

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OUTSTANDING NJ FOSTER PARENTS TO BE HONORED IN MAY

Foster and Adoptive Family Services, in conjunction with the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Youth and Family Services, Once Again Celebrates National Foster Care Month with Recognition Awards

Monmouth Junction, NJ, April 24, 2012 –Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) will once again celebrate May's National Foster Care Month with a Recognition Awards Brunch on Saturday, May 12, 2012 at the Sheraton Eatontown Hotel in Eatontown, NJ. FAFS has honored those who support New Jersey's abused and neglected children with recognition awards for over twenty years.

The Awards Ceremony will feature a speech by Thea Komar, FAFS' Ambassador for Children in Foster Care. To learn more about Komar, please visit www.fafsonline.org/foster-care-awareness.html.

Awards will be presented to outstanding foster and adoptive parents, as well as Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) staff and community members who have demonstrated their commitment to the well-being of children in foster care in New Jersey. This year, FAFS and DYFS have added an Outstanding Kinship Family award to the roster, to honor relative caregivers such as grandparents raising grandchildren for dedication to their families. FAFS has also renamed the Partnership award; it is now known as the Outstanding Teamwork in Support of a Child award, to better depict its purpose.

"We continue to be awed by the unfaltering commitment foster, adoptive and kinship families have to children in foster care," says Mary Jane Awarachow, FAFS' Executive Director. "We are especially proud to announce that we are sponsoring a new award this year, Kinship Family of the Year, to acknowledge relative caregivers' devotion to children who are need of family during a very difficult time in their lives."

MORE

The winners of the 2012 FAFS/DYFS Recognition Awards are:

Outstanding Foster Family:	Irma Smith
Outstanding New Foster Family:	Barbi Alster-Katz
Outstanding Adoptive Family:	Kathleen Loughran
FAFS Commitment Award:	Allen Lester Gribetz, President / Lenox, Inc.
Outstanding FAFS Member:	Charles "Bud" Cannaveno
Outstanding Teamwork in Support of a Child Award:	Deborah Calderon, Elizabeth Carr, Mary Louise Heim, William Flores, Luis Loy, Mary A. Perez, Edna Rosa, Migna Rosa, Gayle Williamson
Outstanding Youth of the Year	Destiny Johnson, Michael Anthony Murray II
FAFS President's Award	Dr. Allison Blake, Commissioner, Department of Children and Families
DYFS Director's Award	Averil Lyn Zitzner
DYFS Worker	Rhonda Y. Brown
FAFS Volunteer Committee of the Year	Warren County FAFS Volunteer Committee

Foster and Adoptive Family Services is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization, dedicated to providing support, training and advocacy to meet the special needs of foster, adoptive and kinship families, who provide safe, stable and nurturing homes for children in foster care.

To receive more information about FAFS, contact Mary Jane Awrachow, Executive Director, at 1.800.222.0047.

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Foster and Adoptive Family Services: The Voice of Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Families in NJ