

March 30, 2010

**ODMHSAS Announces 2009 BEST Award Winners**

*The BEST awards, Building Excellent Services Together, is an annual event*

The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services recognized their 2009 “BEST” award winners at a March 26, 2010 board meeting. The awards are part of an annual effort by the department to celebrate outstanding performance by agency employees.

BEST stands for *Building Excellent Services Together*.

Awards were given in seven different categories, including the department’s Customer Service Award; Award for Innovation, Quality Improvement and Productivity Enhancement; Facility Employee of the Year; Commissioner’s Award for Excellence; Central Office Employee of the Year; Excellence in Changing Attitudes Award; and, Good Samaritan Award. Winners were selected from among nominations submitted by ODMHSAS facilities statewide.

ODMHSAS Commissioner Terri White said the dedication and commitment exhibited by the agency’s employees are exemplary and much appreciated.

“The work our employees do on a daily basis affects the lives of thousands of Oklahomans,” White said. “They provide hope to those whose lives have been impacted by illness, and link them to the possibilities of recovery and wellness. Every day our employees are changing lives for the better and having a positive effect on the future of our state.”

The top award, the *Commissioner’s Award for Excellence*, is given to an employee for exceptional performance or action that enhances the mission and values of ODMHSAS. This award was presented to **Sean Couch**, Director, Telehealth Services – ODMHSAS Central Offices in Oklahoma City.

Couch was recognized for his efforts to establish the agency’s video conferencing capabilities that benefit clients and providers alike. Implementation of tele-health technology

has changed the way ODMHSAS provides health services. The department is consistently recognized among their peers nationally as an innovator in the delivery of state-operated behavioral health services.

The *Facility Employee of the Year* award, given to an employee for outstanding merit and performance or an action that enhances the mission and values of ODMHSAS, was presented to **Eli Clayton, RN**, Pediatric Psychiatric Nurse at the Children's Recovery Center in Norman.

It was noted that Clayton excels in his work and is regarded by fellow employees as one of the most caring and creative staff members at CRC. His commitment to the organization's values and to the growth and development of young Oklahomans is unparalleled.

The *Central Office Employee of the Year* award went to **Kevin Marble**, Director of Software Development and Improvement. Marble represents the department on a number of interagency projects, and is intricately involved in the push to utilize technology. He has been involved in either creating or overseeing multiple projects that seek to advance the department's electronic information capabilities.

**Kathy Regan**, Accounting Tech at the Central Oklahoma Community Mental Health Center in Norman, won the *Customer Service Award* for providing exceptional customer service to internal and external customers. Regan was recognized for her warmth and compassion, and consistency in treating everyone with dignity and respect. It was noted that Regan is without a doubt, dedicated to finding a solution to whatever the problem.

A team of employees from the Bill Willis Community Mental Health Center, Wagoner County Outpatient Clinic, received the *Award for Innovation, Quality Improvement, and Productivity Enhancement*. This award is given to an employee or group of employees whose

suggestions/recommendations lead to improved employee productivity, increased safety, reduction in expenses or improved processes.

The team (**Johna Madden, Kim Jackson, Carleen Noe, and Debra Williams**) has been successful at improving facility productivity and in the implementation of cost saving measures that expand capabilities and ensure the highest quality of care for those served.

**Kim Bartlett**, Recovery Support Specialist affiliated with the Jim Taliaferro Community Mental Health Center in Lawton received the *Good Samaritan Award*, given to an individual who has provided significant volunteer work for the agency in a spirit of service and selflessness.

Bartlett was recognized for her efforts, as a recovering consumer of mental health services, to positively impact the lives of others with similar lived experiences and help them to also realize recovery. Kim is an outstanding example of unselfish giving of “self” to benefit others.

The *Excellence in Changing Attitudes Award* is given to an employee who has taken significant and visible steps to eliminate stigma and provide access to services. **Mitch Magness**, Coordinator, Aging & Long Term Care / OLDR - Older Oklahomans Learning to Direct Recovery received this honor.

Magness is a long-time agency employee and a tremendous example of what the “BEST” awards symbolize. His work in support of the agency’s suicide prevention initiative has been exemplary, and his dedication to preventing suicide, and reducing the stigma of suicide among older adults, has helped elevate awareness throughout the state.

ODMHSAS provides a vast range of prevention and treatment services to Oklahomans who are affected by mental or addictive disorders, in both inpatient and outpatient settings. The agency provides services to approximately 70,000 Oklahomans each year.

The mission of the department is to promote healthy communities and provide the highest quality care to enhance the well-being of all Oklahomans.

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