



Advocating for our Community's Children Since 1989

VIRGINIA BEACH CASA 2015-2016 IMPACT REPORT

Message from the Board President



As an active member of our community for over 20 years, it is an honor to serve as the Board President for Virginia Beach CASA. I believe that it is not only an opportunity for, but the responsibility of "those who can" to stand-up and be a voice for "those who cannot." This is what we do every day at CASA.

I want to thank everyone involved with Virginia Beach CASA. From our selfless volunteers who give generously of their time to spend with children in need every week, to our staff who go above and beyond every day, to our dedicated Board of Directors, and our incredible donors – you all play an essential part in the continued stability and success of CASA.

I am inspired by and proud of our accomplishments. With the support of our loyal donors, we strengthened our financial position, which directly impacts our ability to serve our children—a tremendous achievement given the challenging economic headwinds this year. A strong and growing Board continued to make great strides with our strategic planning and execution focused on maximizing our operational readiness and minimizing the number of children in need without a CASA volunteer. And in the coming year, we look forward to developing new, innovative initiatives that will support continued growth in our volunteer base and community engagement.

CASA continues to be a shining light, getting brighter every day. Working together, we can make an even greater impact in the lives of our most vulnerable children.

On behalf of the entire CASA team, thank you for your unwavering support and we look forward to making continued progress as we strive to serve every child.

Sincerely,
Lloyd Petersen
President, Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lloyd Petersen, President
Julie Swain, Vice President
Morgan Ayers-Comegys, Secretary
Frances Thompson, Treasurer
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Danya Bushéy
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Valarie Williams



As we embark on a new year, the entire Board of Directors, staff and volunteers are grateful to Sam Steingold for four years of faithful and steadfast service as President of the Virginia Beach CASA Board of Directors. Many accomplishments that the organization experienced from 2012 to 2016 can be attributed to his ardent leadership and wisdom. From a significant increase in fundraising efforts to the growth in the number of children served, Sam's initiative provided a solid platform for everyone who plays a role within the organization. Thank you, Sam, for propelling CASA to reach new heights!



(left) October 2015, Virginia State CASA Network celebrated 25 years of CASA being written into the law and 30 years of CASA serving children.

STAFF

Natalie Carducci, Program Assistant
LaShonda Carson, Advocate Manager
Debbie Dail, Advocate Manager
Season Roberts, Executive Director
Kristen Sweitzer, Advocate Manager



About CASA

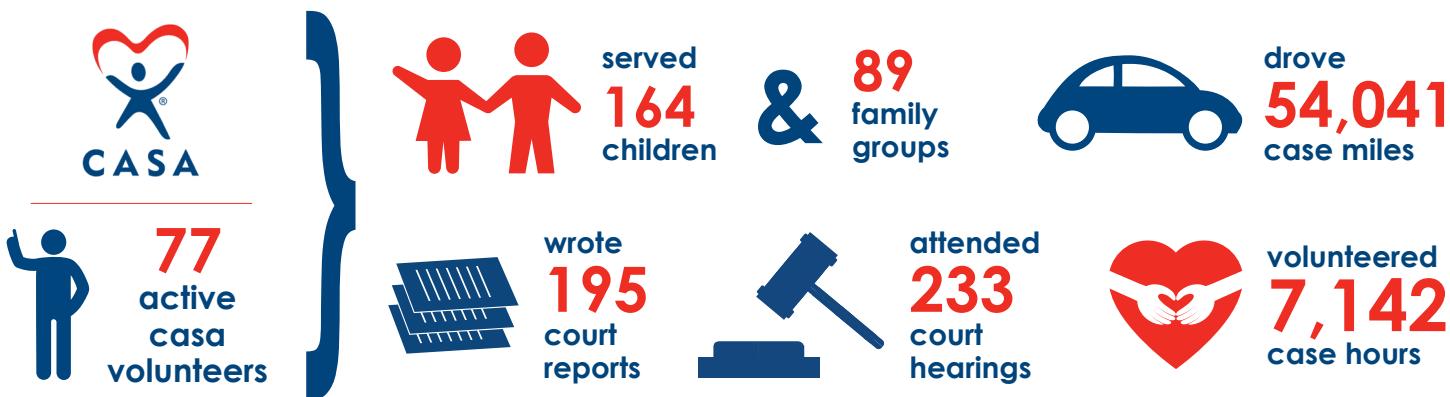
Virginia Beach Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) recruits, trains and supports volunteers to advocate for child victims of abuse and neglect who are too young to speak for themselves during the complicated maze of legal proceedings.

CASA volunteers are members of the community who receive extensive education and training in order to advocate for these children - who through no fault of their own - are thrust into juvenile and domestic relations court and often, into foster care.



