



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates

**FOR CHILDREN**

**LAKE COUNTY**



**2019**



**Impact**



**Report**



## Letter from Executive Director

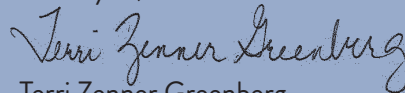
This year presented a multitude of challenges to children who have suffered abuse or neglect in our community. Many have received far less support than they deserve, and they have had to sacrifice too much of a childhood that should be carefree to a child welfare system that breeds anxiety at every turn.

Still, I'm heartened by the possibility of improving that experience for children. We can never prevent every instance of child abuse, but we can ensure that children and families have every opportunity to heal after those traumatic events. The seemingly limitless generosity

of our program's supporters and volunteers puts that opportunity within reach.

With your help, we will continue to do all that we can to help our CASA children turn the page on a difficult past to move forward toward a brighter future.

Thank you,



Terri Zenner Greenberg  
Executive Director

## Mission

### Foster Care Isn't Fair

When a child enters the child welfare system, she has already experienced trauma on a level that few of us can understand. Unfortunately, the circumstances that brought her into foster care are only the beginning, as she enters a chaotic, unfamiliar environment with a constantly changing cast of characters. She doesn't know who to trust. She can't confide in anyone because she fears the consequences that will come from her words. It isn't fair.

Her case will drag on for years. She'll lose touch with the friends she had. She won't see her teachers any more. There will be new ones, but they don't understand where she came from. They don't know who she is. It isn't fair.

When her case finally closes, the scars will remain. She knows that young people like her who have been through the child welfare system are:

- 6x more likely to be incarcerated
- 8x more likely to experience homelessness
- 7x more likely to experience substance dependence
- 10x more likely to be evicted from a home
- 5x more likely to rely on Medicaid for health insurance
- 3x less likely to finish high school
- 4.5x less likely to receive a college degree
- 35% less likely to be employed
- 3x less likely to own a home

It isn't fair.

It won't ever be fair, but it can be just a little bit better. A CASA volunteer can make it a little bit better. And that little bit means a lot.



### CASA's Mission

CASA Lake County is a nonprofit agency that advocates for the best interests of abused and neglected children within the juvenile court system. Based on the belief that every child is entitled to a safe and permanent home, thoroughly trained CASA volunteers work in collaboration with key agencies, legal counsel and community resources to serve as the child's advocate and represent the child's best interest in juvenile court.

### Why Did You Join CASA?

CASA is a call to action program. I learned about CASA nearly 8 years ago. When I was invited as a guest to the annual gala, the stories from that event stayed with me. I am humbled every time I experience the impact of our CASA volunteers.

—Kashiana Singh, Board of Directors



**“CASA volunteers play a unique role on behalf of some of our most vulnerable children. Their commitment, vigilance and persistence offer hope where there has been little.”**

*– Marian Wright Edelman,  
Founder of the Children’s Defense Fund*

## Case Stories

### CASA Donna is there for Alexander and Noemi

For 7 year-old Alexander and 9 year-old Noemi, their experience in the child welfare system was challenging. Over four years, the children had three different case workers, they struggled with slow and confusing court processes, but their CASA, Donna, was a constant through it all.

The case began due to neglect, and the children were placed with their grandmother to remain connected with family. The children’s aunt Jennifer recalls “Donna’s visits felt strange at first. We didn’t know her, and we didn’t know what to expect, but Donna always knew not to cross any boundaries, and eventually found her role as an advocate and supporter. The kids opened up to their CASA, especially Noemi, even though she was very closed off. Donna became a mentor to the kids.”

Donna also supported the family in caring for the children. Their grandmother couldn’t attend court hearings, but Donna was able to communicate in Spanish to help her to understand what was happening. Aunt Jennifer remembered, “It was comforting to know that Donna was there in court when we were not. Donna would talk us through things, and that soothed our concerns.”

Aunt Jennifer’s message to the CASA program: “Find more people like Donna. Keep sharing her. She is such a great person. Whatever you taught her, whatever you gave her, she went over and beyond our expectations.” Their court case has closed, but Alex and Noemi live permanently with their grandmother and are still connected to their CASA today.



### CASA Rose Helps Quentin Achieve Independence

When CASA Rose first met her CASA child, Quentin, more than a decade ago, she encountered a boy who had been removed from his mother and had entered protective care at age 11. Quentin was quiet, closed off, quick to anger, and hesitant to trust. Over ten years in “the system” Quentin was assigned to 5 different case workers and lived in 8 different placements. To Quentin, it often felt like his caseworkers didn’t listen to him and didn’t care about what he needed. In one moment of frustration, he told a case worker “You don’t care. I’m just a number to you.”

Rose was there through it all. When Quentin aged out of DCFS care at age 21, he didn’t have a place to live. At one point, he was just a week away from having to move into a shelter. Separated from most of his family for years, Rose was the longest consistent relationship that Quentin had. Rose worked with him to help him find housing options, she helped him move, and when one living situation fell through, Rose even arranged for Quentin to stay with Rose’s ex-husband for a few weeks until a more permanent solution could be found.

