

# **Award of Distinction Nomination-Leadership**

## **Kim Kaemmerer**

I am pleased to nominate Ms. Kim Kaemmerer for an Award of Distinction in the category of Leadership. Ms. Kaemmerer demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities during a highly traumatic and emotional situation. In early December 2014, a tragic event occurred at the location of the St. Louis Disability Determinations (DDS) office. A medical consultant (MC) who worked at the office was attacked and killed in the office parking lot during work hours. This MC was a long time consultant and was close to many of the employees in the DDS office. As news of the tragedy began to spread, it had a profound effect on the staff in the office. As District Manager of the office, Ms. Kaemmerer demonstrated exceptional leadership that day and the days and weeks to follow. The day of the incident, Ms. Kaemmerer acted quickly to communicate information to her staff and assure them of their safety. Her compassionate and reassuring approach provided support and counseling to those in need. Arrangements were made for a grief counselor to be on site that very day. Ms. Kaemmerer spent much time checking on the welfare of her staff and making herself available to anyone who needed to talk through their grief. This demonstration of support continued over the following days and weeks, despite the fact that Ms. Kaemmerer was dealing with her own grief over this loss. The day after the incident, a staff member was overheard stating "Kim was wonderful. She took care of us like a concerned Mom". As a result of the caring and compassionate leadership displayed by Ms. Kaemmerer, the office staff was able to work through this incident and support each other in the process, perhaps growing even stronger as an office unit.

Respectfully submitted:

Jeff Ripley  
Field Operations Manager  
Missouri DDS