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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### CATHOLIC CHARITIES STAFF MEMBERS RECEIVE GOVERNOR'S VOLUNTEER AWARDS

DUBUQUE/AMES, Iowa – Deacon Bill Hickson of Dubuque, IA and Lori Williams of Ames, IA were honored on June 17 and 18, 2014 with individual and group Governor's Volunteer Awards for their outstanding commitment and service to the 1<sup>st</sup> Judicial District, Department of Corrections and the Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council (IDHRC) Disaster Case Advocacy committee, respectively.

"It's always a great pleasure for me to honor and recognize the volunteers who accomplish extraordinary things through service to help their communities, fellow citizens, and the great state of Iowa," said Governor Branstad. "These dedicated volunteers lead by example—not only encouraging the people they help, but motivating others to serve as well. I sincerely thank them all for their dedication and efforts."

"The Governor and I are strong believers that our community volunteers, charitable nonprofits, and faith-based institutions are often best equipped to provide long-term solutions to the challenges we face," said Lt. Governor Reynolds. "Some of our most promising and cost-effective solutions to literacy, disaster response, drop-out prevention, and community development are fueled by tapping into our best assets—our people and our volunteer spirit."

The Governor's Volunteer Awards (GVA) program was created in 1982, with inaugural awards presented in 1983. What began as a small program for state government agencies, has expanded over the years and now provides all Iowa nonprofit, charitable, and government organizations with an easy way to honor their volunteers with a prestigious state-level award. Hundreds of volunteers are recognized each year with awards in one of four categories: Individual, Group, Length of Service or Disaster Volunteer.

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“It is an honor to accept this award on behalf of the 200 plus volunteers in our Jail and Prison Ministry Program throughout the Archdiocese of Dubuque,” said Deacon Bill Hickson, Jail and Prison Ministry Coordinator. “I see this award as recognition of the countless acts of compassion and support by our volunteers for those who are incarcerated or returning from prison and attempting to rebuild their lives in their communities. Each volunteer is a living example of the love and concern of Christ, and a beacon of His hope in the lives of our clients. Without their devotion to their brothers and sisters in need, this ministry would not be possible.” Hickson was nominated for the award by Monty Scheckles.

“I am very honored to receive such an award for the work the Disaster Case Advocacy committee of the Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council has completed this past year,” said Lori Williams, Program Director and Disaster Services Coordinator for Catholic Charities. “This group has worked tirelessly to put materials and guidelines in place for disaster recovery, hoping all along that these materials will not be needed any time soon. I am privileged to learn from these committee members and to apply their knowledge to the work I do every day with Catholic Charities in disaster services.” Williams was nominated for the award by Blake DeRouchey.

The Governor's Volunteer Award program is coordinated by the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service and the Governor's Office. For more information, visit [www.volunteeriowa.org/awards](http://www.volunteeriowa.org/awards) or call 515.725.3094.

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Dubuque was founded in 1931 as a non-profit, social service organization. The organization serves 30 counties in Northeast Iowa and is part of a national social services network through Catholic Charities USA, working to reduce poverty, strengthen families, and empower communities, responding to persons in need, of all faiths. For more information or ways to get involved visit [www.CatholicCharitiesDubuque.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesDubuque.org) or call 800.772.2758.

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