

**2008 Florida League of Cities  
City Employee of the Year**

**Rose Cure-Persad, Social Services Supervisor**

**Nominated by the City of Tamarac**

Rose Cure-Persad started with the City of Tamarac in 1999 as the Information and Referral Specialist. Through high levels of expertise, dedication and effort, Rose was promoted to Social Services Supervisor in October 2003. Rose has not sat still since! Following her promotion Rose received her Masters Degree in Social Work to better serve our residents. Rose truly exemplifies the City's mission statement through demonstrated excellence in serving the customer, working as part of and inspiring others to work as a team, and achieving results that make a meaningful difference in the City of Tamarac organization and the lives of its residents.

Rose has accomplished many things to benefit the City and its residents through the years, but this past year she willingly took on additional responsibilities while maintaining her already busy workload that have served to further enhance the quality of life for Tamarac residents. Due to property tax reform, the City experienced significant reductions as part of the fiscal year 2008 budget. These reductions significantly impacted the Transportation Division as the division was reduced from 14 employees to seven including the elimination of the Transportation Supervisor. This division provided paratransit services and three fixed bus routes. Service was reduced to one route serving the entire City while maintaining the same level of paratransit service. With the elimination of the Transportation Supervisor position, Rose was assigned to supervise the

staff and operations of the Division in addition to her social service duties. She took this challenge head on by working with the past Supervisor, speaking to the drivers and conducting "ride alongs" to learn as much as she could about the route system and its ridership. Rose put in extensive hours to learn things so that she could make this transition effective for the City and residents. The original proposal for the FY 2008 budget was to eliminate all of the fixed routes. Tamarac has a large senior population and many depend on the transit system to get around the City. After hearing the need from the residents, Rose began working on alternatives to eliminating the entire route system. She came up with a financially feasible alternative, which included keeping one (1) bus on the road serving half of the City three (3) days per week and the other half two (2) days per week. This creative thinking allowed the City to save the budgeted dollars needed while positively serving the needs of the residents. This new system has been successful due in large part to Rose working directly with residents that were having difficulty with the transition. Rose met with these individuals to develop a daily schedule allowing them to maximize their use of the transit system to meet essential needs. Rose also had to step into a division of employees that lost many of their co-workers, as well as their supervisor, and were unsure of their future. Rose built positive relationships with this group and has kept them performing at a high level through trust, understanding and effective communication.

Tamarac has been transitioning from being predominantly made up of seniors to a younger City. Rose put together a five year social services plan which addresses the needs of not only seniors, but needs of youth and families.

Rose put this plan into practice right away by applying for funds through the Community Development Block Grant program to begin new programs that will support the betterment of families. She was successful and was able to start a Women's Success Group and two family support groups. Rose also expanded the annual health fair to include a family component in 2008. By making these adjustments, the fair attracted and informed over 700 individuals in good health and prevention strategies as opposed to the past high of 500.

Following Hurricane Wilma, in which many residents were displaced from their homes and were in need of assistance, Rose began working on a hurricane registry with a committee made up of members from other City Departments. The goal of the registry was to have a systematic procedure put in place for the coordination of storm and disaster recovery for the City's most vulnerable population. The end result would be to respond to their needs sooner. Rose worked with members of the Fire Department to ensure that the City had contact information for each of the homeowners associations so those contacts could identify immediate needs in time of emergency. Rose continued efforts in 2007 and now into 2008 through heavy involvement in the community to insure the registry and association contact lists are updated regularly. As a result, the City has 168 individuals actively registered on the City Hurricane Registry. Rose has also served as the lead for the City in attending training with Broward County for their new Vulnerable Population Database. This has allowed the City to match up those on that registry with our residents so it can be used in conjunction with the City list to best serve the needs of the Tamarac residents.

Other areas of responsibility for Rose that enhance the lives of Tamarac residents include one on one counseling, referrals to needed outside services, organization of 14 support groups and services and eight different health screenings and providing resident assistance with fee waivers and emergency financial grants. Over the past year Rose has averaged 80 resident calls received per month resulting in 45 cases requiring support and referrals and more than 1,100 individuals taking part in health screenings. Rose also has responsibility for the City's Volunteer Program. Rose has taken this from a very small program to where it provides more than 6,000 hours of service to the City. The program currently has 28 adults and 47 teen volunteers that assist in recreation programs, transportation, social services and special events. This program has proven to be invaluable to the City in maintaining service levels as property tax reform has resulted in staff reductions.

Rose's largest strengths are her ability to work as part of a team and her dependability. This has been proven through her relationships with the City's law enforcement provider, Broward Sheriffs Office (BSO) and the City's Fire Rescue Department. BSO and Tamarac Fire contact Rose on a regular basis to notify her of individuals in the community that need assistance. Both groups have said more than once that one thing about Rose is that they know when they call her, the resident will get the services needed without any further involvement on their part.

Rose also assists staff whenever they are dealing with sensitive customer situations.

Rose has been able to diffuse many situations because of her calm demeanor and her knowledge of people resulting in a “win win” for the resident and staff. Rose assists staff with these situations and lends advice on how things may have been handled differently.

Rose has had a very busy and productive year with the City. She has worked in new areas to assist the City and provide a high level of service to the residents. Rose’s nomination is well deserved due to her commitment, dedication and professionalism in enhancing the lives of City of Tamarac residents.