



DCF COVID-19 Daily Update Supporting Children, Families and Staff June 25, 2020

LOVE FOR SOCIAL WORKER'S CITY IS RETURNED

Gina Torres, an intake social worker in the Bridgeport office for 23 years, said she loves her city.

Now her city is showing her love back.

An arts organization called City Lights and Co. has selected Ms. Torres to be part of an exhibit honoring first responders by displaying poster-size photos of them at shops in downtown Bridgeport.

The exhibit features photos of police and fire personnel, nurses and doctors, and others who have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. City Lights hosts art exhibits and conducts outreach to both adults and children by involving them in art related events and activities. Due to the pandemic, an annual art exhibit got cancelled and instead City Lights decided to use photography to honor local heroes responding to the public's needs in this crisis.



"City Lights wanted to showcase different types of first responders, not just doctors and nurses," Ms. Torres said. "There are others who have to go out to do the work." She said that despite the need to mitigate the spread of the virus by the use of remote technology when possible, she has responded to family homes on a number of occasions when necessary and has assisted other social workers who had to go to homes in emergency situations.

For her photograph, Ms. Torres said she decided to borrow from the image of Rosie the Riveter to demonstrate the "can do" attitude of Department social workers.

She said the honor reflects an improving image for the Department. "We are coming to a better place in the community," Ms. Torres said.

Nicole Dionis, the Bridgeport area office director, said the honor for Ms. Torres reflects her strong community ties. "Her selection really highlights her strong connection to our Bridgeport community," Ms. Dionis said. "Gina acts to empower and support the families she works with and her significant connection with our community partners and providers is so beneficial to help support children and families."

Ms. Torres expressed her gratitude to City Lights for the honor. "I was very humbled and honored," she said. "I grew up in Bridgeport, and I love the city."