



The Oklahoma Department of Human Services

Quality Awards, Best of the Best Honor 253 Employees

Celebrating Victories

DHS held its most successful Quality Awards and Best of the Best program May 9 at the Langston University Oklahoma City Campus with more than 450 in attendance. Some 253 DHS employees were honored at the sixth annual Quality Awards celebration.

The combined recognition events celebrate two types of victories. The Quality Awards recognizes team projects and group tasks that have measurable results that improve the ways DHS serves Oklahomans. The

Best of the Best Awards honors those who serve as our leaders, mentors and constant encouragers, and who we respect for the positive character they add to our workplaces. Both awards are very important to how we fulfill our vision, mission and values and guiding principles to the citizens of this state.

This year, a DHS Partners Award was added to the mix to recognize those who are employed by other agencies, but their full-time tasks are to serve DHS clients.

The list of the winners is something to make all of us proud of the work being done by DHS to help Oklahomans. See how many names you recognize...

George Earl Johnson, Jr.
DHS 2001 Quality Awards Chairman

2001 Quality Award Winner

Multi-Sensory Environment Committee Southern Oklahoma Resource Center

The SORC staff felt that a Multi-Sensory Environment would provide necessary enrichment and stimulation for 20 residents who are considered to be medically fragile. The committee found a company specializing in such equipment and which conducted an annual contest with equipment as prizes. The contest required the committee to submit a video detailing need and intended use of the equipment. The SORC team produced a video featuring team members dressed as the different types of equipment and bragging they were the best and most needed piece. The team won first place honors and \$3,500 worth of equipment.

2001 Quality Award Winner

Route 66 Group Workcamp Craig County

Craig County workers in collaboration with Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency and Group Workcamps, a faith-based organization from Colorado completed free home repairs for elderly, disabled and low-income resident. With more than 400 teenagers and their adult sponsors working one week, the needs of more than 70 residents were met.

2001 Quality Award Winner

Food Stamp Quality Improvement Task Force Facilitated By Certified Public Managers

With the Certified Public Managers class as facilitators, the task force sought to increase food stamp accuracy. The task force developed tools and processes to improve accuracy. The results were a drop in the error rate from 11.78 percent in March of 1999 to 6.49 percent in October 2000.

See Page 2 for Award Winning Teams and Best of the Best

Quality Award Winning Teams

Multi-Sensory Environment Committee Southern Oklahoma Resource Center

Janet Anderson, Therapeutic Medical Aide
George Anne Gray, Case Manager
Renee' Heath, Independent Living Skills Instructor
Lisa Mayotte, Physical Therapist
Teresa O'Connor, Occupational Therapist
Kaye Pender, Independent Living Skills Instructor
Jerry Pitts, Independent Living Skills Instructor
Bonnie Smereck, SLP - Liberty Health
Patty Smith, Therapeutic Medical Assistant
Tanya Smith, Physical Therapist
Vonnie Smith, Assistive Technology Specialist - OATC
Nuala South, SLP - Liberty Health

Route 66 Group Workcamp Craig County

Merle Baker, Secretary
Elizabeth Christian, Social Services Specialist
Nancy Christian, Child Welfare Aide
Jean Cooper, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency
Aubrey Crawford, Teenage Volunteer
Cheryl F. Crawford, Social Services Specialist
Larry Cruzan, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency
Abby Dunbar, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency
Randy Engel, Child Welfare Specialist
James Freeman, Social Services Specialist
Leah Gatlin, Teen Volunteer
Kathryn Gibson, Social Services Specialist

Gloria Hybeck, Group Workcamps
Roger Hybeck, Group Workcamps
Stephen Major, Group Workcamps
Sharon McKissick, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency
Mary Ann Overall, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency
Jeff Palmer, Group Workcamps
Janice Peace, Administrative Technician
Linda Williams, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency

Food Stamp Quality Improvement Task Force Facilitated By Certified Public Managers

