

# David Eppright

*Maintenance Supervisor, Department of Transportation*

On Monday, December 28, 2015, David Eppright was out taking care of roads covered in freezing rain and sleet. Close to the Knob Noster exit, he spotted a pickup on the shoulder backing up toward oncoming traffic. David slowed, moved over, and began looking around for the reason the person was backing up on the shoulder. He saw a very light tire track of mud coming from the median across the east bound lanes of 50 and assumed someone had just ran off the road but went ahead and parked his vehicle to check it out. As he walked around his pickup, he saw an SUV upside down in the bottom of a waterway below the road and water was running heavily out of the box culvert into the waterway. David evaluated the scene and noted that the entire front of the SUV was submerged in water and that if the windshield was broken, there was a possibility that the occupant could be under some very cold running water. He made the decision to open the rear passenger door of the SUV and began looking for occupants. A female driver called out to him that she was stuck and couldn't get out. David got into the vehicle with her and tried to keep her calm while he assessed the situation. The occupant's foot was stuck and since he could not see her foot or how it was stuck, he tried to reach around the seat to the steering wheel where she thought she was caught and pull her free. When this didn't free her foot, he lifted her up onto his lap, helped her scoot forward and she was able to wiggle her foot free so that David could pull her back towards the open door. David was able to get her out of the car and onto the bank where he could access her injuries. After assessing her injuries, which were thought to be some broken ribs and a broken wrist, he helped her up to his truck where they waited for paramedics to arrive. Emergency Services arrived about ten minutes later. After Emergency Services left the scene, David left and made a quick stop at the Knob Noster building to ensure staff was handling the current winter event, and when home to proceed with his work day. MoDOT Chief Engineer, Ed Hassinger, stated "What amazes me all the time is that our folks say 'It's no big deal; I was just doing my job.' That just says something about all who work for MoDOT." On Thursday, December 31, the car's occupant stopped by with her husband and daughter to thank David for his actions that day. She had some bumps and bruises, but things could have been much worse if David had not stopped and lent a helping hand that day.



**AWARD OF  
DISTINCTION**

**Human Relations**

**2016**

# **Karla Smith**

*Department of Social Services*

Karla Smith, Children's Division, is awarded the Human Relations Award of Distinction. Karla is known as a mentor and leader throughout the office, among the children and families she serves, and in her community. She selflessly gives her time and resources to help individuals and families, such as attending and capturing photos of life's special moments for foster children and their families, creating a keepsake to cherish forever. Karla's outstanding contributions enhance the quality and morale of the workplace and create a positive public image of state government.



**AWARD OF  
DISTINCTION**

**Innovative Suggestion  
of the Year**

**2016**

# **Kristin Gentry**

*Department of Social Services*

Kristin Gentry, Family Support Division, is awarded the Innovative Suggestion of the Year. Kristin found an opportunity to improve the way documents are shared amongst offices. Kristin's exceptional suggestion exemplifies how employee ideas can initiate new methods, practices, plans and designs which add value to state government or creatively solve a unique problem.