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**Contact:** Lynn Patmalnee, Director of Communication and Development  
**Email:** [lpatmalnee@fafsonline.org](mailto:lpatmalnee@fafsonline.org)  
**Telephone:** 609.520.1500 ext.324

## **Summers Family Presented Award for Service to Foster Children in NJ**

EATONTOWN, NJ –The Summers family would stop at nothing to ensure the health and happiness of their family and friends. Because of this, and for their commitment to providing safe, stable and nurturing homes to children in New Jersey, Joseph and Angela Summers of Orange, NJ received the Outstanding Adoptive Family of the Year award at Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) and the state Department of Child Protection and Permanency's (DCP&P) annual recognition awards.

The family accepted the award at the Pacific Concord Hotel in front of a crowd of more than 100 foster, adoptive and kinship parents and children, as well as dozens of FAFS and DCP&P staff members.

When the Summers learned that they would be unable to have children of their own, they began exploring the possibility of foster care and adoption. Years later, they've provided a warm foster home to six young children. One of those children, an 8-month-old boy with severe congenital issues, became a permanent member of their home through adoption.

The Summers are proud adoptive parents who have taken extraordinary measures to ensure the young boy's health and happiness. While initially there was fear he would be unable to walk or talk, he is now an active four-year-old who is developing into the healthy young child the Summers always imagined he would be.

FAFS Chief Executive Officer Mary Jane Awrachow said, "The Summers exemplify what is so remarkable about thousands of foster, adoptive and kinship families across the state – their willingness to provide safe, stable, nurturing homes for children in need. We applaud the Summers' dedication to New Jersey's children in care."

To earn the award, the Summers met criteria set by the FAFS Board of Directors, which included heightening awareness of foster care, extraordinary commitment to children in care, positive impact on the foster, adoptive and kinship community and improving community outreach for the benefit of children in adoptive care.

For more than 20 years, FAFS, in cooperation with DCP&P, has recognized individuals and families for outstanding achievement in supporting children in foster care.

The mission of FAFS is to provide 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 in New Jersey. FAFS is a federal

501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, with headquarters on Route 1 in Monmouth Junction. Simply stated, FAFS is the voice of foster, adoptive and kinship families in New Jersey.