Pat Bean, Social Service Specialist
Carolyn Bryan, Associate Director
Stella Church, Program Manager
Dan Fitzgerald, Division Administrator
Alice Foran, Area IV Director
Raymond Haddock, Division Administrator
Kay Hagerman, Blaine County Director
Brenda Hawkins, Area I Director
Linda Hughes, Program Manager
Stuart McCollom, Program Administrator
Stephen Scott, Area VI Director
Debbie Searle, Program Administrator
Debbie Sexton, Area III Director
Mary Stalnaker, Program Administrator
Joyce Wilson, Area II Director
Toni Wilson, County Director
Judy Wyatt, Area V Director
Marq Youngblood, Division Administrator

2001 Honorable Mention Teams

Synergizers

Washington County

Lisa Burchett, DDS Case Manager
Lisa Myers Cary, Child Welfare Specialist
Anita Eden, DDS Case Manager
James Harris, Child Welfare Specialist
Rhonda Hudson, Child Welfare Specialist
Glenda Punneo, Social Service Specialist

The Synergizers conducted a cultural assessment survey and identified employee concerns, one of which was building maintenance and cleanliness. The team members took charge of their environment to improve it for not only staff, but clients as well. After only three weeks they saw a marked improvement in the office environment.

Okfuskee County Emergency Operations Team

Okfuskee County

Teresa Bryant-Leffew, Social Service Specialist
Alida Cross, Social Service Specialist
Phillis Edwards, Social Service Specialist
Teresa Harelson, Social Service Specialist
Tracey Lee, Child Welfare Specialist
Austin Lewton, Social Service Specialist
Martha Montgomery, Social Service Specialist
Randy Norman, Social Service Specialist
Mary Seran, Social Service Specialist

When Okfuskee County was hit by the winter ice storms, much of the county was without electricity. Okfuskee County DHS was asked to operate an emergency shelter at the local armory. DHS staff set up the shelter, helped with registering people coming into the shelter, cooked, cared for children, and assisted in any way they could to help make the stay for stranded people as comfortable as possible. >>>>>>>

2001 Honorable Mention Teams

County Director Training Academy III

Center for Professional Development

Phyllis Brister, Atoka/Coal County Director
Shirley Crum, Muskogee County Director
Jerry Davidson, Grady County Director
Gerald L. Davis, Muskogee County Director I
Hal Epperley, Seminole County Director
Ron Garner, Financial Manager/Comptroller
Russell Holderby, Delaware County Director
Shirley Lodes, Programs Manager
Ross Maupin, Kingfisher County Director
Shirley Roberts, Osage County Director
Mel Smith, Garvin County Director
Joani Webster, Pottawatomie County Director
Jeff Zachary, Cotton County Director

From the start, Academy Class III felt it should make a contribution to DHS that reflected the current ideology of the executive team and also focused on the new image of DHS. To achieve this, they decided to produce a video, then a website, and then a Power Point presentation. The 20-minute video, entitled "Community Partnerships: Strengthening Oklahoma Families," has received many positive responses from staff who use it to make presentations to community and civic groups across the state.

Oklahoma Respite Resource Network

DHS State Office and Community Partners

Stephanie Battisto, Office of Finance
Erin Beach, Tulsa Advocates for the Rights of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities
Pat Bush, Developmental Disabilities Services Division
Sally Carter, Department of Health
Ginger Clark, Department of Health
Peggy Davis, Oklahoma Health Care Authority
Jean Derry, Office of Field Operations
Sue Freeman, Tulsa Advocates for the Rights of Citizens
Barbara Fyffe, Parent Child Center of Tulsa
Frank Gault, Family Support Services Division
Charley Hare, Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies
Lisa Henley, Office of Finance
Terry Johnsen, Family Support Services Division
Kathy King, Tulsa Senior Services
Kathleen Kovach, Developmental Disabilities Services Division
B.K. Kubiak, Division of Children and Family Services
Judy Leitner, Aging Services Division
Dale Lott, Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth

