

News Release

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Title: Celebrating Excellent Oregon Child Welfare Casework: Meet this Year's Honorees

(Salem, OR) –

The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) celebrates 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 helps 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 Interim Director Aprille Flint-Gerner. “The positive contributions they make keep hope alive for communities, families, young people, and children. 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 competence.”

Tom Moan (1940-1985) spent his entire professional career as a child welfare caseworker and administrator in Oregon. He recognized that those most committed to child welfare often go unrecognized. Upon his death, Tom Moan’s family, friends and colleagues created [The Tom Moan Memorial Award](#) to honor excellent child welfare casework practice.

ODHS recently named Amanda Catchpole from Clatsop County and Alexandra (Alex) Ronning from Deschutes County the 2023 (awarded in 2022) recipients of the Tom Moan Memorial Award. Awardees are chosen through nominations from families, community organizations, Child Welfare Division employees and organizational partners. This year’s awardees will attend the National Association of Social Work Conference in Washington DC as part of their recognition. The annual conference highlights best practices and developments in the field of social work. All expenses for the award are raised privately by ODHS staff and the Tom Moan award committee.

Amanda Catchpole, one of this year’s winners, is a certified Licensed Clinical Social Worker and recently served as a supervisor in Clatsop County. She now is a Child Welfare trainer for the PSU Partnership. Amanda was nominated for her outside-the-box thinking in accessing supports for children and resource parents to maintain

stability. She pushes people to see beyond what has been traditionally done and encourages new and innovative ideas.

Alexandra (Alex) Ronning is a certifier from Deschutes County who has also worked as a child protective services worker. She is a strong advocate for resource families but also has great judgment in assessing the safety of children. She values positivity and builds that into her care for fellow staff as well as with children in foster care and their resource families. She is passionate about supporting children and families and can work with anyone from any background, whatever place they may be in their life.

“We are exceptionally proud of both Amanda’s and Alex’s work serving and strengthening the children and families of Clatsop and Deschutes Counties and throughout Oregon in their work,” said Interim Director Flint-Gerner. “We deeply appreciate the support from the communities they serve in nominating these outstanding Child Welfare workers. Rolf Moan, Tom Moan’s son and committee chair noted a common thread in all the nominee and awardee interviews: a belief that the circumstances these children and families faced were temporary and that they could play a role to help children and families reach their full potential. These skills are also important components of the Vision for Transformation and the child welfare system we are working towards.” [Nominations for next year’s Tom Moan honorees](#) are now open and will close at the end of May.

Honorable mentions for the award include:

Amanda Hurst (Polk County), Isabel Garcia (Marion County), Mark Davis (Benton County), Reo French (Douglas County), Heather Glazier (Jackson County), Natalee Evans (Clackamas County), Paul Anderson Homan (Jackson County), Phillip Herrera (Baker County), Courtney Langner (Oregon Child Abuse Hotline-Multnomah County)

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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.