



**CASW National Social Work Week Award
- 2007 -
Antonia Gossner
North Battleford, SK**

Ms. Gossner became interested in social work when, as a young mother, she took a position at a funeral home and realized that supportive counseling was something she was good at and enjoyed. She then took a job in the newly established Community Training Residence. In 1979, Ms. Gossner was a mother of three, was working full time but still managed to complete her Certificate in Social Welfare from McMaster's University through correspondence. Ms. Gossner went on to become the Director of the Battleford's Visiting Homemakers, which she describes as early Home Care.

In 1980, Ms. Gossner took a temporary job with the Department of Social Services. She took on a rural child protection caseload, which meant she was also the case worker for the juvenile delinquents in the area. It was here that Ms. Gossner found her true social work calling, which was working with young offenders. Ms. Gossner went on to work in every program that the Department of Social Services offered. In 1982, the *Young Offenders Act* came into effect and Ms. Gossner became a permanent youth worker. She is presently the Assistant Director of the North Battleford Youth Center.

On April 25, 2005 Ms. Gossner was presented with the Public Safety Exemplary Service Medal by Lieutenant Governor, Lynda Haverstock. This medal is to recognize the special obligations and hazardous conditions of service for those who duties bring them in daily contact with offenders in Canadian Correctional programs. Recipients of this award have completed at least 20 years of service characterized by exemplary conduct, industry, and efficiency that serves as a model for others.

When she is not at work, Ms. Gossner spends her time with family and enjoys her grandchildren. She finds enjoyment in reading, knitting and crocheting. As well Ms. Gossner speaks five languages – English and Ukrainian fluently, and can “get by” in Russian, Polish and French.

Despite having worked with some truly difficult populations, Ms. Gossner has maintained an optimism that is hard to match. Although she would rather not see youth come into custody, this is a reality of today's world and Antonia takes it as an opportunity to enrich their lives. Ms. Gossner is a role model and reminder to those who feel the call to be pioneers in a new age and rapidly changing human context.