Thanks to Ms. Williams, PIP has a defined mission, vision, organization chart, clear duties and responsibilities, stipend for the parent partners, training elements and steps for expansion. PIP is currently

operational in hub sites of SPA 1 (Lancaster/Palmdale), Lakewood, and Belvedere DCFS offices. Two other hub sites are scheduled for 2009.

Ms. Williams' willingness to partner and work well with the F2F TAs assigned to support parent engagement in LA County has been outstanding. This is the relationship building which is crucial to the work being able to spread and cultural change realized over time inside and outside the agency. Authentic relationships are key, and establishing ongoing common goals paramount to success. Janis is a creative champion in this arena as well.

Ms. Williams experienced tense situations, complications and barriers that seemed unending, overwhelming and defeating. However, Janis was tenacious and pushed hard because she strongly believed in the PIP concepts and could aptly foresee how PIP was an important and integrated part of rebuilding child welfare delivery.

The PIP program has been highly praised by internal and external stakeholders. Other California counties have expressed great interest in how Los Angeles County has developed its birth parent engagement work. Other recognized 'bright' stars in our community are also giving PIP very serious attention as a formidable community tool. DCFS staff expressed the benefits of PIP and its positive effect on casework planning and decision making.

Ms. Williams is being honored with of the March 2009 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Administrative Staff because she exemplifies a genuine commitment to use her creative ingenuity and professional skills to better the lives of the children and families served by DCFS.

Outstanding Direct Service Staff Award **Jennie Chan-Feria, Supervising Children's Social Worker** **Lakewood Office**

In addition to her responsibilities as a Supervising Children's Supervisor Ms. Chan-Feria has been a volunteer for the SAT East Program (formally known as CSAP) since July of 2003. As part of the adjunct counseling staff she has facilitated group for the non-protective parent. This group is often challenging to therapists as the non-protective parent can often be resistant to the issues that they face. Despite these challenges, Ms. Chan-Feria has been able to deal with them effectively and has never personalized their lack of progress given the seriousness of the sexual abuse issues these parents must resolve.

It was Ms. Chan-Feria's work at SAT East that prompted the Coordinator to ask her if she would voluntarily co-facilitate group supervision for individuals seeking LCSW licensure in the Belvedere office. Ms. Chan-Feria's clinical prowess and abilities became instantly clear as she was able to contribute to the instruction of the practice of psychotherapy which was the groups' main focus. Ms. Chan-Feria can be credited for the progress of the groups' professional development through her dedication, commitment and expertise regarding the

practice of psychotherapy. It was also during the group supervision that Ms. Chan-Feria participated in training of the dynamics of sexual abuse by presenting material co-authored by her entitled, "The Psychosocial Narrative: A Clinical Intervention in treating the Non-Protective Parent." In the future, should Ms. Chan-Feria decide to offer individual or group supervision, any participant seeking her supervision should be considered fortunate to have someone of her caliber.

In addition to her work at the SAT East program, Ms. Chan-Feria also volunteers quite extensively to in her work as Supervising Children's Social Worker for the Lakewood District Office. These volunteer tasks include: MSW preceptor for the various Schools of Social Work, Parents in Partnership Program, Staff Appreciation Committee, SNAP Pilot, Icebreakers Workgroup and Family Fun Day Committee.

Ms. Chan-Feria is a consummate professional. She clearly leads the example of the well-roundedness that DCFS seeks of its' employees. It is through her role as child advocate, her knowledge of various functions and goals of this department that her value can be seen and appreciated. The staff at SAT East considers themselves fortunate that Ms. Chan-Feria is part of their team to treat the problem of intra-familial sexual abuse.

For these reasons and many more Jennie Chan-Feria deserves to receive the March 2009 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Direct Service Staff.

Outstanding Support Service Staff Award

Seta Bahudian, Secretary II

Out of Home Care, Telstar Office

Ms. Seta Bahudian is an assertive-high energy Secretary II in the Out of Home Care section who takes her job very seriously. Ms Bahudian has been with the Department of Children and Family Services for fifteen years. She is highly efficient in performing her daily duties and goes above and beyond to assist staff and managers by addressing concerns and requests for assistance without hesitation. Ms. Bahudian is detail-oriented, follows-up with urgent matters in a timely manner and ensures that all matters are completely resolved.

In addition to regular duties typically performed by clerical support in a Secretary II position, Ms. Bahudian makes it a point to assist any office staff (CSA-I, CSA II/Managers, the CSA III, and the Division Chief) with issues varying from key card problems, placing orders for supplies, ordering business cards, preparing documents for individual staff members or staff meetings, coordinating meetings and special events, preparing materials for meetings with Group Homes and Foster Family Agency providers, shredding large volumes of confidential documents needing disposal, assisting with general computer/printer questions, parking issues, reporting issues to building management in a timely manner and performing other general office administration duties.

She also attends periodic meetings regarding the building maintenance as it relates to safety compliance and is also the designated COA for the Telstar office who is responsible for computer-related issues. Ms Bahudian is currently a liaison for Procurement and Space Management and she was an invaluable point person in the relocation of the Division's RUM staff when the Auditor-Controller staff were temporarily assigned to the Telstar site.

Ms Bahudian often goes beyond her duties to ensure that scheduled staff meetings and meetings with stake holders as well as office events run smoothly. Ms. Bahudian is also on the event committee which prepares office events throughout the year.

Ms Bahudian is sensitive to her co-worker's needs and whenever she is not able to directly assist on a specific issue, she provides resources and follows up to ensure that sources were appropriate, and if further assistance is needed. Ms. Bahudian is highly appreciated by all of the office staff due to her caring, positive attitude, high energy and efficiency. Ms. Bahudian has shown devotion to her assigned duties and commitment to her co-workers. She demonstrates skills of a great team player and one who cares, not only about the operation of the office, but about the people she works with. As a show of appreciation for the work she conducts, Ms. Bahudian received a letter of commendation for "demonstration of teamwork" from the Division Chief for assisting colleagues with the coordination and completion of contracted Foster Family Agency and Group Home providers' program statements.

It is a true pleasure to award Ms. Seta Bahudian the March 2009 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Support Service Staff.

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