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November 16, 2017
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Governor's Outstanding Adoptive Parent Awards presented

(MADISON) — The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) honored six special adoptive families today by presenting them with the 2017 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.

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

"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 serve as great examples to others who are considering adoption and show all of us the transformational power of being accepted into a forever family."

Six adoptive families received awards:

Rebecca and Robert Brooks of Manitowoc are advocates for the adoption of teenagers and older youth who need a forever home. They have adopted nine children and excel at working with children striving to overcome challenges.

Jena and Scott Holman of Clintonville were recognized for not only adopting five children, but for having specialized skills working with children who have medical and other special needs. The Holmans advocate for children and help others through respite care.

Sara and Jason McEvilly of Milwaukee were honored for compassion to keep a sibling group together. Through the help of their extended family, their adopted son is able to continue to build a strong bond with his brother and sister. The McEvillys also are passionate about raising awareness of the need for more forever homes.

Joe and Angela Quance of Wausau have adopted one child, but continue to foster children in hopes of expanding their family once again. They understand trauma and help children heal through the safe and positive relationships they build. The Quances also reach out across cultures to ensure children remain connected.

Annemarie and Bill Scobey-Polacheck of Glendale were recognized for not only adopting two girls, but for their dedication to learning and providing trauma-informed care. They have also been very pro-active in understanding cultural and transracial interactions and reach out within the community to raise cultural awareness.

Erica Reyes of Eau Claire is a single mother of five adopted children and also cares for her ill father. She is an advocate for trauma-informed care and has a passion for helping children who sometimes need extra special care.

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.

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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