

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA)/PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY FY17 ANNUAL REPORT





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between July 2016 and June 2017, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/Prince George's County served a record number of foster youth. CASA's dedicated volunteers ensured that youth received more services and advocated for safe, permanent homes. CASA also completed its "Thriving Pathways" project which will set CASA on a path towards reaching all children in foster care.

“No one else does what you do”- Pupil Personnel Worker, to a CASA

When a child is so severely abused—left with bruises and broken bones after wetting the bed; neglected—left home alone for days to care for younger siblings; or molested—abused by a person she should be able to trust, the County removes the child from their family. They are then thrust into the foster care system: sent to live with strangers and suddenly expected to trust unfamiliar lawyers, social workers and therapists. That's where CASA comes in.





Why CASA Matters

Like all foster kids, Stephen had experienced trauma and needed a CASA volunteer but others' needs were more urgent. So Stephen waited.

While he waited, things started to fall apart. There was no major incident but his foster parents didn't support his dreams of playing football, going to college and becoming a firefighter.

Thankfully the Magistrate in his case saw his potential and reached out to CASA to say, "this kid needs a CASA."

The assigned CASA, Betty, immediately recognized Stephen's potential and helped him to start working towards his goals.

In May 2017 Betty attended Stephen's high school graduation. A cause to celebrate regardless, but even more so when you know that half of kids in foster care drop out.

What's more, he is now one of the 10% of foster care kids to go to college. Thanks to Betty, Stephen got connected with a college football coach. Not only does he have a spot on the team, but he has a scholarship and housing with his teammates.

With Betty's help, Stephen is overcoming the odds.

Reasons to Celebrate

- 156 youth served
- 80.5% of cases closed to permanence (i.e. reunification with biological family, custody and guardianship to a relative or non-relative, adoption or youth successfully living on their own)
- 86% of recommendations ordered by the Court, resulting in more services for youth
- 85% of transition-aged youth had stable housing when they aged out of foster care
- Received Civic Leadership Award from Community Foundation for Prince George's County
- Created comprehensive online Transitioning Youth Resource Guide



Who we Are

CASA relies on a team of experienced professionals with a wide range of backgrounds to support our dynamic volunteers and solidify partnerships with stakeholders and community resource providers that benefit our youth.

Staff:

Ann Marie Foley Binsner, Executive Director

Jeanmarie Albert, Case Supervisor

Sarah Bosken, Lead Case Supervisor

Kara Bundy, Deputy Director

Benjamin Ebeigbe, Case Supervisor (until 11/16)

Tom Ferraro, Resource Development Coordinator VISTA

Andrea LaHaye, Case Supervisor

Phil Lartigue, Case Supervisor (as of 2/17)

Michelle Martin, Program Administrator (new 2/17)

Carolyn Monford (new 2/17)

Cheryl Richards, Transitioning Youth Coordinator

Board of Directors:

LaVerne Byrd

Michele Dearing

Bruce D. Edwards

QC Jones

Shondriette Kelley

Dan Klotz

Leslie Lampton

Keith A. Olfus Sr

Kara Onorato

Barbara Richman

Indika Samarawickreme

K. Singh Taneja

Rosema Jackielyn Taylor

Randall Thomas

Tami Watkins

Volunteers are the backbone of our direct service staff. These extraordinary volunteer advocates work one-on-one with children, getting to know them, talking to the important people in their lives, working to understand them, not just their legal case. These volunteer advocates then go to Court with them, not only to hold their hand but to advocate for them. They provide written and oral reports to the Court that protect children's fundamental right to live in safety. Volunteer advocates provide stability and certainty at a chaotic time. CASA's volunteers provide over \$500,000 worth of in-kind service annually (based on data from Independent Sector).

I am for the child[®]

FY17 FINANCES

Revenue: \$687,274
Expenses: \$617,841
Strategic Reserves: \$69,433



FY17 provided many opportunities for CASA. CASA's Board of Directors created a reserve policy and has directed the organization to grow an operating reserve in order to support CASA's ability to respond to unexpected financial downturns or opportunities for growth. Through support from our funders, CASA was able to hire a part-time Program Administrator and an additional Case Supervisor thereby expanding our capacity to serve. CASA completed a 2 year capacity-building project that led to the development of a campaign for growth to fund our "Thriving Pathways" plan to grow to serve 100% of youth in foster care in the next 5 years.

Our Sponsors

THE WORK CASA DOES WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE INVESTMENT OF THESE SPONSORS

Administrative Office of the Courts

Battelle

The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz

Foundation

Children and Family Capacity-Building

Initiative

Council Member Glaros

Council Member Taveras

Foster Care Court Improvement Program

Community Foundation

George Preston Marshall Foundation

Governor's Office on Crime Control and

Prevention: Children's Justice

Act, Maryland Victims of Crime, Victims of

Crime Act

Harman Cain Family Foundation

Harry & Jeannette Weinberg

Foundation

National CASA Association

Northrop Grumman

Philip Graham Fund

Prince George's County:

Community Development Block

Grant, County Council, Office of

the County Executive

Prince George's County Bar

Association

Stockings from Karen

Chesapeake Public Strategies

Ten Powerful Acts

William S. Abell Foundation



World of Wheels

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS FOR MAKING THIS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL WOW YET

Thank you to our presenting sponsor, Pepco; and to Council Member Deni Taveras for sponsoring free admission!

- "Crane" Sponsors- Pepco, Council Member Deni Taveras
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- "Bus" Sponsor- Asplundh
- "Taxicab" Sponsor- Bates Trucking
- "Bicycle" Sponsors: Advocates for Justice, Binsner Family, LaVerne Byrd, Sheila Edmondson, Knights Healthcare Consulting
- In-Kind Sponsors- Curtis C3 Photography, DeMatha Catholic High School, Game Truck, Prince George's Child Resource Center, Smiley Jump, WTOP



CASA's Goal

CASA currently sees stronger results in permanency, education, employment, relationships and needs being met. But we do so for only 35% of the kids who need it. **In the next five years**, we can be making a difference in the lives of every child in foster care.

Together we can break cycles of generational poverty and abuse. Together we can provide the light of hope in the life of a child.

Together we can

When CASA is involved, very real issues get uncovered and addressed. CASA volunteers work hard to establish trust with the youth and very often become the one person in their lives whom they can trust, whom they know will be there for them even if they change schools or foster homes or social workers ... again. **Together we can** reverse a terrible trend and ensure that these vulnerable youth, who have grown up feeling that no one cares, have someone who will speak up for them and that they will finally find a home they can call their own.

WWW.PGCASA.ORG

