

Day in the Life and Volunteer of the Month

March Speak Up!

Day in the Life: Candace Johnson

My name is Candace Johnson and I have been a CASA volunteer since March 2016. I work for Louisiana Healthcare Connections. I am active in my church and am passionate about my work with youth there. I heard about CASA through a radio ad and after researching, I decided that I wanted to make a difference in a child's life so I signed up for training.

I was assigned a case involving siblings, John and Amy, who entered foster care two years ago. The children entered care due to neglect and dependency. John is in high school and Amy is in middle school. Initially, John and Amy had separate foster care placements. Over the last two years, the children's parents have struggled with adhering to a visitation schedule and their case plan. At this time, the mother's whereabouts are unknown. Amy has been in contact with her father though calls and visits are sporadic.

One of the most important and rewarding turning points in their case is that John and Amy were recently placed in the care of their sister, Julie. This is a positive, safe environment where John and Amy are happy to be with their sister. At this point, Julie is meeting the requirements of providing a safe and stable home to her siblings.

In spending time with John and Amy, it is evident that both children have a great passion for sports and participating in extracurricular activities. John and Amy understand the importance of maintaining their grades to be able to continue participating. I was able to facilitate transportation for after school activities and it is rewarding to see how much they enjoy being a part of those activities.

While there have been some challenges along the way, I appreciate the support of my Advocate Supervisor, Ricketta, in assisting me with my first court report. Ricketta provided me with the assistance I needed in properly completing it. For me, being a CASA volunteer has been a wonderful learning experience.

Names changed for confidentiality purposes.

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Volunteer of the Month: Kim Cupples

Congratulations to Kim Cupples for being chosen as Volunteer of the Month! Kim completed training in May 2015 and accepted her first case in June 2015. Kim is assigned to siblings, Susan and Amanda. The girls came into care on May 8, 2015 after DCFS received a report alleging lack of supervision and inadequate shelter.

During the time that Kim has been assigned to her cases, she has kept in constant contact with Susan and Amanda, their biological parents and foster parent, the case manager, and other collaterals that are assigned to their case. Kim has always focused on the girls' best interests at all times while working on the case. She not only interviewed all of the involved parties, but contacted me monthly, turned in all monthly and court reports, and attended all family team conferences and court hearings. Kim is very knowledgeable of Susan and Amanda's needs and wishes and she is not afraid to advocate for them. It should also be noted that, Kim had a very good working relationship with the girls' DCFS case manager and they were able to have an open dialog regarding the family's needs. Additionally, it was also helpful that Kim was open to working with and supporting Susan and Amanda's mom in her efforts in reunifying with her daughters.

Thank you Kim for your many unselfish acts of kindness and extreme dedication to Susan and Amanda. You have been dedicated to Susan and Amanda since the day that you were assigned to them and because of you none of their needs were overlooked! Additionally, you have never lost sight of advocating for their needs. Kim, thank you for being such a wonderful volunteer. It has been such a joy to supervise you!

Proud Advocate Supervisor,
Ricketta Cotton-Monroe

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February 2017

[Day in the Life: Brenda Redpath and Volunteer of the Month Patricia Beste](#)

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Capital Area CASA Association, 848 Louisiana Ave. Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 379-8598,
info@casabr.org