CASA volunteers advocate for child victims to make sure they do not get lost in an overburdened system. Their ultimate responsibility is to promote safe, permanent homes as quickly as possible.

It is slow, painstaking, and incredibly challenging work - but one child at a time, CASA Volunteers are making a positive impact in our community - for a lifetime.



OUR MISSION...Virginia Beach CASA is a private, nonprofit organization committed to advocating for the best interests of child victims of abuse and neglect involved in the court system. Virginia Beach CASA recruits, trains and supervises competent volunteers dedicated to advocating for the needs of these children. CASA promotes safe, permanent homes for all children and seeks to educate the community concerning the needs of abused and neglected children.

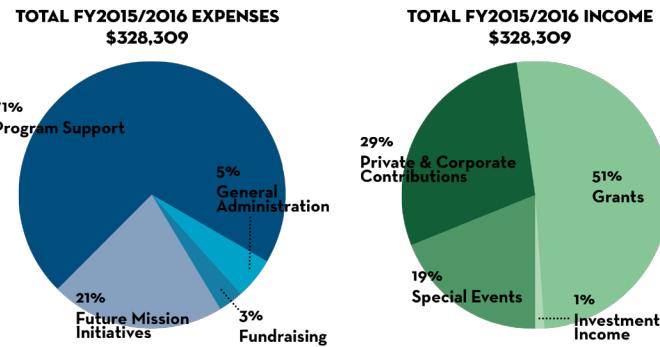
Effective. Efficient. Accountable.

DID YOU KNOW that last year's 7,142 volunteer hours by our CASAs are an amazing budgetary savings of more than \$163,000?

DID YOU ALSO KNOW that Virginia Beach CASA volunteers are typically assigned to the most difficult child victim cases? They are sworn in by the Chief Justice of the Juvenile Court and serve with an unbounded, compassionate heart.

AND LASTLY, DID YOU KNOW that 90 cents of every dollar donated to Virginia Beach CASA goes directly toward our programs and services, and future mission initiatives?

Virginia Beach Court Appointed Special Advocates is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, nonprofit charitable organization. Tax ID# 54-1708340. Full, audited financial statements are available by contacting us at info@VirginiaBeachCASA.org.



Making a Difference - Nancy Ford

An extraordinary team of volunteers—advocating selflessly for our most vulnerable children, is why Virginia Beach CASA's successful outcomes are possible. Among this group of volunteers is Nancy Ford, sworn-in to serve as a CASA in the fall of 2012. After 10 weeks of training, Nancy accepted her first case. She has served 12 children (8 family groups), contributed over 900 service hours and travelled more than 6,000 miles.



Nancy Ford facilitating a training for CASA volunteers where they participated in a mock trial and tour the jail.

Nancy taught high school history and government for 33 years in Virginia Beach and Henrico County Public Schools. Upon moving back to Virginia Beach, she sought out the CASA program. Having heard of CASA while in Richmond and even helping them with some fundraising, Nancy knew that CASA would be her next endeavor with children.

We caught up with Nancy to talk about her involvement with CASA.

Why CASA?

I wanted something meaningful to do at retirement. I was exposed to CASA while living in Richmond, but didn't have time to volunteer as I was teaching full-time. We moved to Virginia Beach a few years ago...retired, so it was a good time to get involved. My teaching and writing background made a natural fit – working with kids.

Only CASA?

In addition to CASA, I'm a docent for the Virginia Beach Court Docent Program where we teach high school seniors about the court system – have them participate in mock trials and visit the jail. Next year, I'll be the full-time Director of the Court Docent Program. I also serve as a mentor for a third grader at Seatack Elementary.

Advice for Working on Difficult Cases?

You must let the children and families know the limits of your role. They feel comfortable with us (CASA Volunteers) and think we'll solve their problems. Redirecting and clearly defining your role...setting expectations.

What Would You Tell a Brand New CASA Volunteer?

Be very careful with details. Take notes. Especially dates, appointments and what they are working on in therapy. Our word is very important in and to the court.

What are Your Hobbies?

I'm part of a book club, as I love to read...ride my bike, walk and row crew in a crew club in Norfolk. I love to spend time with my two adult sons and travel with my husband, Chip...I plan and Chip enjoys!

Nancy on Making A Difference

Along with providing support for the families and serving as a conduit between them and other service providers, I believe CASA volunteers provide information to the judges on the well-being of the children that the judges most likely will not get elsewhere. We are a constant in the children's lives during times of great upheaval and stress.



Nancy and Chip Ford at CASA Cabana 2016

Lift up a child's voice. A child's life. **VOLUNTEER TODAY.**

>> First 2017 training sessions begin January 19th.



