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Dept. of Children and Families: Foster care awards recognize unsung heroes

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(MADISON) – Foster families throughout Wisconsin play an important role in the lives of children who need a temporary home, while also providing care and guidance. In recognition of Gov. Scott Walker's proclamation declaring May as Foster Care Month in Wisconsin, Department of Children and Families (DCF) Secretary Eloise Anderson honored six outstanding foster families and a foster youth with the 2017 Governor's Foster Care Award.

Six foster parent awards were presented during a ceremony today in the Assembly Chamber of the State Capitol, recognizing: Doris and Wayne Jeske of Tilleda, Joan Klang of Madison, Richard and Lynn Lawson of Wausau, Lacey and Steve Naiberg of Conrath, David and Carrie Osswald of Whitefish Bay, and Aaron Schellinger of Appleton.

"Foster families are some of our communities' greatest unsung heroes," said Secretary Anderson. "Foster families take in children during their darkest hour, shelter them and give them love. They do this, knowing that in all likelihood they will one day say goodbye. Even with that knowledge, they nurture and love these children and welcome birth families into their lives; offering support during their journey towards reunification."

Also recognized was Reginald "Reggie" Brown, Jr. from Waupaca who received a

2017 Foster Youth Award for overcoming challenges, forging a new path for his future, and helping to mentor other teens.

The ceremony today also highlighted the need for additional kind, responsible adults to step forward and care for foster children. Currently in Wisconsin there are about 7,300 children living in out-of-home care. For more information on becoming a foster parent, visithttps://dcf.wisconsin.gov/fostercare/become.