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**NEWS RELEASE**  
For Immediate Release

**CLARITY CHILD GUIDANCE CENTER NAMES PATTI DERR AS FIRST WINNER  
OF KATHY CUNNINGHAM MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY AWARD**

***Derr noted for her professional, personal dedication  
to helping children and families suffering from mental illness***

SAN ANTONIO – Clarity Child Guidance Center, a non-profit providing mental health care to children 17 and under, has named local children’s mental health advocate Patti Derr as the recipient of an annual award recognizing individuals who are dedicated to making a difference for children and families suffering from mental illness.

Derr, who is the founder of the advocacy group Texas Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health, will receive the first **Kathy Cunningham Mental Health Advocacy Award** on Thursday June 18 before a community of mental health professionals at the Claritycon2015 summit on children’s mental health in San Antonio.

“This award honors the often overlooked hard work that goes into creating access to care and de-stigmatization of mental illness,” said Clarity CGC President and CEO Fred Hines. “Every year it will go to one individual who has significantly advanced our community’s understanding and treatment of children’s mental, emotional and behavioral disorders, and Patti’s work over the last three decades has certainly achieved that.”

The award was established in honor of Kathy Cunningham, a Clarity Child Guidance Center mental health professional who devoted more than 30 years of her life to the cause of children’s mental health as a parent, professional and community member.

Derr was selected because of her passionate, longtime advocacy for the welfare of children struggling with mental illness, and also because of her personal connection with mental illness as the mother of a child with intellectual and behavioral health disabilities. She has dedicated 35 years to advocacy and policy development for children and their families struggling with mental illness.

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Derr established the Texas Chapter of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health and the Alamo Area Youth MOVE, the local chapter of a national organization an organization devoted to improving services and systems that support positive growth and development in youth.

Derr also served on the Texas Mental Health Planning Council for 22 years and has personally worked to secure funds for the support of more than 40 San Antonio youth with mental illness. She also participates in Bexar County children's mental health planning initiatives, information fairs, and guides and trains youth and families about children's mental health services and agencies.

"Patti is a person who is dedicated and passionate about children's mental health," Hines said. "The breadth and depth of her involvement in the field made her the unanimous choice for the award."

For more information on Clarity CGC, visit [www.claritycgc.org](http://www.claritycgc.org).

## **ABOUT CLARITY CHILD GUIDANCE CENTER**

Clarity Child Guidance Center (CGC) is the only nonprofit in South Texas providing a full continuum of mental health care to children 17 and under, including services for acute cases for children as young as three.

Clarity CGC offers the region's largest concentration of child and adolescent psychiatrists, with its onsite affiliation with Southwest Psychiatric Physicians. In addition, the center serves as a teaching hospital for The University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio. Clarity CGC provides outpatient therapy for children and families, day treatment (where the child is at Clarity CGC during school hours and then returns home each evening) and acute inpatient hospitalization at its 52-bed hospital.

As a nonprofit, Clarity CGC serves children in need, regardless of their ability to pay, while bringing a multitude of services to children and families through its case managers as a United Way agency.

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