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Jefferson County Literacy Council's Family Literacy Program to Receive Wisconsin Cares About Kids Award

First Lady Jessica Doyle to Present Award

(Madison) The Jefferson County Literacy Council's Family Literacy Program will receive the *Wisconsin Cares About Kids Award* at 9:30 am on February 11, 2010. The award, sponsored by Governor Jim Doyle and the State Public Defender's Office, formally recognizes extraordinary efforts in working with children. The ceremony will be held in 3rd Floor Puerner Room of the First Community Credit Union located at 100 North Main Street in Jefferson.

In addition to First Lady Jessica Doyle, Public Defender Board Member James Brennan, Deputy State Public Defender Kelli Thompson and Executive Assistant/Legislative Liaison Krista Ginger will also take part in the presentation. Jill Ottow, Executive Director of the Jefferson County Literacy Council (JCLC), will be accepting the award on behalf of the organization.

Founded in the late 1990's and beginning operations in 2001, the JCLC develops a stronger community through literacy. The JCLC's work is based on the belief that everyone is impacted when someone struggles with literacy skills, and programs that begin with children and families can have a far-reaching outcome. The JCLC has responded by giving a greater focus to children's literacy. Three related programs of note are its Books for Babies (working with the families of newborns); Rooted in Reading (working with the parents of 3-5 year olds to create a literacy-friendly home environment); and Storybook Project (making a connection between incarcerated parents and their children by producing an audio recording of the parent reading book for their child to hear).

Recipients of *Wisconsin Cares About Kids Awards* are shining examples of the difference individuals and organizations can make – and are making – in our communities. The award was started in 1998, and the Jefferson County Literacy Council is the 24th recipient.

Public Defender Board Chair Dan Berkos noted, "Jill Ottow and the Jefferson County Literacy Council is a great community asset. They are well deserving of a *Wisconsin Cares About Kids Award* and having a spotlight shine on the council's wonderful work."

State Public Defender Nicholas L. Chiarkas added, "Wisconsin and its communities gain from the efforts of *Wisconsin Cares About Kids Award* winners. And certainly, the Jefferson County Literacy Council and its Family Literacy Program have made a substantial impact on its communities."

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