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TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Jim Mills recipient of the 2009 Chiles Advocacy Award

Staff Report

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Florida's Chief Child Advocate Jim Kallinger recognized Jim Mills as recipient of the 2009 Chiles Advocacy Award during the Children's Week Advocacy Dinner held Monday night at the University Club in Tallahassee.

The event is the prelude to Florida's 14th Annual Children's Week and honored Mills for his more than 22 years of leadership with the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County through creation of various management and assessment tools and programs for Florida and the nation's children and youth.

"Jim Mills is truly a pioneer in children's advocacy," said Florida's Chief Child Advocate, Jim Kallinger. "His life has been dedicated to the identification of innovative ways to help improve the quality of life for Florida's children and youth."

The Chiles Advocacy Award is named for the late Governor Lawton Chiles and his wife Rhea, who brought new awareness to and elevated the critical importance of issues related to Florida's children, and helped craft state and national policies to benefit children and their families for generations to come.

In recognition of their efforts, the Chiles Advocacy Award is given annually by Children's Week partners - more than 80 non-profit, private and public sector organizations - to a Floridian who has demonstrated a commitment over many years to advocating for public policies that improve the lives of Florida's children and their families. Awardees are chosen for their integrity, dedication and commitment to improving the lives of Florida's children and families.

"Each year we honor a very deserving candidate that has exhibited outstanding leadership and courage to advocate on behalf of Florida's children and families, said Children's Week Coordinator, Jason Zaborske. "Jim is very deserving of this award, and we are proud to honor his achievement."

Past winners include: 1999 Rhea Chiles; 2000 Susan Muenchow; 2001 Linda Merrill; 2002 David Lawrence; 2003 BeBe Furnside; 2004 Budd Bell; 2005 Ed Feaver; 2006 Ann Levy; 2007 Karen Woodall; and 2008 Maryann Barry.

For more information about the Chiles Advocacy Award and Florida's 14th Annual Children's Week, visit www.childrensweek.org.