Linda McClintock, Division of Children and Family Services
Madalyn McCollom, Oklahoma Areawide Services Information System (OASIS)
Debbie Miller, Association of Catholic Charities
Jan Moss, United Affiliated Program/OUHSC
Millard Peacock, Office of Finance
Rose Ann Percival, Developmental Disabilities Services Division
Diane Potts, Tulsa Community College
Darlene Sapp, Aging Services Division
Sally Selvidge, OASIS
Donna Shanor, Latino Community Development Agency
Barbara Sieck, Division of Children and Family Services
Beverly Smallwood, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Jody Smith, Office of Finance
Neeley Snyder, Alzheimer's Association
Don Thompson, Office of Finance
Lyn Thoreson, Department of Health
Ann Trudgeon, Developmental Disabilities Council
Sherilyn Walton, Tulsa Advocates for the Rights of Citizens
Janice Winters, Oklahoma Areawide Services Information System

The Oklahoma Respite Resource Network was formed to increase the availability and accessibility of respite care. A statewide public and private collaboration, ORRN helps provide time away from constant caregiving for families of children or adults with disabilities, chronic disease or severe illness. Since February 2001, the Oklahoma Respite Resource Network has helped strengthen more than 500 families across the state by providing them with respite care support.

Area III Recruitment and Retention Task Force

Area III, Office of Field Operations

Rhonda Blaylock-Smith, County Director, Oklahoma County 55B
Cathy Brodt, Social Service Specialist, Oklahoma County 55G
Mike Chapman, Social Service Specialist, Oklahoma County 55B
Albertha Coleman, County Director, Oklahoma County 55C
Deloris Ferguson, County Director, Oklahoma County 55D
Justin Giddens, County Director, Canadian County
Cindy Halpern, Programs Field Representative, Area III
Penny Hill, Child Welfare Specialist, 55D
Johnnie K. Jones, County Director, Oklahoma County 55A
Renee Jones, Senior Personnel Officer
Denise McReynolds, Social Service Specialist, Oklahoma County 55B
Chris Pyle, Social Service Specialist, Oklahoma County 55C
Jim Struby, County Director, Oklahoma County 55G

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2001 Honorable Mention Teams

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Gordon Watson, Human Resources Consultant
Sherita Williams, Child Welfare Specialist, Oklahoma County
55D
Donna Yelverton, Social Service Specialist, Oklahoma County
55H

The Area III Recruitment and Retention Task Force was formed to address the problem of increasing vacancies and difficulty in finding quality applicants for the positions of Child Welfare Specialists and Social Service Specialists. The group went to work refining interviewing techniques and questions; developing a display to take to job fairs; producing recruitment brochures and posters; and placing recruitment notices in newspapers. The result has been a marked increase in applications and a better choice of applicants.

CSED Esprit Team

Child Support Enforcement Division

Marilyn Alsup, Human Resources Programs Manager
Terrie Bruesch, Interstate Worker
Laurel Eaton, Planning Specialist
Maryjane Erickson, Administrative Assistant
Pat Harper, Administrative Assistant
Victoria Harrison, Assistant to the Division Administrator
Ossie Ivory, Accountant
James W. Mitchell, Administrative Programs Officer
Rachel Mitchell, Administrative Programs Officer
Diane Owen, Administrative Programs Officer
Alicia Simpson, Child Support Specialist
Cindi Stine, Child Support Specialist

In 1997, a self-assessment conducted throughout the Child Support Enforcement Division showed a significant drop in morale, a lack of employee recognition and an overall lack of employee satisfaction. To help reverse this trend, the Esprit Team was formed. Employing a "Bright Ideas" program, the Esprit Team took ideas from across the state, evaluated them and shared the best with everyone. As a result, more than a quarter of the ideas submitted have been implemented. The boost in morale is felt statewide.

Pittsburg County DHS Toy Store

Pittsburg County

Jan Harris, Social Service Specialist
Donna Province, Social Service Specialist
McAlester High School Student Council

Donna Province and Jan Harris were determined to provide a Christmas for needy children after a community program suddenly disbanded. They only had one month to identify who needed toys, collect the gifts and distribute them. Using lists from the previous program helped with donations. And the McAlester High School Student Council agreed to conduct a toy drive and donated more than \$1,800. Jan and Donna spent an entire weekend buying toys; DHS employees and local volunteers helped wrap and distribute; and when the day arrived, 326 needy children had a very Merry Christmas.

