



201 East Washington Avenue, Room G200  
P.O. Box 8916  
Madison, WI 53708-8916  
Telephone: 608-266-8684  
Fax: 608-261-6972

Governor Scott Walker  
Secretary Eloise Anderson  
  
Secretary's Office

---

**For Immediate Release**

Wednesday, May 27, 2015

Contact: Joe Scialfa or Kathleen Scholl, 608.266.9000

## **First Lady and DCF Secretary Recognize Foster Parents and Foster Youth**

In recognition of Foster Care Month, First Lady Tonette Walker joined Department of Children and Families Secretary Eloise Anderson to honor foster parents for their incredible commitment to the children of Wisconsin who have needed a temporary, safe place to call home by honoring them with the 2015 Governor's Foster Care Award.

"Foster Care Month gives us an opportunity to thank the families who care for the vulnerable children in Wisconsin who have to be removed from their homes," said Mrs. Walker. "Foster parents play a critical role in helping these children take the first step of their journey towards healing and recovery."

"For those times when children cannot remain at home, foster families step in to keep them safe, nurture them, and give them a place to call home," stated Secretary Anderson. "I know the joys and challenges of being a foster parent can be significant, although the joys far outweigh the challenges."

Mrs. Walker and Secretary Anderson recognized fourteen outstanding foster parents from throughout Wisconsin at a ceremony this morning at the state Capitol: Chuck and Judy Koenings of Menomonee Falls, Deb and Jerry Roth of Unity, Gerald Doxtator of Oneida, Dan and Brenda Schultz of Stoughton, Nakeita Patterson of Milwaukee, Carl and Carlene Keys of Milwaukee, Diana and Doug Zwart of LaCrosse, and Fred and Barb Hoffman of DePere.

Two Foster Youths were honored for overcoming challenges and making great improvements in their lives, as well as helping to mentor other teens. Faith Neumann of Antigo and Devon Thompson of Milwaukee received a 2015 Foster Youth Award.

A special "Champion of Foster Care Award" was presented to Colleen Ellingson of the Coalition for Children, Youth and Families, for over 30 years of work advocating for the support of children and youth in foster care.

The event also highlighted the need for additional kind, responsible parents to step forward and care for foster children. Today in Wisconsin there are more approximately 7,000 children living in out-of-home care. For more information on becoming a foster parent, please visit [dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/foster](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/foster).

- END -