

OCFS HONORS MONTGOMERY COUNTY PSA UNIT FOR OUTSTANDING WORK WITH VULNERABLE ADULTS

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) today awarded Certificates of Recognition For Excellence in Providing Protective Services for Adults (PSA) to staff of the Montgomery County Department of Social Services (DSS) PSA unit.

The awards were presented at a session of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors in Fonda by OCFS Deputy Commissioner Laura Velez, Director of the Bureau of Adult Services Alan Lawitz and Deborah Schwencke, also of the Bureau of Adult Services.

OCFS honored Theresa Cranker, PSA supervisor and long-term care coordinator, and Elizabeth Minnitti, senior caseworker, for outstanding supervision and casework, and for going above and beyond what is required to protect vulnerable adults and to help their clients obtain necessary services and benefits.

OCFS Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq., said: "Protective Services for Adults workers are on the front lines in responding to referrals of adult abuse, neglect and exploitation. They are the ones who act to protect vulnerable adults with impairments, who have no one else willing and able to assist them. With these Certificates of Recognition we proudly acknowledge and celebrate superlative work by PSA workers."

Ms. Cranker was cited for inspiring caseworkers to serve their clients with empathy and compassion; for assisting caseworkers with assessments and home visits when necessary; for developing positive interagency relationships to enhance collaborative work; and for being instrumental in working with the local Office for the Aging to develop the Single Point of Entry for Long-term Care.

Ms. Minnitti was honored for her many years of dedicated, compassionate service to her elderly and disabled clients. She recently led homemakers in cleaning the home of an elderly client, for whom the district serves as guardian, and who had moved from a local hospital into a nursing home. She arranged for the client's clothing to be brought to the nursing home, coordinated with distant relatives to make sure family mementos and photographs would reach them, and met with a realtor to list the home for sale in order to cover the cost of the client's care, and did all these tasks with an effort that was no less than would be done for a beloved family member.

Adults, 18 or older, may need protective services for a variety of reasons. A family member, friend, neighbor or other concerned person worried about an individual who may need protective services for adults should call the local department of social services. Individuals who recognize their own need for help may call for themselves. For the phone number of a county's protective services for adults unit, call: 1-800-342-3009 (press option 6). For more information, visit the website of OCFS, which oversees PSA: www.ocfs.state.ny.us.

###