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## Oak Park Social Worker Chosen IL Social Worker of the Year

**Oak Park, IL**— Every day the nation’s 650,000 social workers act as advocates, champions, and leaders who make our society a better place to live. In continuation of this year’s National Professional Social Work Month theme, “Social Workers: Leaders. Advocates. Champions,” the National Association of Social Workers, Illinois Chapter (NASW-IL) is honoring the work of some exceptional Illinois social workers and individuals whose work promotes social justice and social change with and on behalf of the people and clients they serve.

One such exemplary Illinois social worker being honored this year is Statewide Social Worker of the Year Michelle Adler-Morrison. **Michelle Adler-Morrison** (*MSW, University of Illinois at Chicago; LCSW*) serves as CEO for Youth Guidance with more than 25 years of experience in management and program development. Under her direction, the agency has grown immensely and now serves 11,000+ youth in under-resourced communities in Chicagoland and Boston—helping them overcome obstacles, achieve academically and in life. Her expertise includes child and adolescent growth and development, evidence-based approaches to addressing youth trauma, educational reform, and nonprofit leadership. Under her direction, Youth Guidance has greatly expanded many of its programs and garnered national support and acclaim.

In support of the nomination of Michelle, colleague Lisa A. Brock wrote: “Michelle is a visionary leader who believes in the potential and capacity of the youth, families and the communities served by Youth Guidance. Her leadership style creates opportunities for others to grow and develop as leaders. This is evident in her unique ability to develop working relationships with strategic partners at every level; whether it is the school janitor, school principal, and a parent of a child in crisis, the board president, city officials and foundation leaders. She honors each person with the same compassion, humor and dignity.”

Another colleague, Kathleen Osta, National Equity Project Regional Director, wrote: “Michelle is an extraordinary leader with remarkable tenacity and a lifelong commitment to youth service, social justice, and the development of healthy communities in which all young people can thrive. She leads with a fierce passion, yet she is humble, and leads with grace and humor. She leads from the front, from behind, and shoulder to shoulder with her staff and community.”

The NASW-Illinois Chapter is proud of the work of Michelle Adler-Morrison and others like her who fight every day for the underserved and underprivileged in Illinois. Michelle is one of four individuals being honored this year. To learn more about the other statewide awardees, please visit the NASW-Illinois Chapter website ([www.naswil.org](http://www.naswil.org)) or contact Joel L. Rubin, executive director, at [jrubin.naswil@socialworkers.org](mailto:jrubin.naswil@socialworkers.org).

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*The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, with over 120,000 members. The NASW-Illinois Chapter is one of the association’s largest chapters with over 5,500 members in Illinois alone. NASW strives to advance social work careers, grow social work businesses, and protect the profession.*