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Governor's Outstanding Adoptive Parent Awards presented

(MADISON) — First Lady Tonette Walker and Wisconsin Department of Children and Families' Secretary Eloise Anderson honored four special adoptive families today by presenting them with the 2015 Governor's Outstanding Adoptive Award. The awards were presented during a celebration at the State Capitol as part of Wisconsin's month long recognition of National Adoption Month.

Nominations for the awards were received from adoption workers, children's advocates, and citizens from all corners of Wisconsin who wanted to recognize the incredible families they know who have opened their hearts to provide safe and loving homes to children in need of a "forever" family. The recipients were chosen based upon their stories of exceptional dedication, commitment and sacrifice made in order to ensure their adopted children received the important family bonds that only a "forever" family can provide.

"It is my pleasure to play a role in recognizing the Outstanding Adoptive Parent Award winners," said First Lady Tonette Walker. "These parents inspire all of us in their unending dedication and commitment to children in desperate need of a permanent home. They are truly changing the lives of these children, serving as a light to everyone involved in the foster care system."

Four adoptive families who were nominated by their caseworkers received awards.

Randall and Paulette Alseth of South Range were recognized for adopting two children and fostering a third child, and for going above and beyond to advocate for the care and rights of their children.

Derek and Jackie Moran of Eden were honored for adopting two brothers and keeping them together, while keeping an open relationship with the birth family. The Morans also adopted a third child, an infant in need of a home and family.

Bradley and Kodi Morton of Middleton were foster parents for almost eight years. They adopted three siblings and are fostering a fourth, keeping them together. They were recognized for their dedication over the years to ensure the care of the children.

Dave and Yvonne Truckey of DePere were honored for adopting a very young child and caring for her through serious illness, while maintaining an interactive relationship with the birth mother. They were recognized for their dedication of putting a child's needs foremost.

Although many Wisconsin families have made the commitment to adopt children, the event highlighted the need for more families to step forward to create these unique and special families through adoption.

“Adoptive parents have a dramatic impact on the lives of the young people that they welcome into their families,” said DCF Secretary Eloise Anderson. “The outstanding parents that we honored today are great examples of the type of commitment that Wisconsin needs from more families so that all of the children waiting to be adopted are welcomed into families with open arms and open hearts.”

Speakers at the ceremony included: Mrs. Walker; Secretary Anderson; Debra Waller, CEO of Jockey, International; and Ciara Scheithauer, a college freshman from Ogema, WI who talked about her adoption from a youth’s perspective.

Secretary Anderson also recognized Jockey International and its corporate initiative, *Jockey Being Family*. The initiative provides funding, employee volunteers, and in-kind donations in support of post-adoption services in Wisconsin and throughout the United States.

For more information about adoption, please visit www.dcf.wisconsin.gov visit and click on Foster Care and Adoption.

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