

Every April CAPCC honors individuals and/or organizations that are doing exceptional work in the field of child abuse prevention and intervention. The following are our 2025 Children First recipients.

April 2025 Children First Award Recipients

Ronda Evans, Director of Community Schools, Eureka City Schools

For 36 years, I have been dedicated to educating and supporting children and families, with the last 17 years in Humboldt County. Since 2007, I have been dedicated to supporting children and families in Humboldt County. My journey began when my husband and I, and our four children moved from Butte County, bringing with us a deep commitment to foster care and adoption. As a parent to both biological and adopted children, I have firsthand experience navigating the complexities of raising children with diverse needs, including those impacted by trauma and the foster care system.

My professional work in Humboldt started as a Parent Educator through the College of the Redwoods Foster/Kinship Care Education Program, CASA, and various non-profits, where I worked directly with families, including mothers in Humboldt County affected by the criminal justice system. In 2014, I returned to the public school setting as an educator at South Bay School, where I spent nearly a decade serving students and families. During this time, our family grew to include eight children, including two additional sibling groups added to our family through adoption.

Building on my experiences as a foster/adoptive parent, educator, and advocate for children with special needs, I pursued my Master's in Education with an emphasis in Trauma-Informed School Practices. In 2022, I joined Eureka City Schools as the Director of Community Schools, where I have the privilege of coordinating whole-child services for over 4,000 students in TK-12.

Community Schools provide wraparound support to ensure that every child has access to education, health care, and social services. By integrating academic, health, and family support, we help students overcome barriers to success. Some key collaborations include:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters, True North, English Express, and Grow Together, provide mentoring, after-school programs, and family resources.
- Optical Academy's Glasses to Classes Program, which provided vision screenings to 2,860 students and prescription glasses to 610 students, ensuring access to essential vision care.

Humboldt County is a beautifully resilient community where 33 languages are spoken in Eureka City Schools! Our diversity is our strength, and through the work of 24 Community Schools employees across nine schools, we are creating a system where every child has the opportunity to succeed.

The Children First Award is not just a recognition of my work but a testament to the power of collaboration, advocacy, and unwavering dedication to children and families. It is an honor to be part of a movement that ensures all children have the support they need to thrive.



https://www.eurekacityschools.org/for_parents/community_schools

<https://www.instagram.com/eureka.city.schools/>

<https://www.facebook.com/eurekacityschools>

Jessica Clothier, MA, Supervisor Community Services, Community Health Investment, Providence St. Joseph Hospital

It is something special to get to work with families in the North Coast. When I came to Humboldt as a student, nearly 15 years ago, my hope was to work with families. During my time at Cal Poly Humboldt (HSU then) I volunteered and worked at Youth Educational Services, also known as the YES House, and this launched me into a deeper understanding of community needs and strengths and gave me perspective into the systems that are at play in different environments. I had the honor of volunteering at and learning from the local juvenile detention center, bringing music to elementary schools, and tutoring English Language Learners. Over the next few years, I was able to go from volunteering in several programs, to directing a program of my peers and ultimately to becoming a consultant for other directors. It was here that I was able to gain connections to the larger community, including volunteer opportunities at local events and Latino Health Fairs and service days at the Jefferson Community Center.



Volunteering then working at Jefferson Community Center provided me with a new perspective and understanding of the power of community. Seeing the neighborhood come alive around events and programs fueled me. I am so thankful to everyone at Jefferson, especially Heidi, who works tirelessly to ensure this place continues to be available and accessible to the community.

Today, I am working at Providence for the Community Health Investment Department. I am in a more administrative role currently, and prior to that spent 8 years as a community health worker for Paso a Paso, supporting Spanish speaking families in the prenatal and postpartum period. Outside of providing a family with relevant and accessible education and information to maintain or improve their health and pregnancy, one of my biggest goals was to connect families to other families, providers, and programs. One of my favorite things about this job is having the chance to connect with families early in their parenting journey, to build trust, to empower them, and to support them in building the village they will lean on as the parenting years go by. What an honor it is to walk beside the families, support them in times of need, and even sweeter to celebrate with them when they meet their goals.

Martha Flores-Chavez, Community Health Worker, Paso a Paso, Providence St. Joseph Hospital

Soy Martha Flores-Chavez, I am a Community Health Worker and provide Perinatal Health Education to the Spanish speaking community.

“Martha meets clients where they are at and beautifully connects with parents to support the development of their babies and young children. She is encouraging to the parent and shows unconditional positive regard in her work with families.”

[Paso a Paso \(Step by Step\) | Providence](#)

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Humboldt Network of Family Resource Centers

"The HNFRC has done some great work during these challenging times. Their core principals are the 5 protective factors. Their individual sites have initiated life changing programs, such as Guaranteed Income in McKinleyville, or Financial Literacy in Rio Dell. They have adopted the strategy of Family First Prevention Services to assist families in accessing services early on, or upstream, to keep families out of costly systems of care. The sixteen Family Resource Centers, through the network, act as supports for one another, participating in trainings, workshops, and seeking funding opportunities to sustain essential services in each of their communities.

Humboldt County is a much richer place thanks to the Humboldt Network of Family resource Centers."

<https://www.hnfrc.org>

