

News Release

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State Honors Child Welfare Workforce During Social Work Month

(Salem, Ore.) – The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS), Child Welfare Division is celebrating National Social Work Month in March. Social work is inherent in the work done by the Child Welfare Division and other areas at ODHS, which annually help 1.5 million Oregon residents through all stages of life.

“National Social Work month is a time to recognize that those who do social work are important to our world and our community well-being,” said Child Welfare Director Rebecca Jones Gaston. “Those who positively impact communities, families, young people, and children should be celebrated for their contributions to social change and development. As we continue to carry out our work, we adhere to the values and beliefs of the [Child Welfare Division Vision for Transformation](#) which include service to humanity, social justice, integrity, human dignity and worth and competence.”

ODHS recently named Lyndsie Wynn the 2020 (awarded in 2021) recipient of the annual [Tom Moan Memorial Award](#), which recognizes and promotes leadership and outstanding achievement by caseworkers in the field of child welfare.

The awardee is chosen through nominations from community organizations, Child Welfare Division employees and organizational partners. Generally, the awardee will travel to attend the National Association of Social Work Conference in Washington DC, although this year the conference will be held virtually due to the pandemic. All expenses for the award are raised privately by ODHS staff and the Tom Moan award committee. Moan was a career child welfare caseworker and administrator in Oregon.

This year’s winner, Wynn, is a caseworker with five years of experience in Central Oregon. Wynn was awarded to recognize her exceptional skill at family engagement, connections to community partners and the high level of respect she has from children, young people and families.

“We are exceptionally proud of Lyndsie’s work serving and strengthening the children and families of Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson Counties,” said Director Jones Gaston. “Deschutes County Intensive Youth care coordinators nominated Lyndsie because of the hands-on and compassionate support she provides to children and families, noting her ability to help biological family members integrate into mental health care and her commitment to family preservation. We appreciate the community connections Lyndsie has built through her work and her collaborative nature, as noted by her nomination from this group. Lyndsie understands the importance of the biological family to the child and does everything in her power to help that family become healthy again, which includes meeting them where they are at and including their voice in the planning process. These are crucial engagement skills that help all involved work alongside each other to address challenges and reach beneficial outcomes. These are also important components of the Vision for Transformation and the child welfare system we are working towards.”

Honorable mentions for the award include: Amanda Sinclair (Multnomah County), Faith Decides (Jefferson/Crook/Deschutes County), Heather Wise (Umatilla/Morrow County), and Lori Allan (Coos/Curry County).

The National Association of Social Workers organizes Social Work Month to educate the public about the invaluable contributions of the profession. More information is available at www.socialworkmonth.org.

About the ODHS Child Welfare Division: The Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Division is committed to transforming itself to better support the individual needs of families and to best serve Oregon’s children and young people. Read the [Child Welfare Division Vision for Transformation](#) to learn more.

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