Okfuskee County Child Welfare Team

Okfuskee County

Cecil Campbell, Child Welfare Specialist
Tracey Lee, Child Welfare Specialist
Deborah Lemons, Child Welfare Specialist
Connie Meadors, Social Work Aide
Marilyn Rainwater, Child Welfare Specialist
Toni Wisner, Child Welfare Specialist

Christmas gifts for the foster children in Okfuskee County have always depended on donations, and in recent years those donations decreased as the number of foster children increased. More funds were needed. The Okfuskee County Child Welfare staff began a series of fundraisers that included selling Indian tacos and fried pies, a silent auction and a variety show. The funds raised by these hardworking volunteers enabled them to provide foster children with Christmas gifts and to provide a pizza party for the kids, complete with a visit from Santa.

Brady Heights Child Welfare\Family Support Link

Tulsa County 72C

Joan Clay, County Director
Alesia Clement, Child Welfare Specialist
Tracy Graham, Social Service Specialist
Debra Meyer, Social Service Specialist
Carol Moisant, Social Service Specialist
With the ever-growing needs in Child Welfare services, Tulsa County 72C sought to improve kinship placements by linking Family Support Services with Child Welfare on targeted kinship cases. This may not seem like such a novel idea in smaller counties, but for Tulsa County, the mix of Family Support and Child Welfare staff has rarely been done. Now, there are positive to be seen not only in what has been done for families, but also in the understanding and appreciation of two staffs working together to best serve the families.

DHS Employee Recognition Committee

2001 "Best of the Best"

AGING SERVICES DIVISION

Area One

Donna Munyon, Health Care Management Nurse

Area Two

Connie Lutonsky, Health Care Management Nurse

Area Three

Debbie Thompson, Health Care Management Nurse

Area Four

Barbara Lanning, Health Care Management Nurse

Area Five

Renee Foust, Health Care Management Nurse

Area Six

Ruth Hale, Health Care Management Nurse

State Office

Bonnie Kolar, Administrative Officer I

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

El Reno District Office

Patricia Tennerly, Administrative Assistant

Miami District Office

Lana Waybright, Administrative Programs Officer II

Midwest City Office

Ed Bucknell, Child Support Specialist II

State Office

Lisa Moses, Comptroller, II

Tulsa West Office

Gayle Sutton, Child Support Specialist

Data Services Division

James Berry, Informational Services Data Management Analyst IV

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES DIVISION

Area II Office (Laura Dester Center)

Aprile Mitchell, Case Manager III

Northern Oklahoma Resource Center Of Enid (NORCE)

Donna Willingham, Direct Care Specialist II

State Office

Judy LaPointe-Jennings, Program Supervisor

Southern Oklahoma Resource Center (SORC)

Charles Boots Holder, Therapeutic Medical Aide II

Peggy Holder, Boots wife, accepted the award for her late husband.

DIVISION OF CHILD CARE

Region One

Hollie Winslow, Child Care Licensing Specialist III

Region Two

Carlotta Grimes, Child Care Licensing Specialist II

Region Three

Enna Wilbur, Child Care Licensing Specialist II

Region Four

Marsha Cofer, Child Care Licensing Specialist IV

Region Five

Janet Bole, Child Care Licensing Specialist III

State Office

Rosemarie James, Secretary IV-Sequoyah Building

DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Pauline E. Mayer Shelter

Verna Hudson-Sackett, Direct Care Specialist II

State Office

Martha Scales, Programs Administrator

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

Office For Civil Rights

Beverly Carroll, Civil Rights Administrator

Office Of Client Advocacy

Steven Mitchell, Social Services Inspector II

Executive Office

Sherleen Jackson, Ph.D., Administrator of Civil Rights

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

James Conway, Programs Field Representative

OFFICE OF FINANCE

Cecilia Fream, Human Resource Management Specialist

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

Travis Smith, Assistant General Counsel

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Laree Reidenbaugh, Human Resources Consultant

OFFICE SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

Deborah Scowden, Accountant

OFFICE OF FIELD OPERATIONS

Area IV Office

William Wilson, Area IV Administrative Field Liaison

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2001 "Best of the Best"

