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ADMH Employees Receive Professional Achievement Awards

MONTGOMERY – ADMH is pleased to announce the recent presentations of professional achievement awards to three of its employees. Two employees in the Office of Deaf Services received awards during the 2012 joint Alabama Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and Council on Organizations Serving Deaf Alabamians annual conference that took place this past Friday and Saturday. Charlene Crump, statewide mental health interpreter coordinator, received ALRID's 2012 Mary Lou Bingham Award during a special presentation Saturday. Wendy Darling, a regional interpreter in ODS, was awarded the Interpreter of the Year Award from COSDA during an awards luncheon on Friday. In addition, ADMH Historian Steve Davis received the 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Alabama chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness at their annual meeting this past Friday.

The Mary Lou Bingham Award, presented biennially as a lifetime achievement award, is given in honor of Alabama's first professional interpreter and champion for the professionalism of interpreting. It recognizes significant contributions and achievements toward improving the profession of interpreting in the state. The award joins a long list of Crump's accolades including the Alabama's Executive Branch Employee of the Year in 2010, ADMH's Central Office Employee of the Year in 2009, AAD Citizen of the Year in 2007, SERID Interpreter of the Year in 2004 and COSDA Interpreter of the Year in 2002. As Steve Hamerdinger, director of the Office of Deaf Services noted in nominating Crump for this most recent honor, "She will modestly brush off these acclamations, but together, they attest to the esteem in which those who work with her and who are exposed to her commitment and passion hold her."

During her career with ADMH, Crump has sought to better the lives of deaf and hard of hearing people through improved access to interpreter services and better mental health services. She has been the force behind the nationally renowned Mental Health Interpreter Training Institute, which annually draws participants from around the world. Crump guided the Alabama Board of Interpreters and Transliterators from a concept to a functional, effective reality, and navigated the nation's first set of mental health standards through the process of adoption in order to have the force of law. She is also a widely published author on mental health interpreting, penning two book chapters and several peer-reviewed articles.

In presenting the Interpreter of the Year Award to Darling, Hamerdinger said the award was going, "To someone who has few peers in the interpreting world with regard to her energy, compassion and dedication to working with some of the most challenging consumers we have." Darling is the only person in the department holding a national certification to work with people who are both deaf and blind. She is admired by her peers for her untiring devotion to ensure consumers are receiving needed services, her ability to analyze and respond effectively and efficiently to requests and problems, and her positive

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energy. Hamerdinger also stated, "She exemplifies the very best of what civil service should be." Darling's Interpreter of the Year Award joins another recent recognition as ADMH's Central Office Employee of the Quarter in April 2012.

NAMI Alabama presented Davis with the 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award for a career of promoting and preserving the history of the treatment of persons with a mental illness. During the presentation, Wanda Laird, executive director of NAMI Alabama stated, "Steve Davis has been dedicated to preserving the history of both Bryce Hospital and the Alabama Department of Mental Health. The breadth and quality of his work to preserve both documents and other physical objects only begins to speak to his commitment ultimately to preserve, honor, and respect the memory of all persons, both known and unknown, who have been patients at Bryce over the past 150 years." Davis has been with ADMH for 37 years, becoming department historian in July 2008. This award joins other recognition from the national NAMI organization in 2009 for the best use of media for reducing the stigma of mental illness.

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