

Kudos: Kaitlyn Leo (Georgia Hernandez Award)

Kaitlyn Leo, caseworker III in the South Regional Office (SRO), was presented with the inaugural Georgia Hernandez Award for Excellence in Child Welfare Practice.

Named in honor of longtime CYF Advisory Board chair Georgia Hernandez, the award recognizes one CYF caseworker who exemplifies excellence in case practice, exhibits commitment to the DHS vision and guiding principles, and consistently demonstrates the 13 core casework competencies promulgated in CYF in conjunction with the Annie E. Casey Foundation's On the Frontline initiative. Nominees were accepted from CYF staff in each of the six offices. Using both qualitative and quantitative measures, a team of peers, supervisors, managers, regional office directors, and other CYF leaders narrowed the list to two finalists.

Kaitlyn was selected for her attention to detail, dedication to advanced learning, and consistent support of fellow caseworkers. One testimonial stated that Kaitlyn "is a tireless, thorough, intelligent, and persistent advocate whose professional standard of excellence in casework is unmistakable. She consistently dedicates herself to the highest bar of the welfare of every child for whom she is charged and when she is my assigned caseworker, I rest a little easier." Similar sentiments were echoed in seven additional testimonials submitted by CYF staff and local attorneys.

Although Kaitlyn was honored at the September 30 CYF all staff training, future Georgia Hernandez awards will be presented in April, in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month.

[View the awards presentation on Vimeo](#)