- Area V Office*
Phil Harris, Wagoner County Director
- Area VI Office*
Claudzetta Warren, Area Secretary
- State Office*
Shirley Lodes, Programs Manager II
- Adair County Office*
Brad Davidson, Social Services Specialist I
- Beckham County Office*
Pam Baldwin, Administrative Technician
- Blaine County Office*
John Brack, Child Welfare Specialist II
- Canadian County Office*
Kathryn Kay, Child Welfare Specialist II
- Carter County Office*
Cynthia A. Sperry, Social Services Specialist II
- Cherokee County Office*
Betty McHolland, Adult Protective Services Worker
- Choctaw County Office*
Melissa Gallagher, Social Service Specialist
- Craig County Office*
Phyllis Teal, Social Worker II
- Garfield County Office*
Esther Fisher, Social Service Specialist II
- Grady County Office*
Mitzi Aldrich, Adult Protective Service Worker
- Haskell County Office*
Kristy Doss, Social Services Specialist II
- Johnston County Office*
Andrea Hudgens, Social Service Specialist II
- Kay County, Newkirk Office*
Gayla Bailey, Child Welfare Specialist II
- Kay County, Ponca City Office*
Linda Merz, Social Service Specialist II
- Kingfisher County Office*
Becky Hansens, Secretary I
- Latimer County Office*
Tamma Copeland, Social Service Specialist II
- LeFlore County Office*
Ann Howard, Administrative Tech IV
- Logan County*
Lanora Horton, Social Service Specialist II
- McClain County*
Carla Fisher, Social Service Specialist II
- McIntosh County*
Dennis Duke, Social Services Specialist IV
- Major County*
Linda Lunn, Social Service Specialist III
- Marshall County*
Kent Hallmark, Social Services Specialist II
- Mayes County*
Mark Carson, Child Welfare Specialist IV
- Noble County*
Nellie Cervantes, Secretary I
- Nowata County*
Maria Downing, Customer Service Representative
- Okfuskee County*
Rosena Scott, Administrative Technician
- Oklahoma County 55-A*
Pam Miller, Social Service Specialist II
- Oklahoma County 55-C*
Roosevelt Milton, County Director
- Oklahoma County 55-D*
Clydene Brandt, Child Welfare Specialist
- Oklahoma County 55-F*
Mark Nitta, Child Welfare Specialist III
- Oklahoma County 55-G*
Charles Pruett, Social Service Specialist II
- Oklahoma County 55-H*
Angela Garman, Child Welfare Specialist III.
- Okmulgee County*
Danny Thomas, Adult Protective Services Specialist II
- Osage County*
E. J. Farrow, Social Service Specialist IV
- Pawnee County*
Joette Widener, Administrative Technician II
- Pontotoc County*
Karla Chaffin, Social Services Specialist II
- Pushmataha County*
Linda K. Morse, Customer Service Representative II
- Rogers County*
Kathy Locke
- Sequoyah County*
Ruby James, Child Welfare Specialist III
- Stephens County*
Gerald Lawrence, Social Services Specialist II
- Tulsa County 72-C*
Arianne Dryer, Social Service Specialist II
- Wagoner County*
Virginia "Ginger" Dugger, Social Services Specialist II
- Washington County*
Andrea Bone-Zink, Social Services Specialist

DHS Employee Recognition Committee 2001 "Partners Award"

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

McAlester District Office

Shelly Yates, Receptionist

Guthrie District Office

Diane Trigg, Enforcement/Establishment Case Manager

Stillwater District Office

Amanda Jensen, Receptionist

Muskogee District Office

Janet Tucker, Office Manager

Norman District Office

Melissa Sherman, Establishment Case Manager

Pauls Valley District Office

Terri Mueller, Case Manager

Poteau District Office

Gail Allen, Enforcement Case Manager

Wilburton District Office

Regina Cooper, Enforcement Case Manager

Published Nationally



Co-authors of an article that appears in the June issue of the national publication, "The Gerontologist," are from left, Judy Leitner, Aging Services Division; Jim McAuley, Ph.D., formerly associate professor at University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center where he was head of the OU Center on Aging; and Pat Baker, Aging Services Division. The article reports on the development of the DHS Oklahoma Aging Advocacy Leadership Academy which prepares concerned Oklahomans for leadership roles in dealing with issues in aging. Dr. McAuley, currently associate dean for research in the College of Nursing and Health Professions at University of North Carolina at Charlotte was instrumental in curriculum selection and is a frequent speaker at the academy. Leitner developed the concept and model for the academy, and Baker coordinates academy operations.

