



One child. One future. One voice. That is the commitment of CASA. Without your investment in Illinois CASA, one child's voice may not be heard.

You may also call into the office at (309) 683-8788 for more information or visit us online at www.illinoiscasa.org.

7501 N. University Suite 217B
Peoria, IL 61614

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- My donation is:
- \$25.00 \$50.00 \$75.00 \$100.00
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YES! You can count on me! I would like to support the mission of Illinois CASA to develop local programs whose volunteers advocate for the best interest abused and neglected children in the juvenile court system.

Will You Support Illinois' Children?



ILLINOIS CASA NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2010

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Cornerstone of the Voice

Spring 2010



Illinois CASA is proud to be the organizing body for the 30 local programs in 34 of Illinois counties. As we charge into a new year of challenges, I want to take a few minutes to celebrate our last year's success.

In 2009, there were 111,732 children reported to be victims of abuse and neglect in Illinois. In response to this overwhelming need over 2,315 CASA volunteers contributed more than 168,262 hours for over 5,784 children. Volunteer advocates are the back bone of the CASA mission. Together we can change the world of a child. I think the poem written by the Richards Group speaks to the impact they provide:

*To a child silenced by injustice,
I am a voice.
To a child with whom the world has broken
faith,
I am someone to believe in.
Amid confusion, I am certainty;
amid instability, constancy.
In a dark labyrinth of bureaucracy,
I am a way through –
a steady arm around the shoulder,
a calming voice in the ear.
For while my appointment may come from a
court,
my calling comes from within.
To the child neglected, the child abused, the
child cast upon the mercy of an often
merciless system,
I am heart and caring and courage
personified.
I am a CASA volunteer.*

While we recognize the immeasurable efforts that volunteer advocates have on the life of an abused and neglected child, it is important to also acknowledge the more measurable outcomes. Studies have shown that children with CASA involvement spend an average of over 8

months less time in care. These children also experience a third less moves to other foster homes and are more likely to achieve a permanent home. The impact doesn't stop there, children assigned a casa volunteer are 50% less likely to reenter the foster care system. To the state of Illinois this equates into a significant dollar savings.

The unstable economy facing our state, CASA offers a true win – win situation. The average monthly cost for a child placed outside of the family home is \$5,488. If each child had a CASA and spent 8 less months in care, it would save the state \$43,911 per child. This means that the saving to the state for the CASA kids served in 2008, was \$243,135,883. If all the children in need in Illinois were to have a CASA the overall savings would be \$696,781,687. And yes, you read that correctly. Just to put this into perspective the total DCFS funding for FY2008 was \$1,264,459,100.

Illinois CASA, volunteers and supporters continue to educate legislators to these facts. In the current legislative session we have Senate Bill 248 and House Bill 962 requesting state funding to expand services. Last year, CASA in Illinois was only able to serve 19% of the children in need and is one of only seven states not funded. This is one of those rare and special cases of spending money to save money but more importantly, save lives and futures. That is what the CASA program in Illinois offers our most vulnerable children.



THANK YOU

William Baumann
Stephanie Corum
Carline Curtis
Cathy Earlywine
Courtney Field
Carol Frederick
Jennifer Jansen
Pam Johnson
Dr. & Mrs. Karsh
Jill Olson
Kelly Pokharel
Bob Ptak
Deb Spencer
Ronald Stuyvesant
Savannah Williams

Local Programs

DeKalb-we will be starting our spring advocate training on April 5th. We also will be working on our next fundraiser for June 18th, "A Midsummer's Night Wine Tasting".

Kankakee- currently has 24 volunteers serving 101 children. On March 20th will be holding our second annual "My Favorite Things" fundraiser, a craft and vendor show. We will be participating in the Champions for Children Walk on Saturday May 15th.

Boone- we are hosting our annual advocate appreciation evening on Saturday, March 6 and our spring training in April.

Lake - presented a full-day workshop There were 150 persons in attendance for *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*. Our first CASA training class of the year began in January; a swearing-in ceremony for the class of 13 trainees was held on February 11. A second training class began on February 23 with 14 students enrolled. Terri Z. Greenberg, Executive Director, is a 2010 recipient of the *Lake County Journal's Forefront Award*, honoring her for exemplary citizenship and community service. Awards were presented at the annual Forefronts Breakfast on February 25, at the State Bank of the Lakes in Grayslake, Illinois.



McLean-volunteers assisted 159 children and devoted 3,707 hours of advocacy. On February 20th, the CASA program and the Children's Advocacy Center hosted our annual fund-raiser, TIP A VIP at a local restaurant. Our next training is scheduled April 5th through May 17th and we have 9 potential volunteers participating in the class.

