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Putnam Pioneer in Family Support and Advocacy to Retire

Pam Forde of Putnam Family & Community Services retiring after 20 years of dedicated service.

Carmel, NY – At an Open House held on Wednesday, April 8th, 2015, Putnam Family & Community Services (PFCS) honored Pam Forde, Family Peer Support Advocate, for her untiring dedication, strong advocacy and enduring passion in support of Putnam area families for more than 20 years. After 8 years at PFCS and another 12 years previously as co-founder and Director of Advocacy at Putnam Family Support & Advocacy, Ms. Forde is retiring. ‘Pam is truly a pioneer in her field and will be deeply missed by the families that she works with and the staff here at Putnam Family and Community Services’, said Anna Williamson, Director of Community Services at PFCS.

In 1986, fueled by her own need to find help and hope for her family, Pam started her journey to understand the resources available in Putnam County to help families and children in need of assistance with emotional and behavioral issues. Joining the Community Services Board’s Mental Health Subcommittee as a concerned citizen, she filed her first advocacy letter in 1990 to address gaps in support, and never looked back.

In 1993, Pam co-founded Putnam Family Support & Advocacy, a non-profit agency providing advocacy and support services to area residents, and gained wide recognition at the state and local level from organizations like Families Together of New York State, the Putnam County Legislature and the Parent Network Center. ‘In founding Putnam Family Support and Advocacy she established a community of Family Peer Support Advocates long before New York State recognized the importance of peer support’, said Ms. Williamson.

Pam and her staff moved their mission and programs under the PFCS suite of services in 2008, and continued to instill hope, provide support and guidance, and assure parents in crisis that they are not alone. ‘Pam has been a guiding force for progress in gaining support services and assistance for parents and children in crisis,’ said Diane Russo, Executive Director of PFCS. ‘She will be missed by all of us here, but we are proud to carry her legacy of advocacy, open availability and compassion forward.’

Pam was further recognized at the Open House on Wednesday for her achievements and contributions to the families and children in Putnam County by a proclamation from County Executive Maryellen O’Dell presented by Michael Piazza, Commissioner of Social Services, and induction into the Putnam County Sheriff’s Honor Corps by Sheriff Don Smith and Under Sheriff Peter Convery.

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About Putnam Family and Community Services, Inc.

Putnam Family and Community Services, Inc. (PFCS) is the only private non-profit agency providing recovery-based mental health, substance use disorder treatment and prevention services in Putnam County, NY. PFCS offers hope and healing to people of all ages through a comprehensive range of services including individual and group counseling, care management, family advocacy, parenting education, community outreach, psychiatric rehabilitation, and medication management. For more information, visit www.PFCSinc.org or www.Facebook.com/PFCSinc.