

TO FEDERAL AGENCY MANAGERS AND INJURY COMPENSATION PERSONNEL:

The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) is proud to announce the establishment of The Sheila Williams Memorial Award for outstanding and meritorious endeavors on behalf of people with disabilities. This award is dedicated to the memory of the late Sheila Williams, Deputy Director of the Federal Employees' Compensation Program. Her tireless and dedicated service to disabled individuals was well known throughout the Federal Government and the rehabilitation community at large. The Award has been created to honor her commitment.

Two Sheila Williams Awards were conferred in 2000. A regional Award was presented on December 5th, to William Simmons, Rehabilitation Specialist in the Denver OWCP office for excellence in pursuing the return to work of federal injured workers. The national Sheila Williams Award is to be presented on Feb 1st, 2001 to Ms. Sally Kneipp, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in Philadelphia for her outstanding work with severely disabled workers and individuals with cognitive disabilities.

OWCP will continue the presentation of the Sheila Williams Award on an annual basis. Nominations may come from federal, state, county or city governmental groups and are open to all grade levels in your respective jurisdictions. Nominations may also come from the private sector. The period for submitting nominations for the 2001 Sheila Williams Award ends July 31st, 2001. Nominations should be submitted to the following:

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Room S-3522
Washington, DC 20210

Attention: Omar Canty

Please share the attached announcement with all the employees of your agency, encouraging nominations from your current staff whose service, dedication and perseverance, like Sheila's, create and enhance opportunities for injured employees.

Sincerely,

Shelby Hallmark,
Acting Director
Office of Workers'
Compensation Programs

RELEASE

SHEILA WILLIAMS

Sheila Williams' career in public service was exemplary. After completing a Master's Degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling at George Washington University in Washington, DC, she worked as rehabilitation counselor with the vocational services agency for the District of Columbia. Soon, the quality of her work and her irrepressible personality were noticed by many in the private and government sectors.

In 1975, Sheila accepted a position as a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist in the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) in the Department of Labor. Here, Sheila's boundless energy, resourcefulness, and keen intellect served a large population of injured workers. Because of these and many other excellent qualities, she was soon promoted to a policy-making position where she helped to shape the vocational rehabilitation programs for the Federal Employees' Compensation (FEC) and Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation (LHWC). She formulated policy, trained staff and contract rehabilitation professionals, and she coordinated rehabilitation activities with Federal agencies and private institutions.

In 1985, she returned to her first love, the vocational rehabilitation and re-employment of disabled persons. She worked with injured workers at FEC's Branch of Special Claims and, later, at the National Operations Office. Her vast experience and interest in rehabilitation was put to a different use when she was promoted to the position of Deputy Director of the Division of Federal Workers' Compensation in 1989, a position she held until her untimely death in 1999. During her tenure, the Division implemented a number of changes to improve service to its constituency, including an automated system to process medical bills accurately and expeditiously, and case management procedures involving the use of contract nurses to monitor the medical care of injured workers.

Sheila greatly influenced the direction of the OWCP programs. She will be remembered for her devotion to public service, her tireless pursuit of excellence, and her commitment to the rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE SHEILA WILLIAMS AWARD

The purpose of this award is to recognize and honor individuals, agencies, and institutions, who excel in returning injured workers to employment, and providing opportunities to enhance their employment through promotional opportunities, training, and job security in workers' compensation programs.

Those nominated should have a demonstrated record of outstanding accomplishment in this field. Their efforts may be regional or national in scope, or involve activity at the state, or local community level, and should meet the following workers' compensation criteria:

1. The rehabilitation activities for which they are nominated were carried out as part of the duties of their position.
2. The activities were completed no more than two years prior to the current nomination.
3. The nomination demonstrates successful implementation in at least one of the following:
 - a. Innovative approach to return to work programs. (Including, for example, the early identification of injured workers; the development of appropriate position descriptions; work site modifications; the use of assistive technology; the development of program assurances for job and remuneration retention; minimization of re-injury; and/or quality control to assure opportunities for upward mobility.)
 - b. Expert application of established rehabilitation principles and procedures to the return to work effort.
 - c. Documented utilization of human resources in team building to ensure success of the rehabilitation effort.
4. The nominee clearly and measurably demonstrates a positive outcome in at least two of the following areas: an increase in the number of injured employees returning to work; improvement in customer satisfaction; a decrease in re-injuries, or the elimination of significant barriers to reemployment of one or more injured employees with extensive physical, and/or mental impairments and disability.

**THE SHEILA WILLIAMS MEMORIAL AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE FIELD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION**

1. Name of person, or organization making nomination _____.
2. Address _____.
3. Telephone Number _____.
4. Name of nominee _____.
5. Address of nominee _____.
6. Telephone Number _____.
7. Explain how nominee's customary job duties involve services to injured workers.

8. Describe Nominee's specific efforts to benefit injured workers in the following areas:

a. Innovative approaches to placement _____

b. Methods for early involvement of injured workers in the rehabilitation process

c. Work site modifications _____

d. Use of assistive technology _____

e. Job and pay retention _____

f. Safeguards against re-injury _____

g. Quality control for upward mobility _____

9. Expert application of established rehabilitation principles and procedures to the return to work effort. _____

10. Team building, and human resource utilization in the rehabilitation effort. _____

11. Explain how the nominee has achieved positive outcomes, clearly and measurably in these areas:

a. Increase in number of injured workers returning to duty _____

b. Improvement in customer satisfaction: _____

c. Decrease in re-injuries _____

- d. Elimination of barriers to reemployment of one or more injured workers with extensive physical and/or mental impairments and disability. _____

You may provide additional pages to this nomination if needed.