Virginia Beach CASA Volunteers

Lorreene Anderson
Lindsey Atkinson
Erin Badran
Savannah Bolin
Jamie Burd
Virginia Ann Burke
Tamara "Tammy" Burnell
Angela Cappello
Cynthia Caravas
Tamara Castro
Donald Christensen
Donna Clabbers
Cynthia "Cathy" Clay
Clarke Crenshaw
Patricia Crumb
John Delaney
Katie Denton
Marc Flores
Nancy Ford
Dianne Frantz
Ann Geraci
Margaret "Peggy" Gilman
Tracee Gobel
Michelle Goodove

June Gregory
Elizabeth Harrell
Mary Pat Harris
Gina Hartgraves
Liene Hawkins
Deatra Henderson
Alison Holladay
Jenny Howell Branch
Gail Huber
Laura Hughes
Pearl Marie Ibarra
Sandra Jones
Dawn Lambert
Joseph Lipscomb
Martha "Candy" Logan
Kathy Malley
Fiesta Martin
Pamela Moffatt
Jodi Myers
Stacy Nixon
Jennifer O'Connor
Theresa Orr
Sundae Oxley
Sally Pattison-Cisna

Kathleen Peterson
Michelle Phillips
Antonia Prego
Pamela Reed
Lorlie Reiser
Rosa Roche
Jennifer Ruelas
Alice Ruffin
Edward "Joe" Sallee
Martine Sallee
Patricia Sare
Betty Savage-Vass
Steve Sawyer
Lance Shavers
Sharon Short
Christina Sims
Tricia Smigel
David Smith
Hollie Smith
Crystal Snyder
Lisa Spain
Frank Steadman
Johna Stoneking
Kristen Sweitzer



Brittany Tabb
Joanna Tequida
Jennifer Tillard
Kathy "Kate" Tippett-Bowles
Kimberly Tisdale-Vakos
Melanie Tumlin
Naomi Vargas
Rhanada Vazquez
Anthony Walker
Carolyn Werner
Gillian Werth
Stefanie White
Valerie Zavislak

THE EDITH DUGAN AWARD

The Edith Duggan Award was established in 2008 to honor founding Director, Edith Duggan. The award is given annually and recognizes an individual who exemplifies the characteristics of Edith: vision, leadership and a passion for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.



Past Award Recipients

2008 - Honorable Jerome Freidman, Judge
2009 - Mrs. Leah Waitzer, CASA Volunteer
2010 - Nianza Wallace, Virginia Beach City Attorney
2011 - Sylvia Smith, CASA Volunteer
2012 - Betty Wade Coyle, Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Hampton Roads
2013 - Pearl Ibarra, CASA Volunteer
2014 - Judy Kurtz, Past Executive Director of Virginia Beach CASA
2015 - John Delaney (pictured left), CASA Volunteer Emeritus (15 years of service as a CASA volunteer)

Sworn In To Serve

Each year Virginia Beach CASA holds three pre-service training sessions to train new CASA volunteers. Each session is six weeks long with a combination of online modules and in-person, interactive classes. 30 dedicated individuals joined the ranks of the elite CASA volunteers in fiscal year 2015-2016.



Class of Fall 2015



Class of Winter 2016



Class of Spring 2016

Training includes topics such as child development, investigation skills, the courts and the law, etc. Several sessions are dedicated to hosting panels of professionals such as a juvenile court judge, a current CASA volunteer, child welfare workers and a Guardian ad Litem (GAL), which is the attorney for the child. Following a series of background checks and successful completion of training, trainees are sworn in by the chief judge of the juvenile court to serve as a CASA volunteer.



Friends of CASA

Friends of CASA (FOC) is our ambassadors group, established in November of 2013, to raise funds and awareness for Virginia Beach Court Appointed Special Advocates through educational, social and philanthropic opportunities. From the Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign, CASA Cocktail Connections, and the Letter Writing Campaign to name a few, FOC members have been true ambassadors for the work of CASA volunteers with a goal of safe permanent homes for the children we serve.



