

HONOREES: FRONT-LINE CASEWORKER STAFF

Hisako O'Rourke

Missouri Children's Division, St. Louis County
Nominated by Jennifer Lavelle

"She doesn't just do it ... She believes it!"

Hisako (Sako) O'Rourke is regarded as the consummate social worker. She has been with the Missouri Children's Division for 13 years and works out of the St. Louis County office. A strong advocate for the children in her caseload, she thinks outside the box when finding ways to create healthy and successful family placements. Sako's reputation with community members is exemplary. They trust that she will do everything she can for the children. She often is relied upon to take the most difficult cases, knowing she will do so with thoroughness, empathy, concern and strength. Sako is the kind of worker who does more than what is expected, and has been instrumental in getting children in her caseload services they might not have otherwise received. Her commitment is illus-



trated in the story of a girl in her caseload who had over 30 placements in her 16 years of life. While the youth was in a residential facility due to trust issue-related behaviors, her adoptive family moved to Washington, D.C. Sako continued to follow her case and arranged for a residential facility in Washington so the family could work toward reunification.

When the family chose not to pursue reunification, Sako continued to advocate for the girl and eventually secured a transitional housing placement for her back in the St. Louis area. Sako realized that she was now the only adult in this child's life who was still looking out for her best interest, and she wore this burden with a heavy heart. Without Sako on this case, this youth would have turned age 18, and found herself completely alone. Sako gave her a chance at a healthy adulthood; Sako saved this child.

Bev Schaefer

Lutheran Family & Children's Services
Nominated by Paulette Foster

"She has incorporated her job into her life's mission!"

Bev Schaefer has been serving families as a foster care worker for Lutheran Family & Children's Services for almost 30 years. Before that, she and her husband Rich were foster parents to more than 50 young people and since have adopted two children. With LFCS, Bev has supervised over 900 children. She has incorporated her job into her life's mission. Known for the warmth and compassion she exudes, she makes people immediately feel at ease, whether they are infants, children, teens or adults. Her personal experience as both a foster and adoptive parent has made her an empathet-



ic and effective advocate for anyone touched by these experiences. When she was a foster parent, she would be asked often to meet with birth parents whose children were going to be placed in foster care, to ease their fears about the negative image of foster parents. After meeting with Bev, birth parents would feel confident that their child was going to receive loving care in a safe family environment. She selflessly makes herself available to foster parents 24 hours a day. Once, Bev volunteered to transport a child to Arizona for a sibling placement, so the adoptive parents, who had several other children, did not have to make the trip. She radiates positive energy, never loses her patience, and is a tireless champion for children.



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We Congratulate LFCS Nominee, Bev Schaefer!

And We Salute You!

We salute the **hard work** and **dedication** of all those who *Step Up for Kids* — making a difference in the lives of children in foster, adoptive and kinship care!

HONOREES: RESOURCE FAMILIES

Barbara Bocklage

Nominated by Amanda O'Neil

"She prepares older youth for independence with passion and exceptional skill!"

Barbara Bocklage has been a foster parent for 21 years and a Career/Level B home for well over 15 years. She works primarily with older teens who have significant mental health and behavioral needs. Barbara is an exceptional advocate for mental health services, educational services, and preparing older youth for



independence. She promotes therapeutic services for youth in her home, and regularly advocates for special programs in community agencies. In education, she encourages her youth to utilize Lindbergh School District and Special School District programs, and works with them to meet their goals for graduation, college enrollment, or joining the workforce as appropriate for each youth. Barbara teaches the youth to advocate for themselves with their Family Support Teams. In preparing youth for independent living, she teaches youth to drive, assists them in obtaining their driver's licenses, teaches budgeting and housekeeping skills, encourages employment, and teaches general self-care.

Sara Glasscock

Nominated by Danny Jenkins and Keith Dockins

"She is an anchor for children navigating rough seas!"

Over the past 14 years, Sara Glasscock has fostered over 100 children and adopted 4 children who were in her care. As an Elevated Needs B foster parent, she works with troubled teenagers, striving tirelessly to give them a chance to make themselves productive members of our society and to get a good education. Sara never turned a child away. She has fostered children



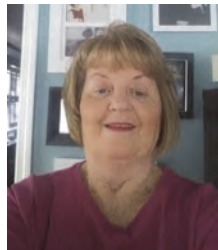
ranging in age from newborns to 18 years, including several with severe disabilities. She is proactive with the children's medical, psychological and educational needs. Sara provides resources beyond what the state provides, so they can have a more normal lifestyle. Once her youth have moved on, she remains involved in their lives. She often has continued to provide them with the necessities of life, and has helped several children with college education. Sara gives every child in her care and out of her care a rock to lean on. She has provided a feeling of family that has been rewarded by having had children she has fostered return to visit because it was home. The children know they are in safe hands with Sara and that she is an anchor as they navigate rough seas.

Evelyn Holder

Nominated by Ruthanne Willeke

"She doesn't treat the girls like foster children, but like her own children!"

Evelyn Holder has fostered some 30 teenage girls since 2008. Most have been career- and behavioral-level placements and many have stayed in her home for more than a year. She has *never* asked for a child to be removed from her home despite many challenges. Despite her busy household, Evelyn spends individual



time with each girl. She makes sure they celebrate their accomplishments, birthdays and other special occasions and they eat dinner as a family on a regular basis. She tries very hard to give the children she fosters the same opportunities she gave to her own children. Evelyn has helped two of the girls purchase automobiles, and she makes sure they understand the importance of budgeting their money, paying bills, paying for insurance and working. She hosts family support team meetings in her home and she has direct contact with many of the birth parents, even after the girls go home. Evelyn not only provides emotional support to the girls, but she talks with birth parents and other family members to help them manage the girls and their behaviors.

Yvonne Peoples

Nominated by Danny Jenkins

"She works tirelessly to help youth become productive members of society!"

Yvonne Peoples is a loving and nurturing Elevated Needs B foster parent who puts the needs of the children in our community before her own. She works tirelessly with our most troubled teenagers to



give them a chance to make themselves productive members of our society and to get a good education. She provides resources beyond those the state provides, so they may have the same extras her own children have and experience a more normal lifestyle. Yvonne also is a member of the Children's Division Assertive Community Treatment team, working to give other foster parents recommendations that help children heal. She is also an adoptive foster parent who has seen several of her children grow to maturity and remains in contact with the children that have been placed in her home in the past.