

# **Okaloosa County News Release**

August 18, 2015

## **Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel Selected as Social Worker of the Year for the State of Florida**

National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has selected Okaloosa County Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel as Social Worker of the Year for the State of Florida. The award was presented by Jim Aiken, Executive Director of NASW, Florida Chapter, praising Carolyn Ketchel for her contributions over 40 years to the field of Social Work. This Social Work award is given as a result of a lifetime of contributions to the field of Social Policy and specifically to the field of Social Work. Ketchel was elected Okaloosa County Commissioner as the only female currently on the Commission, and the first Licensed Clinical Social Worker to hold office in Northwest Florida.

“After 40 years in the Social Work profession, I am humbled to be honored by my Social Worker colleagues. It has been a privilege to be a part of this profession and I look forward to continuing to serve the citizens of Okaloosa County as a servant leader,” said Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel.

Commissioner Ketchel’s lifetime contributions began at the level of Federal Policy, where she participated in President Jimmy Carter’s White House Conference on Families, was recognized by President Ronald Reagan for her work on the Social Security Commission and went on to work as a technical adviser to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means. After moving to Florida in 1987, Commissioner Ketchel was active in many aspects of the Social Work field, including as Director of Catholic Charities and as a private counselor. Commissioner Ketchel was also appointed as the Senior Legislative Director for Senator Don Gaetz, during which time Ketchel advocated and ultimately worked to pass legislation creating the Masters-level Social Work program at the University of West Florida. She serves as a member of the Gubernatorial Florida Faith-Based and Community-Based Advisory Board.

In summary, Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel has exhibited a lifetime commitment to the ideals and ethics of the field of Social Work, which she brings into focus now as a county commissioner to improve the lives of the citizens of Okaloosa County. Commissioner Ketchel can be reached at 850-651-7105 or [cketchel@co.okaloosa.fl.us](mailto:cketchel@co.okaloosa.fl.us).