

Award: Aimee Olson Advocate of the Year
Recipient: Sandra Hansen
Presenter: Yadira Montoya

The Aimee Olson Advocate of the Year Award is given to a Hotline Advocate who has demonstrated commitment to CCHCC's work and has been especially helpful to the Hotline's operation. This year, we have chosen to honor Sandra Hansen.

The Hotline is a free resource to the community that provides information, referral and advocacy services hundreds of community members each month. None of this would be possible without the help of students and community members who volunteer their time. As Hotline Advocates, volunteers work with residents of the community to help them solve health related problems and questions.

Sandra started volunteering at CCHCC exactly a year ago. As a retired employee from the Department of Human Services, or most commonly known as the Public Aid office, she is a true asset to the Hotline. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge in working with low-income clients as well as state programs such as Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP). Needless to say, I was very excited when I received a call from Sandra about volunteering with us.

Through the past year Sandra has worked on Hotline cases individually and with me related to Medicaid. She is able to provide helpful information and suggestions about applying and receiving benefits. If anyone in the audience works with Medicaid recipients, you understand how valuable it is to have information about how to get speak to a client's caseworker or how to get your calls returned. In addition to her knowledge about public assistance programs, Sandra makes a great Advocate because she is genuinely interested in helping others. She is able to handle all kinds of cases ranging from finding dental care to hospital financial assistance, she has also learned about health care resources in the community.

Sandra is being recognized today because she is committed to her volunteer work in the Hotline. In December she had to stop volunteering for the Hotline for medical reasons. Once she was feeling better she came back and was ready to work on clients cases. During the time she was gone, a client who Sandra had been communicating over the phone walked in to the office. Sandra had talked to the client about applying to Carle's hospital financial assistance program to receive assistance with outstanding medical bills. Unable to reach

the client, Sandra continued to leave voicemail messages urging the client to apply for the Carle's program as it would be beneficial and help her solve her medical debt. At the Hotline, we typically try to contact clients 2-3 times; however, Sandra is always one to say- "I'm going to call them one more time." Unbeknownst to Sandra and I, the client was dealing with some personal issues herself. When the client walked in to our office, she had the financial application Sandra had mailed her earlier and the supporting documents. The client was very grateful for Sandra's persistence.

Sandra has and continues to contribute tremendously to the Hotline. Thank you for the commitment and compassion you demonstrate while working with Hotline clients. It has been a pleasure working with you this past year. CCHCC hopes that you continue your great work as an Advocate helping members of the community access care and navigate the healthcare system.

I am honored to present you with the Aimee Olson Advocate of the Year Award!