

The EAP Committee is tasked to recognize Employees of the Month. This is a very important and a very special occasion when fellow county employees are recognized for not only their service to the citizens of the county but to recognize those individuals who go above and beyond their duty. The EAP Committee receives nominations from fellow employees and department directors and then the nominations are reviewed, discussed by the committee and a selection is made.

The employees of the month for the past year were:

October 2022 James White (Sheriff)

November 2022 Jennifer Gonzalez (Social Services)

December 2022 Martin Stirk (Sheriff)

January 2023 Justin Niederhofer (Emergency Management)

February 2023 David Foeller (Sheriff)

March 2023 Tisha Drought, Taylor Tinkous, Patricia Urquhart (Mental Health)

April 2023 Cory Martindale (Sheriff)

May 2023 Ariel Ambrose (Sheriff)

June 2023 Jennifer Leverenz (District Attorney)

July 2023 Mark Tucker (Mental Health)

August 2023 Jennifer Szalay (Social Services)

September 2023 Devon Pahuta, Brian Marsceill, Kevin Colonna (Sheriff)

From this pool of candidates, a Department Head must make a recommendation to a separate committee to determine the Employee of the Year. The committee takes into consideration the service that an employee has performed before choosing the Employee of the Year.

This year's employee of the year started with Social Services in 2009 as a quiet keyboard specialist.

They were promoted to a Social Welfare Examiner in 2016 and in 2020 were again promoted to a Senior Social Welfare Examiner overseeing the Public Assistance and HEAP programs.

Due to her dedication to both the county and the programs, this employee was once again promoted to Principal Social Welfare Examiner of the unit in 2022.

The Public Assistance program has always been a very demanding and fast paced program area and has been short staffed for some time.

During the past year the Homelessness has skyrocketed within our county and continues to grow into a more complex problem daily as many of the local motels are at capacity.

This employee has been able to lead their team through the endless struggles with finding solutions and placements for the residents in need in our district. This employee also ensures that the recipients are in compliance with the basic program requirements set forth by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and that the recipients are working towards gaining self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

Due to multiple vacancies within the unit this employee has shown her dedication by continuing to manage vacant caseloads, train newer staff and support her entire team through a very difficult year. She can often be seen coming in early and staying late in order to get the required work completed and support her team.

This employee has grown as a leader and has become such a valued asset to the Department of Social Services and to Orleans County.

We are pleased to announce the 2023 Employee of the year is Jennifer Szalay. Congratulations!