FRIENDS OF CASA MEMBERS

Kelley Bimson	Blair Fine	Janet McCardell Hammond	Loretta Rich
Jessica Booth	Lisa M. Johnson	Stacy Nixon	Virginia Rountree
Ann Marie Burroughs	Tami Kamarek	Nancy O'Brien	Karen W. Royall
Laurie Cooper	Judy Kurtz	Anne O'Brian Pope	Mancha Stanton
Sally E. Dudley	Kara McCaa	Allison Rachels	Jill Wight

**For more information or to join Friends of CASA...
FriendsOfCASA@VirginiaBeachCASA.org or 757.385.5616**

PINWHEELS FOR PREVENTION

Friends of CASA Ambassadors Group executed the 3rd Annual Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign in April - National Child Abuse Prevention month. Each year, a pinwheel garden is planted on the lawn of the Virginia Beach Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court to honor the total number of children victims served by Virginia Beach CASA. In addition to the 3,000 pinwheels planted on the court lawn, more than 7,000 were planted throughout the community in an effort to support this awareness campaign. The campaign culminated with a Pinwheel Palooza, a family-friendly event. Attendees enjoyed a pinwheel fitness course courtesy of Jim White Fitness, games, food by Outback Steakhouse, a petting zoo, fire engine, and more. Join us for the 4th Annual Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign in April 2017. We are now accepting sponsors and vendors.



SAVING GRACE

As a girl, my brother and I suffered just about every form of abuse you can imagine—emotional and physical attacks by my mother, later sexual abuse by her and her “boyfriend.” When I was 13 years old, we were all removed from our home. After that, I bounced around, from a foster home to a relative’s house, then back to another foster home. There was so much I did not know about the foster care system. Without knowledge or the power to speak up, I felt like a victim.

A year and a half later, I met my CASA volunteer, Mary. And everything changed.



Mary taught me how to communicate, how to represent myself and my needs. She helped me to understand what was happening in court and taught me how to stand up for myself. At every school event, Mary was there. From awards ceremonies to my high school graduation, she was there. When I took hold of my diploma, I heard her cheers above the rest. Mary was always there. She was the one constant in my life.

About that same time, at the age of 17, I was placed into my final foster home, where I learned about service to others. Mary, my CASA volunteer did so much more than she had to do, for me and for the other children she served. Mary was my “saving grace.” Without her, I would not be...



Special Features



SUITCASE PROJECT

Over the last year, more than 50 brand new, child-friendly suitcases were donated to Virginia Beach CASA. These suitcases were made available to children who were being removed from their home at no fault of their own. Often times in these removal situations, the children have to stuff a few belongings in a garbage bag as they move to yet another unfamiliar home. With the help of generous community donors, even in a removal situation, the children can carry their personal belongs with dignity in a suitcase of their own.

FRIENDS OF THE COURT

CASA kudos to Friends of the Court for their support of the children we serve. Friends of the Court has partnered with Virginia Beach CASA for the last few years in donating gifts for the holidays. From gift cards, purses, toys, and clothes, Friends of the Court ensures our CASA children have a joyous holiday season. Diane Shelton, Executive Director of Friends of the Court, leads the charge each year by soliciting and personally shopping for some of the items. Thanks to Diane and the entire team for making it a very merry holiday for the kids!



CASA CABANA

More than 300 of the community's finest said "goodbye to the tie", "put down the gown" and gathered for the Premier Party at the Beach - the 2016 CASA Cabana!

CONTRIBUTING TO CASA

As a private nonprofit organization, Virginia Beach CASA engages the community each year to support the advocacy for the children we serve. Individuals, corporations, organizations, and foundations collectively provide monetary support to our mission of safe permanent homes.



Stacy Cummings of Priority Charity Bowl presents a check to members of Virginia Beach CASA Board and staff.



Chris Poulos of Youth Service Club presents a check to Virginia Beach CASA's Season Roberts and Lloyd Petersen.



Beach Ambassadors present a check from the 2015 Martinis and Manicures proceeds to Virginia Beach CASA.





Virginia Beach CASA
Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court
2425 Nimmo Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23456



APRIL 2017
Pinwheels for Prevention

Virginia Beach CASA's 4th Annual Pinwheels for Prevention campaign will coincide with National Child Abuse Prevention month, April 2017. From educational and awareness events; to the family "funday" at Pinwheel Palooza; there is something for everyone to get involved. Now accepting vendor applications.

Now Available...
Sponsor Packages and Volunteer Opportunities!

SAVE
THE
DATES

JUNE 9, 2017
CASA Cabana Fundraiser

Virginia Beach CASA will host our 29th Annual CASA Cabana Fundraiser at the Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront on Friday, June 9, 2017. Known as the 'Premier Party at the Beach', this event will feature live music by The Deloreans, Live and Silent Auctions, Exquisite Food and Drinks, and more!

Tickets and Sponsor Packages Now Available!

HOW YOU CAN *Help*

- DONATE** Every dollar received helps us provide more resources, more advocacy and more help to children in need.
- VOLUNTEER** Volunteers are the lifeblood of Virginia Beach CASA. Apply online for our next class at VirginiaBeachCASA.org.
- JOIN FOC** Friends of CASA is our ambassadors group, established to raise funds & awareness for Virginia Beach CASA.