Macon-is graduating 8 new volunteers on March 10. Our 2010, Casa's for CASA playhouse raffle is underway! Ticket prices are: \$5 each, 3 for \$10, 10 for \$25, 25 for \$50 and 50 for \$100!

Franklin- will be holding our "We Rock for CASA" Gala at the Benton Civic Center on Friday, April 23rd. This lip-sync entertainment and dinner event is a fun family event.

Coles- has recently closed out 3 hard-won cases involving 6 children. One child had been in foster care for 34 of her 36 months when we were finally able to have her goal changed. She is on her way to permanency. On April 15, we will use the Forgotten Children at our Longaberger Bingo fundraiser.

Winnebago- is currently planning our Spring 2010, training also our major fundraiser is on April 30th -- an Auction/Dinner.

McHenry- partnered with two local non-profits for a Bunco Fund-raiser, we have a supporter throwing his 5th annual St. Patrick's Day party fundraiser with all proceeds to benefit CASA. Akasha Yoga Center is hosting a yoga-thon, April 20th. We will be having the 4th annual Light of Hope Breakfast at the Crystal Lake Country Club.



Special Points of Interest

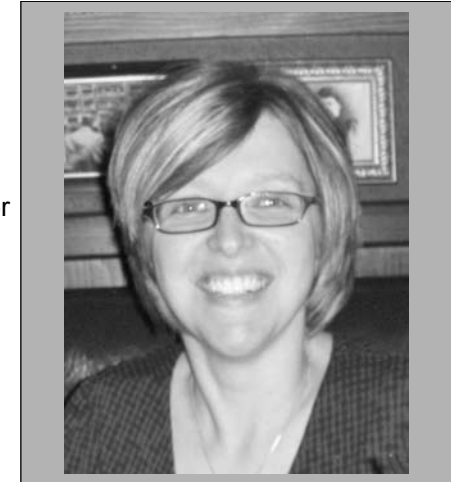
- Peoria County Hands Around the Courthouse- Aril 16th at Noon - Peoria, IL
- Will County Wine Tasting April 23rd 6:30pm-10:30pm Bolingbrook, IL
- Open House St. Clair County April 23rd 11am-2pm Fairview Heights, IL

Board Member Spotlight
Stephanie Corum

Stephanie was a DCFS intact caseworker as well as a DCFS investigator for 3 years. She decided to return to law school after a State's Attorney told her, "If you didn't like the way your cases were going as a DCFS worker, you should go to law school."

During law school, Stephanie served as a volunteer for St. Louis City CASA. After law school and passing the bar exam, Stephanie became the county appointed GAL for Randolph County. Shortly after becoming GAL for the county, Stephanie also accepted the job of Executive Director for Randolph County CASA.

Currently, Stephanie is employed as the Marion County Assistant Public Defender. In this position she represents juvenile offenders as well as parents in the juvenile court system as well as indigent criminal defendants.



Stephanie Corum
Board Member

Program Specialist

I was raised in the Peoria area and have lived in the area for most of my adult life. I reside in North Peoria in the Dunlap school district where my daughter attends 5th grade. She is 11 years old and is involved in band, chorus, drama and church activities. I have been working in a managerial capacity in business for the past 24 years. I have been in pursuit of my Accounting degree and have recently graduated with my Associate's degree in Business Administration and an Associate's degree in Accounting. I am continuing my education at Midstate to receive my Bachelor's degree in Accounting. Recently, I accepted the position of Program Specialist at Illinois CASA. Being in an entry level position, I want to learn all about the CASA organization. My desire is to take my education, strong business background, coupled with my life experiences to further my career with Illinois CASA with the hope to have a long and rewarding career.



Carla Haynes
Program Specialist

I am looking forward to increasing my experience with the nonprofit world and have volunteered some with different organizations. I have worked with underprivileged children through a program called Karing for Kids. Some other programs I have worked with are Coaches vs. Cancer, Easter Seals, and Special Olympics in a variety of functions. I find it very interesting and rewarding to know that I am not only furthering my career, but my interests and in the process helping children have a stable home environment.

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The mission of Illinois Association of Court Appointed Special Advocates is to provide leadership and support in the development and growth of local programs whose volunteers advocate for the best interest of children in the Juvenile Court System.

Help Us Save Some Green
Sign up for our
e-newsletter on
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Illinois CASA has a goal to go green in the year 2010. We want to be environmentally responsible and save some green. Sign up today for the e-newsletter, by joining our constant contact list. We will not only save our organization some green, but think of how many trees we can save.