Rose has helped Quentin transition to adulthood. She has been so impressed with the attitude, patience, and forgiveness that Quentin has developed despite all that he has been through. Now, Quentin is working full-time and picking up extra shifts on the side as well. Rose helped him get on the waiting list for an affordable housing program, and in the near future he should have a place of his own for the first time.



## Who Is A CASA Child?



### Age

28% 0-3 years  
37% 4-9 years  
25% 10-16 years  
10% 17-21 years

### Ethnicity

40% Black  
29% White  
23% Hispanic/Latino  
8% Other Groups



## Types of Trauma Experienced by CASA Kids

21% Physical Abuse  
7% Sexual Abuse  
78% Neglect  
30% Domestic Violence  
23% Alcohol Abuse  
31% Drug Abuse

*\*Each child can experience multiple types of trauma.*



## Duration of Case

17% Under 1 year  
46% 1-3 years  
22% 3-5 years  
15% Over 5 years

*\*Try to remember how long three and half years is for a child. It's an impossible amount of time at that age. Still, half of our children's cases last longer than that.*

## Outcomes for CASA kids

Children served – 547  
Active CASAs – 279  
Child case closures – 116

## Case Closure Circumstance

6% Independence  
28% Adoptions  
9% Case Dismissed  
10% Guardianship  
47% Return to Parent

*\*These 94% represent permanent placements, which is the goal at the beginning of every case.*

## Who Is A CASA Volunteer?

### Age

4% 21-29 years  
9% 30-39 years  
17% 40-49 years  
35% 50-59 years  
35% over 59 years

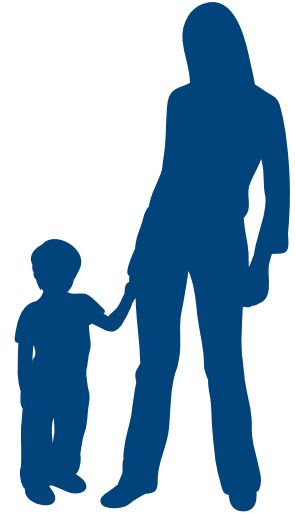
### Employment Status

57% Full Time  
18% Part Time  
11% Retired  
14% Not employed

### Service as a CASA Volunteer

40% Under 2 years  
31% 3-5 years  
29% over 5 years

*\* Two Lake County CASA volunteers have served over 24 years!*



## Why Did You Join CASA?

From the start I was impressed by the mission of CASA. Perhaps most impressive to me is the selfless volunteerism our CASA advocates display on a daily basis. They see the bigger picture of life and do everything they can to advance the cause of humanity, one child at a time.

—Ryan Clark, *Board of Directors*

Having worked with CASA volunteers in my courtroom for almost 12 years I saw firsthand how important their input was for me in making very important decisions for children in my courtroom through no fault of their own. I saw that CASA volunteers made a difference for the children.

—Judge Sarah Lessman, *Board of Directors*

CASA provides a much needed voice for children. I joined CASA because I wanted to support this very important work, while being around others who care deeply about the health and safety of children.

—Nicoleta Girloanta, *Office and Development Administrator*

## Organization Finances (for the fiscal year ending 6/30/2019)

**Revenue - \$1,062,980**

### By Donor Type

17% Government  
27% Foundations  
12% Businesses  
41% Individuals  
3% Other

### By Source

26% Special Events  
52% Grants  
19% Donations  
3% Other

**Expenses - \$997,695**

88% Program Services  
5% Management  
7% Fundraising

**Net Assets - \$1,393,308**

\$220,135 Restricted  
\$1,173,173 Unrestricted

# Our 2019 Fiscal Year Supporters

(for donations 7/1/2018-6/30/2019)

## \$50,000+

IL Criminal Justice Info Authority

## \$25,000 to \$49,999

AbbVie Foundation  
Anonymous  
Aon Foundation  
Camping World  
Community Foundation for the Fox Valley  
Gorter Family Foundation  
Jack and Donna Greenberg  
Healthcare Foundation of Highland Park  
Kim & Brad Keywell  
Stacey and Doug Meyer  
Peggy & Steve Fossett Foundation

## \$10,000 to \$24,999

CME Group  
Mark and Lori Fedyk  
First Presbyterian Church of Lake Forest  
Grace A. Bersted Foundation  
Healthcare Fnd. of Northern Lake County  
The John R. Houlby Foundation  
ITW  
The Edward & Wanda Jordan Family Fnd.  
Joanna and Bill Lynn  
Deanne & John McLean  
Brent & Kim Moody  
Susan and Abraham Stern  
Trustmark Foundation  
Village of Vernon Hills  
Noga and Antonio Villalon  
Wells Fargo Advisors  
Eric and Sherri Zion

