



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN



JACKSON COUNTY CASA 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

H I G H L I G H T S

V O L U N T E E R S

F I N A N C I A L S

D O N O R S



As the new President and CEO of Jackson County CASA, I am proud to serve an organization that steps in when a child's world has fallen apart.

The cases of child abuse and neglect we see are tragic, and the children we serve have experienced trauma that will affect them for life. Our staff and volunteers currently serve almost 40% of the children under the protection of the Jackson County Family Court. We take on challenging cases, the cases of severe trauma and with multiple siblings, cases whose children need the extra support and advocacy that CASA provides. There are no easy cases.

Once they are assigned to CASA, each child receives a three-person team comprised of a highly trained CASA Volunteer, an experienced Case Supervisor, and an expert Staff Attorney to ensure that child's best interests are well represented in court. The team works diligently to make sure each of these children receives the educational, medical, and therapeutic support they need to heal and have hope for a better future. We work toward the goal of a safe, permanent home, for each child, either with a biological parent or relative, or with a new adoptive family.

And for teens who are unlikely to be adopted, we work to help them create a better ending to their story. When a youth has no appropriate relatives or adoptive resources, they receive support not only from their CASA Volunteer, but also from our Older Youth Specialist, who can help them secure housing, get health insurance, find transportation, continue their education, and get a job. With CASA, even after they "age out" of the system, they have someone to call, someone who cares.

As the number of cases we handle rises, CASA will continue to advocate for the best interests of all the children we serve. Your commitment to CASA enables us to write a hopeful ending for children whose life story has taken a dark turn. Thank you for your friendship and support.

Angie Blumel



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

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Angie Blumel
Executive Director

MESSAGE FROM BOARD PRESIDENT **COLLIN THOMAS**



As President of the Board of Directors of Jackson County CASA, I am pleased to report that CASA is making a difference in the lives of abused and neglected children in our community.

In 2016 Jackson County CASA advocated for 1,200 children who were removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. These children benefited from the advocacy of 372 dedicated CASA Volunteers.

Volunteers are the heart of CASA. They are the experts on their children's cases. They attend trainings, visit and assess the children, and talk to their teachers, social workers, and therapists. They meet with social workers and others to determine the best plans for these children, and they relay this information to the Family Court. Most of all, they listen to the children's fears, hopes, and dreams and earn their trust. They benefit from the extra training, support, and guidance provided by the professional staff of Jackson County CASA.

Not all children can return home or find a new family. So after a full year of our new program directing additional services to our Older Foster Youth, we are beginning to see progress. Several have moved into transitional apartments, and are setting their own goals for education and employment. Some have even started college. CASA Volunteers can stay in contact with these youth even after they leave the care of the Court, and these youth can continue to rely on CASA for assistance with their transition to adulthood. We are excited by the promise this program is showing.

For seven years, Jackson County CASA benefited from the dynamic leadership of former Executive Director Martha Gershun, who in late 2016 announced her planned retirement. Now the Board is equally committed to supporting her successor, Angie Blumel, who brings a strong background in development to her passion for helping children. She has made it CASA's goal to provide a trained CASA Volunteer for 1,250 children in 2017, bringing us closer to our goal of serving 50% of the children in the Jackson County child welfare system. To reach this goal, we will need the continued generous support of the caring people of Kansas City and even more heroic CASA Volunteers.

I am confident that with your help, Jackson County CASA will continue to improve the lives of more children than ever.

Collin Thomas

2016 YEAR-END RESULTS

Your generous support and thoughtful encouragement continue to mean a great deal to all of us at Jackson County CASA. We had another record-breaking year – growing to serve 1,200 children in 2016. Here are our year-end results:



Overall we served
1,200
children and teens,
compared to 1,149 in 2015,
an increase of 51 kids.



We accepted Court assignments for
441
new children, a **huge 23% jump** over last year's high of 359. This means we took more than 43% of the new children and teens who came under state care in 2016.



We trained
90
new CASA Volunteers and maintained our very strong Volunteer retention for a total of **372 active CASA Volunteers** assigned to cases in 2016.

We advocate for permanent, safe homes for our children.

In 2016:

155

CASA children were adopted or placed with a permanent guardian, compared to 117 last year.

184

CASA children were safely reunited with their biological parents.

100%

ALL children assigned to CASA received skilled, passionate advocacy for appropriate and timely medical, therapeutic, and educational resources.

Our Emergency and Enrichment Assistance program grew to help more children and families with basic needs:



We provided holiday gifts for 287 CASA children, as well as food and basic hygiene items for their families.



We again provided school supplies and age-appropriate backpacks for over 100 school-age children this fall.

