

2021

Dr. Janet E. Williams Humanitarian Award

It is my pleasure to nominate Ms. Ann Adams, Director of the Office of Community Relations, for the 2021 Janet E. Williams Humanitarian Award.

A humanitarian is someone who seeks to promote human welfare, with the goal to relieve suffering and maintain the dignity of human beings. It these traits, and many others, which make Ms. Adams so deserving of this award.

Within the Department, it is Ms. Adams who enthusiastically engages and partners with those individuals who contact her to express their concerns. They are in pain. Without judgement, and with great patience, Ms. Adams listens to and validates their thoughts - not common experiences for those whom we serve.

"You can do this," or "Partner with us" are frequent encouraging remarks she makes. In speaking of her sincere desires to effectuate a positive outcome, "supports" and "understanding" are terms which anchor her thoughts.

During the pandemic, Ms. Adams has been a strong advocate for those facing evictions and homelessness due to the perils of economic instability. In her humanitarian way, she took it upon herself to seek out answers on eviction moratoriums and financial supports for families. She educated the staff in the Bureau of External Affairs and facilitated the posting of helpful information on our website.

"Annie" as she is referred to in our Bureau, is always quick to ask us how we are, exchange a quick recipe and express her concerns about the pressures staff in the Regions face. She cares for all of us.

In her personal life, we know of her large pots of soup which feed numerous "children" of hers. While sometimes it proves difficult to truly understand exactly who her family members are, what we can tell you is that she speaks of her "family" with unconditional love.

In her personal life, Ms. Adams is active with a charity organization entitled, "House of Heroes." The mission is to recognize and honor military and public safety veterans. With great pride, she tells us of their events. Most of all, the people that she meets and their individual stories.

Earlier in my career, I had the pleasure of working with Dr. Williams. Although in limited fashion, I have a vision of her sitting at a desk, patiently answering questions from staff. Her legacy reaches far.

For Ms. Adams, she has already left a legacy of her own within the Department. Hundreds, if not thousands of children, are living in better conditions today, safely with their families, because of her efforts. These children may never know her name, but they will forever feel her influence and compassion.