

April 2021 Children First Award Recipients

Ann Blackwood - Department of Health & Human Services



Ann Blackwood has served our community for about 20 years. In the time I have known and worked with her I am continually impressed by her compassion and care. Ann and I served together on the SARB board, and even with my toughest student she was unfailingly kind, seeking solutions to benefit everyone at the table. Ann understands the unique needs of Humboldt County's children (and foster children in particular) and works tirelessly to provide assistance and care for families in the region. I really find her to be a commendable human being and feel that her work makes her more than qualified to receive this award.

Amy Terrones - Redway Family Resource Center



Amy works mostly by herself in Southern Humboldt. That is a huge task serving the families of SoHum who make up an area the size of Rhode Island! Amy promotes healthy relationships, parental support, group counseling, individual counseling, parent preparation, and deals with food and clothing scarcity for our community. Amy provides a space of non judgement where families can go to better themselves individually and as a family unit. Amy provides a friendly liaison between law enforcement, county welfare, and the community. I am in awe every time I work with Amy about how kind and supportive she is. She works with the youth of So Hum until they graduate from High School. Amy is a true asset to our community and deserving of recognition to making this community and our world a better place.

Jessica Eusebio Larios – Paso a Paso



Jessica is doing an amazing work with new mothers by providing them support in many different ways. One way is providing lactation education and referrals according to the needs of each mom. She has a support groups with these women and she follows their lead to provide information in response to questions they might have. She also invites guest speakers to this group to help them learn of other community programs. In addition, she offers infant massage and car seat classes for these clients or any family who would like to participate. Even more, she participates in community with other programs to be informed and learn about new resources that she shares with her coworkers and her clients. She also advocates for all her clients and the Latinx community.

Sharrone Blanck - North Coast Big Brothers Big Sisters



Sharrone Blanck is a pillar for the community, her work specifically for the BIPOC community has supported both the community and the professionals, and those striving for a better understanding of the turbulent times we are experiencing. As an educator Sharrone spends a good amount of her time in direct service to the children of our community. She beams when she speaks of her students and the progress and supports that she provides. As a mother she gushes over the accomplishments of her sons, and their impacts made and on the horizon. As a community member she is supportive, attentive and leads in love. As a community leader and the President of the NAACP she is bold, with a sense of urgency that this time demands, but with a listening heart and the ability to learn and grow. Others only hope to mirror her professionalism and the dedication that she brings to the community through her many commitments and profound leadership.

Soledad Torres - Paso a Paso

Soledad is an extraordinary woman, who prepares herself every day to best support families, especially mothers and children. She supports mothers from pregnancy and continues to support them after the baby is born. In addition to supporting them she also assists them with problems related to their children's emotions. She supports them in developing resilience in their children. Soledad facilitates a group called Women to Women, where mothers can seek support and talk about their problems.

Florence Parks – North Coast Big Brothers Big Sisters

Florence is the Executive Director for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the North Coast and has revitalized the agency. After several different directors and staff, BBBSNC found her. She moved up the Eureka for this position and has over 25 years in the mentoring field. She has become a force in the community, serves on many boards and is passionate about the future of our youth. I have never been more inspired by an individual and I have been with the agency off and on since 2014. Her philosophy really does parallel our mission that all youth deserve success. She has in depth knowledge of the ACE's study, and the importance of 5 positive adults in a child's life. Humboldt County should be thanking her every day for joining our community. She teaches me daily to how to be a leader, professional, and how to take and empower myself with the spark of mentoring.

She wanted me to think of a nomination with all sponsors and supporters, which are so many amazing people, but truly, I think Florence deserves this because she doesn't stop; working, advocating, and preventing child abuse. Again, I have never met a person so inspiring in real life!