## \$5,000 to \$9,999

Brent and Kathy Arnold  
Arrow ECS  
Matt and Theresa Baden  
Rick and Sue Biagi  
Joanne Celba  
City of Waukegan - CDBG  
Janis and Ron Douglas  
First Bank of Highland Park  
Robert and Jennifer W. Frentzel  
Debra Gonzalez  
Janice and Andy Greenawalt  
Heartland Children's Fund  
Illinois Attorney General - VCVA  
Jim and Suzanne Kenney  
Christopher Moody and Ryan Lalonde  
Libertyville Bank and Trust  
Lundbeck Inc.  
Peter Manhard  
NetApp  
Bob Parkinson  
Denise Peterson  
Cindy Robinson  
Elizabeth and Derek Sammann  
Jeanne and John Simons  
Jay and Susie Trees  
Vernon Township  
Winston & Strawn LLP  
Zurich American Insurance Co.

## \$2,000 to \$4,999

Mr. William and Joan Abington  
Jessica and Steve Aguilar

APC  
Joe Arnolde  
Sarah and Matt Arvanites  
Assertio Therapeutics, Inc.  
Rosie Balk  
Kyle Holden and David Bedrin  
Brian and Cindy Benner  
Gary and Ruby Bennett  
Amanda and Charles Carol  
Jason and Lauren Crane  
Bill and Cindee Dietz Jr.  
Jacqueline Dioguardi  
Eisenberg Foundation for Charities  
First Presbyterian Church of Deerfield  
Fortinet  
Jill and Ernest Kaplan  
Lenovo  
Gail and Howard Lifshitz  
Ellen and Steve Lubelfeld  
Kristina Lynn  
Hugh and Ann Mazza  
Kevin and Jennifer McDevitt  
Mark and Maureen Miller  
Craig Nielsen  
Nielsen-Massey Vanillas  
Brent Novoselsky  
Maureen O'Leary  
Thomas and Harriet Onan  
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald and Elaine Prebish  
Mark and Caryn Putterman  
Regency Centers LP  
Jerald & Marcia Richman  
Robert H. and Terri L. Cohn  
Carolyn and Jim Robertson  
Randy and Tobey Sheridan  
Mr. & Mrs. Roger and Jeri Smith  
SonicWall  
Hank and Kim Struik  
Ed and Sarah Tolzien  
Laura Z. and Kurt W. Topel  
Whole Foods Market  
Brian Little and Anise Wiley-Little  
Winnetka Congregational Church

## Why Did You Join CASA?

I learned about CASA several years ago when I attended the gala. The mission spoke to me. I have always believed every child is precious and deserves the opportunity to be safe and cared for, regardless of the circumstances they were born into.

—Tobey Sheridan, *Board of Directors*

The mission of CASA is so important, so needed, and it holds a special place in my heart now that I am a mother of two small children. I am extremely grateful to be part of an organization that does so much for some of the most vulnerable children in this community.

—Liz Fales, *Program Development Manager*

## \$1,000 to \$1,999

Todd and Trish Baczek  
Karin Bell and Myles Toomey  
Liz and Tim Bronneberg  
Colleen and Michael Campbell  
Kathy & Rob Carlson  
Casey Family Programs  
Don and Ellen Clark  
Ryan and Cassie Clark  
Neal and Jaime Cotts  
Timothy and Elizabeth Dembinski  
Ken Sabath and Lindsay DeReadt  
Mary Beth Fahrney  
Patty Felker  
Mable Franzoni  
Lynn and Michael Froy  
Scott and Jennifer Gifford

## 2019 Board of Directors

Arnold, Brent, *President*

Joanna, Lynn, *Secretary*

Meyer, Doug, *Vice President*

Moody, Brent, *Vice President*

Villalon, Noga, *Vice President*

Zion, Eric, *Treasurer*

Greenberg, Terri, *Ex Officio*

Bennett, Gary

Clark, Ryan

Dembinski, Tim

Dodzik, Dana

Dotlich, Milan

Duchossis, Judi

Greenberg, Donna

Jenista, Paul

Lessman, Sarah

McLean, Deanne

Moody, Chris

Mueller, Hope

Peloquin, Vicki

Sheridan, Tobey

Singh, Kashiana

Taylor Robinson, Cindy

Walker-Eich, Kathryn

Wiley-Little, Anise

Williams, DeRonda



### Why Did You Join CASA?

For kids in foster care, their CASA is one constant in their life, helping them navigate the system, being a voice for them, comforting and encouraging them in tough times and celebrating with them in great times. I joined the board of CASA to ensure those children get the support they need and deserve.

—Chris Moody

As a juvenile law attorney and GAL in Milwaukee, I learned about CASA during continual interactions with the program. When the opportunity to become an Advocate Manager for CASA Lake County emerged, I was excited that I could contribute with my specific skills, experiences, and values to guide the volunteers that advocate for the best interests of children in our court system.

—Elizabeth Bush, *Advocate Manager*

## CASA Thanks Our 2019 Mission Partners

