

CONGRATULATIONS

DCFS ALL STARS

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

November 2008

Outstanding Direct Service Staff Award

Rina Mejia, Children's Social Worker III

West Los Angeles Office

Rina Mejia has been a Children's Social Worker for DCFS for over 14 years. During her tenure, she has been an ER worker, as well as an FM&R worker, and for the past two years she has been an adoption worker who carries a Spanish-speaking caseload.

Ms. Mejia is an excellent worker who is always on top of her case management responsibilities and she is a person who never hesitates to go above and beyond to assist her clients and colleagues. However, what really makes Ms. Mejia a truly excellent social worker is the warmth and genuineness with which she approaches her clients. She is willing to spend as much time as needed to help caregivers understand the need for permanency for our children. She meets with the caregivers and children frequently in order to build a rapport with them. She makes many more visits than are mandated. As her clients begin to trust her, Ms. Mejia addresses their concerns regarding adoption and helps ameliorate these concerns.

This year Ms. Mejia had a caseload that included many unattached children who needed to be matched with adoptive parents. These children included a sibling set of 3 and another sibling set of 2. Ms. Mejia actively worked with the Placement and Recruitment Unit to attempt to find adoptive families for all her unattached children. Due to the special needs of these children, no suitable families were found. While trying to recruit for the children, Ms. Mejia also put in the time to form relationships with their caregivers. She used these relationships to address the families' concerns about adoption. As a result, 3 separate families decided to complete home studies to adopt the children in their care. These included the families of both sibling sets. In the end, 6 children were adopted thanks to Ms. Mejia's efforts.

Rina Mejia is an asset to the Department of Children and Family Services and very deserving of the November 2008 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Direct Service Staff.

Outstanding Support Service Staff Award
Diane Champagne, Technical Assistant (TA)
Lakewood Office

Diane Champagne is a dedicated Technical Assistant in the Lakewood office who is described by her colleagues as a pleasure to work with and a person who always goes the extra mile to help Children's Social Workers find permanent homes for the children on their caseloads. Recently there was a need to find a placement for two sisters who have behavioral problems and needed a specific type of home in order to maintain their placements. Ms. Champagne worked extremely hard for two weeks to find an appropriate home for these children. She went out of her way to ask pertinent questions about the children to assist her in finding a matching placement. She never complained even when she was making a second round of phone calls to the same FFA's to see if there were any new openings. She is always open to continuing a search even when it may seem futile. She does everything she can to take on a task that may assist the social worker in any way she can.

Her compassion for the children and their situations is always foremost on her mind so she strives to help the social workers find the best placement for a child, not just a placement that will take the child. Ms. Champagne is a team player and exhibits an perfect example of team work and compassion.

Diana Champagne is to be commended on her work ethics. Her colleagues are always grateful to have her assistance. She has earned the November 2008 **DCFS ALL STARS** Director's Employee Recognition Award for Outstanding Support Service Staff.

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

NOMINATE Someone NOW!