THE NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS

Jackson County CASA offers a volunteer opportunity like no other. As officers of the court, CASA Volunteers are empowered to make a lifelong difference in the lives of abused and neglected children.

In 2016, 372 CASA Volunteers advocated for 1,200 children in Jackson County. While this is an impressive number, hundreds more children remain on a waiting list for our services.

Our Volunteers are an amazing force for good, but we need more of them. In 2016, we hope to advocate for more than 1,200 children. With your help, we can reach that goal!

THE VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

People who give their time to CASA come from many different places. Some have years of education and professional experience working for children and families. Some have themselves grown up in the foster care system and felt the anguish of having to move from home to home.

Being a CASA Volunteer does not require any special education or background, simply the desire to help abused and neglected children find safe, permanent homes. Volunteer advocates are asked to dedicate themselves to a case until it is closed (the average case lasts about one and one half years). Advocates work in a team alongside their CASA Case Supervisor and CASA Staff Attorney.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BECOME A CASA VOLUNTEER?

The first step is to meet with a CASA staff member to talk about the program and complete an application.

In addition, every volunteer must pass a background check and participate in an extensive training course.

After successfully completing the training, volunteers are assigned their first case. A volunteer's average time commitment to a case is approximately 10 hours per month.

For more information on becoming a CASA Volunteer please call (816) 984-8204, or visit us online at www.jacksoncountycasa-mo.org.

2016 NEW VOLUNTEERS

Ann Adamson	Neal McCarroll
Angel Allen	Samantha McIntosh
Linda Andersen	Kevin McKenzie
Gabriela Armendariz	Sara Merker
Caroline Baker	Taylor Miller
Sandra Baldry	Glenn Mills
Stephanie Barnes	Abigail Moeller
Valerie Baul	Kathy Moorman
Robyn Bedell	Brianna Mormann
Carmen Bennington-Williams	Daniel Morton
Courtney Breitreutz	Melissa Murphy
Janice Brill	Jacquelin Nicodemus-Norman
Michaela Brown	Larry Norris
Molly Byrns	Rachel Pannebaker
Pamela Chapman	Cicily Petralie
Brett Cline	Karlenne Powell
Dana Diec	John Reeves
Ann Dingey	Ashley Rodriguez
Shelly Doucet	Mary Beth Rojas
Molly Eberle	Nicole Rosencrantz
Susan Edwards	Samantha Schaff
David Escobar	Stephanie Seger
Mary Everitt	Felicia Shaw
Robert Everitt	Kara Shelley
Rebecca Fowler	Samuel Shelton
Olivia Gibby	keelee short
Shawna Gretzinger	Brenda Shrader
Chelsea Griffin	Joan Simpson
Amanda Grodie	Denise Smith
Natalie Harper	Kirby Smyth
Emily Hastings	Juanita Standifer
Audry Hite	Alyson Stewart
Shelley Holsten	Christina Styles
Tracy Hull	Stephanie Taormina
Candace King	Marie Tuschy
Cassandra Kohlstaedt	Debra Urick
Abby Krone	Michele Utt
Nathan Kuhl	Jennifer Walker
Sherianne Laba	Marci Watkins
Wendy Leighton-Floyd	Jana Weaver
Esther Lovesee	Kevin White
Charlene Luster	Megan White
William Macbeth	Lea Williams
Carol Marshall	Kelly Wilson
Emajo Mayberry	Rachel Wilson
	Josephine Zahner

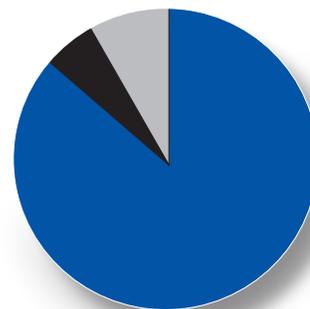


2016 Financial Information:

Total Programmatic Revenue: \$1,821,999

Foundation support.....	\$476,395
United Way/CFC donations	\$105,061
Corporate contributions	\$33,257
Individual and other donations.....	\$117,660
County government support	\$160,514
Federal/State program support	\$87,652
Special events	\$276,221
In-kind goods and services.....	\$565,239

Total Expenses: \$1,703,894



- Program services **\$1,357,225**
- Fundraising
- Administrative.....

● Fundraising **\$127,918**
 ○ Administrative..... **\$218,751**

The staff and board of Jackson County CASA extend our sincerest gratitude to the following friends and supporters who made our efforts in 2016 possible.

\$100,000 & Above

Bank of America Charitable Foundation

\$50,000–\$99,999

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Jackson County COMBAT
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"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.

—Frederick Douglass

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*"Children are the living messages
we send to a time we will not see."*

-John F. Kennedy

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