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Sunbeam Celebrates Staff During National Social Work Month

(OKLAHOMA CITY) – March marks National Social Work Month, and Sunbeam Family Services is recognizing nine social workers that support the nonprofit’s clients throughout the year. Organized by the National Association of Social Workers, the month celebrates the over 680,000 social workers in the United States.

“Help us celebrate social workers and the invaluable work they do,” said Donita Goodin, chief operating officer at Sunbeam. “Social work can be a challenging and rewarding career. We are thankful for our social workers, who provide a unique perspective on the clients that we serve by viewing clients holistically and within the dynamics of the family system.”

Sunbeam is proud to have many social workers on staff working to help families, children and seniors learn, grow and thrive. Social workers include:

- Nolanda Bush, master of social work intern
- Sydney Concha, master of social work intern
- Amanda Francisco, licensed master social worker, master of social work under supervision
- Meranda Smallwood, bachelors of social work
- Victoria Scoville, licensed clinical social worker
- Lissa Vernon, licensed clinical social worker
- Jessica Welp, who is under supervision for licensure as a social worker
- Midge Woodard, master of social work

At Sunbeam, social workers support the nonprofit’s mission to provide people of all ages with help, hope, and the opportunity to succeed through Early Childhood, Foster Care, Counseling and Senior Services programs.

Learning begins long before a child starts kindergarten. Sunbeam Family Services Early Childhood program is a leader in early childhood education, preparing children and their families, prenatal to five, to enter kindergarten with the skills necessary to be ready for school and life. Studies show that early learning strengthens a child’s verbal and math abilities, prepares them socially to interact with others, teaches them self-regulation skills and supports development to the fullest potential. Sunbeam helps families who might normally have difficulty in accessing high quality early learning and care programs by providing home-based and full-day, full-year center-based services free of charge.

The Foster Care program serves children from birth to 17 years old in Canadian, Cleveland, Grady, Kingfisher, Lincoln, Logan, McClain and Oklahoma counties. Sunbeam’s Foster Care staff are available 24/7, which means Foster Parents can call at any time for assistance. Foster Care staff also make monthly in-home visits and provide trainings for Foster Parents. Sunbeam

works to certify families interested in providing care to siblings groups of two or more. Sibling relationships are emotionally powerful and critically important not only in childhood, but over the course of a lifetime. Foster families also have access to all of Sunbeam's services, including counselors who are trauma certified and priority placement in our high-quality Early Childhood Services program.

Sunbeam's Counseling program offers high-quality, affordable counseling services for people of all ages who need help with life's challenges, such as: grief or loss, depression and anxiety, managing anger and overcoming negative behaviors, addiction, family and blended family relationships, and children's issues related to school or home behaviors. The nonprofit's goal is for clients to learn ways to identify, cope and build strengths to overcome difficulties.

Last year through Sunbeam's Senior Services, 3,110 senior adults received safe and caring support through the Senior Companion and the Caregiver Fundamentals programs. Sunbeam also works to end senior homelessness, give hope and restore dignity through its Emergency Senior Shelter, the state's only shelter equipped to assist homeless seniors.

Last fiscal year, 99 homeless seniors aged 55 and older sought safety in the Emergency Senior Shelter, many of whom were without a family support system and had a limited monthly income. The shelter is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is supported by therapists from Sunbeam's Counseling program.

Through March 31, Sunbeam is asking the community to join them in "giving hope and restoring dignity" for Oklahoma's seniors who are homeless through raising \$65,000 to fund Sunbeam's Emergency Senior Shelter. Thanks to Randy Thurman CPA, CFP, donations will be matched up to \$5,000. For more information, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org/dignity or call 405-609-8994.

Last year alone, 99 homeless seniors aged 60 and older sought safety in the Emergency Senior Shelter, many of whom were without a family support system and had a limited monthly income. For more information, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org/dignity or call 405-609-8994.

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About Sunbeam Family Services

Founded in 1907, Sunbeam Family Services is one of Oklahoma's longest serving nonprofits and is one of the original United Way of Central Oklahoma Community partners. Sunbeam's mission is to provide help, hope and the opportunity to succeed to people of all ages and all stages of life in central Oklahoma through Early Childhood, Counseling, Foster Care and Senior Services. To learn more, call 405-528-7721, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org, or join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.