Human Services Commission Approves Fiscal 2002 Budget

The Oklahoma Commission for Human Services approved a fiscal 2002 state operating budget of \$439.5 million for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services during its June 12 meeting in Oklahoma City.

The budget is funded by \$416.4 million in state appropriated funds and \$23.1 million in one-time carryover funds. The Department had requested \$447.8 million as a maintenance budget to operate all programs and services at the fiscal 2001 levels. Collectively, the \$439.5 million state budget will allow Oklahoma to receive nearly \$687 million in federal matching funds, which

brings the total DHS operating budget to \$1.26 billion for the 36 state and federal programs the agency administers.

The Commission is required by state mandates to approve and submit a balanced budget work program by June 30 to the Office of State Finance, which is based on the Department's final legislative appropriation for fiscal 2002.

DHS Director Howard H. Hendrick said, Our focus during the coming year will be on continuing to increase the number of permanent adoptive homes we can find for children in state custody; improving the quality of child care; improving customer services

and collections in child support; improving the work opportunities for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families recipients; reducing the number of persons waiting to receive services through our developmental disabilities services programs; and improving opportunities for older Oklahomans to receive Personal Care and Advantage Waiver services in their own or relatives homes.



Randall Miller Named Lincoln County Director

Randall Miller, a 29-year veteran of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, has been named Director of the DHS office in Lincoln County.

I'm proud to welcome Randall Miller to the position of County Director, said Alice Foran, Area IV Director. Randall brings with him years of experience as well as a strong sense of community and family and will be a great asset to the Area IV management team.

Miller began his career with DHS as a social worker in Hughes County before moving to Lincoln County where he served as a social services supervisor.

I am very excited to have been selected to serve Lincoln County, said Miller. I intend to

continue to build upon the high standards set in Lincoln County and to work with our community partners to further the mission of



Randall Miller

DHS. Working together we can and will see good things happen.

Miller graduated from Gerty High School and earned a bache-

lor's degree in secondary education with a concentration in speech and English from East Central University, Ada. Miller has also served as pastor of the Prague Free Will Baptist Church for the past 26 years.

Miller's wife of 33 years, Violet, is a kindergarten teacher. They have four children: Renalla Ellis, 32, a dentist in Shawnee; Kristie Tiry, 30, an accountant in Oklahoma City; Trina Kelly, 28, who is studying to become a registered nurse and Rance Miller, 24, who recently graduated from Oklahoma State University and now works as an engineer for Manhattan Construction in Tulsa. The Millers also have three grandchildren: Kristie's son Brian, 2, and Renalla's twins, William and Aaron, a month old.

Marc Bonge Receives Child Support Award

The Western Interstate Child Support Enforcement Council (WICSEC) honored Marc Bonge, a 21-year veteran of the DHS Child Support Enforcement Division, with the Technical/Line Staff Award during their annual conference in Wyoming.

Bonge received the award from the WICSEC, an organization comprised of child support enforcement agencies west of the Mississippi, for his work in increasing lump-sum worker's compensation collections in Oklahoma by more than \$1 million a year.

Bonge has worked to build relationships with the Worker's Compensation Court and insurers.

By showing respect to the claimant's financial needs while they are unable to work, he has fostered cooperation with the individual claimant's legal representation as well.

I salute the attorneys and staff in the local offices, as well as the programs unit in the Child Support state office for their crucial roles and support, said Bonge. This is a group effort that often means I just verify collections and document everyone's hard work. I'm only part of this new-found success in the division.

Bonge's dedication in working for the children of Oklahoma does not end at the office. He



Marc Bonge

works with Oklahoma legislators to create more effective laws regarding children's issues. He also volunteers his time with the Kiwanis Club of Northeastern Oklahoma City, the Cleveland County Care Net, Inc., and the Oklahoma City Public Schools Mentor program.

