

DIRECTOR'S EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD
CONGRATULATIONS
DCFS ALL STAR
WILL WONG
SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD WINNER

December 2010

In the world of child welfare today, one often hears about social workers helping make connections for kids. Most of the time this is in reference to a connection to another person – a long-lost relative, a mentor, a new service provider, a fitting foster parent or a prospective adoptive family. These connections are very important and are on the personal or micro- level.

Sometimes, though, a social worker comes along who can and has made some of these personal and micro- level connections for kids, but has also developed a niche for making and using connections that make an impact on more of a macro- level. William Wong is one such social worker. Best known as the “Wednesday’s Child” social worker, Will has used his role as DCFS’ Coordinator for the Wednesday’s Child Program to connect with many community partners who in turn have helped improve the lives of many of the children and families served by DCFS. Beyond “hosting” a Wednesday’s Child segment taping, many community businesses and individuals have donated new clothing items, paid for different types of lessons, helped curb costs for a family suffering a loss, hosted fun activities such as ice skating, attending sporting events or dinner and a show at Medieval Nights for large groups of DCFS children and/or families.

Will has also developed good working relationships with representatives from many social work and other organizations – including the Child Welfare League of America, the Adoption Exchange Association, the Freddie Mac Foundation (which sponsors the Wednesday’s Child Program here in Los Angeles as well as 4 other major US cities), Project: Nightlight and others. In building such positive working relationships, Will can reach out to such organizations when he is looking for a particular resource and they in turn reach out to Will when they believe he might be able to tap into a resource they are seeking.

Will often volunteers to help out with other activities that help fundraise or in some way benefit DCFS clients. He is often able to secure items for silent auctions from his community partners for events such as “Rising Stars” and, as a self-employed professional photographer, he is often able to donate his own time and services to capture moments during such occasions that can be used for further promotion.

And while it seems like Will does a lot in the here and now to help in the big picture, he realizes that there will come a day when a new generation of social workers will come along to continue the work currently done by Will and his current colleagues. Therefore, Will also has made it a

point to take the time to be a regular speaker at the Association of Student Social Workers at California State University, Los Angeles. Beyond making captivating presentations that inspire students to consider pursuing a career in public child welfare, Will was also invited to serve on the School of Social Work's Advisory Board. Through these endeavors, Will is helping shape community education as well as the social services of tomorrow.

Those who are familiar with Will's work know that he knows how to build connections. And if there remains any question as to why Will does what he does so well ... he connects for the kids.

For all the work he has done and continues to do on behalf of our children and families, Will Wong is awarded the **Director's Special Recognition Award.**