

DCBS Superheroes Named – February 2021 Vision

Commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub has announced new recipients of the DCBS Superhero Award, an honor for DCBS employees who above and beyond their job description in serving families, adults and children.

Recent honorees are Laura Begin and Andrea Collins.

Congratulations to these DCBS Superhero Award winners!



Laura Begin, Staff Assistant, Commissioner's Office

Laura was nominated by Division of Family Support Director Jason Dunn and the DFS Policy Development Branch, who thanked her for her “outstanding assistance during the past several challenging months as we implemented multiple changes resulting from the pandemic.”

The Policy Development Branch processed an unusually high number of regulatory amendments in addition to short term assistance policies for citizens, such as temporary waivers, emergency allotments, emergency heating and cooling assistance. This was all done in addition to regular functions like Program State Plans and reporting. Laura quickly grasped the many new operational state options the agency undertook, assisting with regulatory guidance, prioritizing the approval/signature track for emergency actions, staying in close contact to ensure tracking the approval steps, and answering all technical questions.

The nominators say “she provided her assistance with never ending positivity and patience. We greatly appreciate her guidance and assistance and wanted to let you know she has been a phenomenal asset to our branch as well as others. She’s been a true superhero to us!”

Congratulations, Laura!



Andrea Collins, Social Services Worker II, Wayne County Division of Protection and Permanency

Andrea’s dedication to customer service earned her both the DCBS Superhero Award and the Cumberland Service Region Employee of the Month award for January.

Andrea, an investigative worker, who previously did ongoing casework, went above and beyond recently on a difficult case with a family and was able to do great social work.

“I am quite honored and surprised to be honored,” Andrea said. “I certainly don’t consider myself a Superhero but I am certainly flattered that someone else does. My coworkers deserve a great deal of credit in the success of that family. I would not have been successful in doing as much as we were

able to do for that family had it not been for their help.”

Read Andrea’s nomination below from colleagues to learn how she rallied community partners, built trust and advocated for a vulnerable family.

“A few months ago, we received a medical neglect referral on a non-English speaking family (parents). One of their children needed a liver transplant due to a genetic disease. Without the transplant, the child would die. The hospital decided they were not going to put the child on the transplant list because the parents were uneducated and did not speak English. The parents did not understand the medicine regimen, which caused the child’s condition to deteriorate quicker. They also missed appointments due to transportation issues. They have a vehicle, but the father was afraid to drive to Cincinnati because they are illegal and he does not have a license. The parents only took him to the local hospital when he was very sick, which required him to be taken to Cincinnati Children’s. The hospital said he would only be placed on the list if the Cabinet took custody. If the Cabinet didn’t take custody, he would die. They were refusing to release him from the hospital.

“Andrea then went to work. She worked day and night contacting community partners, talking to doctors, nurses, social workers, schools, church family, Family Preservation Program, etc. The family was initially very afraid. They would not allow her in the home. After several failed attempts, she decided to just sit outside until someone came home or someone came to visit. After about 20 to 30 minutes, she saw someone and was able to speak to the older daughter. The three children speak excellent English, but the parents do not. The daughter said her father was on the phone. Andrea waited outside and asked her to have the father come to her when he was done. She continued to wait several minutes.

“To make a long story short, Andrea and the family developed a plan that the hospital approved. The child was released and able to come home awaiting a transplant. Andrea had to go to the home daily with Family Preservation Program. They developed charts for the medicine, mom and child knew how to do the medicine, chart his temperature, etc. The family did not have a digital thermometer. Andrea went to every store locally and could not find one. She finally was able to locate and purchase one for them. The call was finally received in the middle of the night for a liver. No one was answering their phone, except Andrea. She had to go to the home to wake the family. She then had to go to the home of the local taxi cab to get their transportation. The family was able to get to Cincinnati in under the required time. The child got his transplant.

“Mom and child were in the hospital over the holidays. Andrea took the dad and other two children meals on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. She also accepted donations and got them all Christmas gifts. The father eventually lost his job because he had to be at the hospital for trainings. Word got out in the community and donations started pouring in. Enough money was gathered to pay for two months’ rent and utilities. She also got people to volunteer to transport the father back and forth to Cincinnati free of charge when he had to be present for something.

“The child has now received his transplant and has been released to the Ronald McDonald House. They will be returning home soon. Andrea had to complete one of the trainings with the family that lasted five hours. She recorded it so everyone else in the office could review the training in case something happened and she was unexpectedly on leave (for example, COVID). When he comes home, he will require daily home visits for an extended period of time. He will require blood work weekly and his medications will change weekly.

“As stated before, Andrea is an investigative worker. She has a relationship with the family and they now trust her. She volunteered to keep this ongoing case, even though she knows it will consume most of her time, day and night. She is also aware that the brother has the same condition. His condition has started to decline, as it does over time. He will be evaluated in the upcoming months to start the process to get him on the transplant list. The family already lost three infant children to this condition in their native country.

“This is only one of Andrea’s cases. Her other investigations have not required this amount of work, but she would do it if they did. On top of this, she always volunteers to assist anyone that needs her help.”

Thank you for your service and congratulations, Andrea!

How to Nominate for the DCBS Superhero Award

Anyone can nominate. Please make a nomination of a deserving colleague. Learn more about the Superhero Award [here](#). Get the Superhero Award nomination form [here](#).