Dispute Resolution Program Resolves Workplace Issues

Everyone wants a happy, healthy working environment. But sometimes peace and harmony are hard to maintain in the cubicle jungle. A valuable tool helps resolve these issues - the Alternative Dispute Resolution Program.

The Alternative Dispute Resolution Program offers DHS employees a process for resolving workplace issues that have an adverse affect on work.

We hope that supervisors and managers will try to resolve disputes at the local level, said *Clarese Amadi*, Grievance Manager and Mediation Coordinator, HRMD. But if a situation can't be resolved at the local level, employees can use the Dispute Resolution Program.

The program can be used to resolve work-related disputes by using a third party in negotiating a mutually beneficial solution to a disagreement. The processes used fall into three categories: mediation, conciliation and facilitation.

Mediation is a voluntary process and the mediator is chosen from outside the office or even outside the agency. Conciliation is a process where the third party can offer advice on the content of the dispute or the outcome of the resolution based on agency policy. During conciliation the parties involved don't have to meet face to face, but can communicate through the third party. Facilitation involves resolu-

tion of disputes between groups and works much the same as mediation.

The mediation process is what we ask employees to use first, said *Amadi*. During fiscal year 2000, there were 193 grievances filed, but only 53 mediations requested. Our goal is to increase the use of mediation and decrease the use of grievances.

Amadi said employees often use the grievance process as a com-



Clarese Amadi

munication tool.

Sometimes they don't feel they are being heard and instead of trying to solve the problem at the office level, they jump ahead and file a grievance, she said. Though the grievance process can be used to resolve an issue, it should only be used after all other avenues have been exhausted.

To find out more about the Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, contact *Clarese Amadi* at (405) 522-2098, or e-mail her at Clarese.Amadi@okdhs.org. Detailed information can also be found in the DHS Policy at DHS:2-1-150 through DHS:2-1-169.

Foster Youths See Legislative Action

During the recent session of the Oklahoma Legislature, 25 foster youths from across the state received hands-on experience in the law-making process when they served as pages for the Oklahoma House of Representatives.

The week that I work with the foster youth pages is the most rewarding week during the session, said *Karen Kipgen*, Page Program Supervisor for the House.

I see them change a lot during the week. They come in skeptical and a little scared, but they leave with the understanding that elected officials are just regular people from all walks of life.

In addition to their duties as pages, the foster youth participated in a mock legislative session, toured the Governor's mansion and met with Governor Frank Keating and Oklahoma House Speaker Larry Adair.

We have received letters from judges and foster parents saying that after a foster youth goes through the page program their grades, attitude and confidence improve, said *Claudia Hunter*, Oklahoma Department of Human Services Independent Living Coordinator. Some who have served as pages have suggested that it be mandatory for all foster youth.

Rep. *Jari Askins* provided the leadership four years ago to start the program, which is the only one of its kind in the nation. Currently Oklahoma has more than 7,200 foster children. If you would like to know more about becoming a foster parent, call 1-800-376-9729, or click on www.okdhs.org.

Vicki Williams New Director for Oklahoma County 55-A

Vicki Williams, a 20-year veteran of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, was named director of the DHS office serving south Oklahoma County and located at 401 W. Commerce.

I'm very pleased to have Vicki back in Oklahoma City, said Debbie Sexton, Area III Director. Her years of experience and expertise with the different divisions of the agency will be a great asset.

Williams began her DHS career as a Youth Guidance Specialist at the Oklahoma City Girls Group Home. She later transferred to the Midwest City office where she served as a social worker before moving to the Oklahoma County C office, 2409



Vicki Williams



N. Kelley Ave., where she worked as a social services supervisor. She then served as an administrative officer at the state office

before being named director of the DHS office in Lincoln County.

I am looking forward to working with the staff in the Oklahoma County 55-A office, said Williams. This is an exciting opportunity to work as a team to continue to build and improve upon the quality customer service this office has always delivered.

Williams graduated from Muskogee High School and received her bachelor's degree in community health and her master's degree in human development from the University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond.

Williams' husband of 22 years, Leo, works for Oklahoma Natural Gas. They have two children, a daughter, Marquita, 17, and a son, Sidney, 12.



**2001
Fall Conference
Southwest Regional
Support Enforcement
Association**

**September 4-7, 2001
Renaissance Hotel
Downtown Oklahoma City**

CLE Training credits available
For more information
or reservations,
contact Laurel Eaton
at 405-522-5871 by Aug. 1, 2001

[www.okdhs.org/childsupport/
swrsea/swrindex.htm](http://www.okdhs.org/childsupport/swrsea/swrindex.htm)

Parenting Helpline Listens Anytime

Being a parent is a hard job. Sometimes parents need someone to listen without making judgments or giving advice. For times like these, the Parenting Helpline is there, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

The volunteers at the Parenting Helpline know that there are times when a parent's patience runs out, but kids still need attention. At the other end of a call, someone listens without judging, cares about families,

wants to help and does not want to interfere.

Resources available through the Parenting Helpline include books and pamphlets on such topics as caring for infants and

toddlers, developmental stages, discipline and guidance. The volunteers at the Parenting Helpline can also provide information about resources and help agencies in a caller's area.

The Parenting Helpline is available statewide at 1-877-446-6865.

**Statewide Parenting
Helpline
1-877-446-6865**

Grady County Floods Mean Record Repairs

The Grady County office suffered \$20,000 worth of damage after storms ripped through the area Memorial Day weekend. A leak in the roof of the county-owned building collapsed the ceiling tiles, spilling insulation, debris and 200 gallons of water into the office.

We carried out three dumpsters full of ceiling tiles, said Grady County Director Jerry Davidson, who had to cut his long weekend short to help clean up the building.

Davidson said the building flooded along its length of the south one-third. Computer keyboards, the mail machine, copiers, desks and child welfare files sustained damage.

Mary Gail Foster, Records Management Coordinator, rushed down to Grady County when she learned about the water-damaged files. She loaded up the five cubic feet of records and transported them to the Records Center to dry and copy them.

Mold sets into paper within 72 hours of paper getting wet, said Foster. We could let it dry

and return it, but once high humidity sets in again, the mold will transfer to the good records. We'll

by spilled soft drinks, over-turned coffee cups and leaky flower pots. Foster said workers can



DHS Records Management Coordinator Mary Gail Foster sorts flood-damaged records from the Grady County office.

dry them enough to photocopy, then we'll destroy the wet records and certify the photocopies as true copies of the damaged records.

Foster estimated that it would take a month before the records could be returned to Grady County.

She said records are damaged not only by rain and flood but also

reduce damage to soaked records by limiting the use of paperclips and staples which rust; by making entries with ball-point pins and not felt tips which bleed; and by storing files appropriately and not under desks, which are notorious gathering spots for any slithering moisture.

Council Director Honored for Leadership

Ann Trudgeon, director of the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council, was recognized by Leadership Oklahoma as one of the state's finest community leaders in ceremonies at the 2001 Excellence in Community Leadership Awards luncheon in May.

Trudgeon was selected for her work with the Oklahoma Aging Advocacy Leadership Program with-

in the DHS Aging Services Division. She championed the cause of funding the development of the leadership program and laid the groundwork for a new partnership in advocacy. Trudgeon has been with the council for 12 years, eight of which she has served as director. The council is a federally required and federally funded body with DHS as the administering

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Pittsburg County Office Caught Working

On a recent trip to Pittsburg County, DHS Director of Public Relations George Earl Johnson Jr. caught Joe Bray and company with their heads down and shoulders to the plow. Bray said the 85 housed at the McAlester office are an excellent working team and stabilizing force in the community.

(Photo right) Comprehensive Services Supervisor Patricia Johnson, seated, and Family Support specialists, from left, Elizabeth Roberts, Gerald Smiddy, Ron Bennett, Jim Smith and Barbara Cottier take a moment from a staff meeting to smile for the camera.



Debra Winn of Swift Adoption shares a smile while visiting with State Office about finalizing an adoption.



Family Support Field Liaison Barbara Ferris (left) visits with Assistant County Director Sharon Walters.



Pittsburg County Director Joe Bray and administrative assistant Teresa Moy review job logs to fill a position.



Developmental Disabilities Services Supervisor Teresa Keirse was caught in the middle of locating community services for a client.

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Howard H. Hendrick

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