CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

HEART OF MISSOURI CASA

2018-2019 Annual Report

Change a Child's Story

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MISSION: We train and support volunteers to be exceptional voices for every abused and neglected child in the Boone and Callaway County Family Courts.

VISION: We believe that all children have the right to safe, healthy, stable homes, free from abuse and neglect.

LETTER FROM CASA LEADERSHIP

Thank you for everything you made happen last year for our kids!

You made the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, the best year yet for Heart of Missouri CASA. Your generosity helped us advocate for more of our community's most vulnerable children. In fact, you made it possible for us to serve the most children we have ever served in one year. 44% of the children involved in the foster care system in Boone and Callaway counties had a CASA advocate; a 15% increase from the previous year!

Every day, CASA volunteers bravely give of their time, compassion, and mental and emotional energy to change the stories of children in foster care. Last year, 52 new CASA volunteers joined a strong cadre of seasoned advocates to lend their voices for children in need. 142 Heart of Missouri CASA volunteers gave nearly 9,000 hours of advocacy and drove 52,000 miles to bring hope to children in foster care last year. Your resources allowed this to happen.

Because of CASA volunteers' stellar advocacy, children in foster care have a better chance at healing, exiting foster care quickly, and achieving a safe, permanent home. Stories of impact small and large were recorded throughout the year. We are proud of what we accomplished together. You'll read about these accomplishments throughout this report. You should reflect and be proud of how your financial assistance improved services to our children, and consider what sustaining contribution you can make to allow us to continue our commitment and advocacy on behalf of children in our community.

We are working fervently to reach 50% of the children in need by the end of our fiscal year, and with your critical support, we can achieve our mission of serving every child the court identifies as needing a CASA volunteer. As Heart of Missouri CASA has grown stronger, so has the need for CASA in our communities. Thank you for joining with us and providing a voice to our community's most vulnerable children.

Sincerely,

Kelly Hill
Executive Director

Jorgen Schlemeier
Board Chair

Thank You CASA VOLUNTEERS

Nita Abbott
Leslie Abney
Nikki Aguero
Suzanne Anderson
Jim Babb
Janet Baker
Angie Bass
Cynthia Beverley
Milly Biggs
Alyssa Bish
Gary Bonsall Sr.
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Kelly Borman
Jennifer Burke
Glen Cameron
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Sela Freuler
Beverley Fries
Sara Gable
Jodi Ganapathy
Yi Gao
Cynthia Gardner
Yoko Gely
Cindy Gergen
Julie Geyer
Marilyn Gordon
Ilene Greenwell
Nancy Hanson
Shannyn Harris
Anita Hayes-Birt
Elizabeth Heidt
Cynthia Helphingstine
James Hogan
Peter Holmes
Mary Hoskins
Todd Iveson
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Kelly Jones
Debra Karwoski
Michelle Kasmann
Ginger Kazmierczak
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Julie Anne Mattson
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Gina McGinnis
Nancy McKerrow
Kyla Mickey
Gail Cross Miller
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Laura Nauser
Leigh Neier
Jordan Newland
Lauren O'Donnell
Elaina Olsen
Lisa Ovaitt
Melanie Pezold
Brenda Pipes
Lindsey Poenie
Brooke Rempfer
Brandon Rodewald
Krista Rodgers
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Courtney Rowden
Tod Schattgen
Betsy Schlemeier
Sharon Schneeberger
Alisia Sebers
Lincoln Sheets
Kayla Simon
Amanda Smith
Jane E. Smith
Madison Spadarotto
Lisa Stevens
Martha Stevens
Kenna Tervo
Jeane Tetro
Deanna Thomassen
Ruth Threlkeld
Jennifer Turek
Amanda Van Dalsem
Mark Volkmann
Julie Walden
Terry Warren
Hunter Watkins
Christa Weisbrook
Kayla Welch
Julie Wesley
Rachel Wesley
Jen West
Andrea Wiggins
Linda Willenburg
Linda Williams
Maryann Williamson
Tina Willingham-Hall
Joyce Wood Harter
Jayne Woods
Susan Woods
Mary Wright
Patty Zap

CASA volunteers advocate for and ensure a child's right to a safe, nurturing, and happy life. My hope is that through my work as a CASA volunteer, I can not only speak for a child whose voice often goes unheard but also help them to believe in themselves and their unique gifts and talents and provide support as they experience a very difficult time in life. Working with children is what I have been called to do and I am so honored to have the opportunity to be doing so as a CASA volunteer.

Linda Williams,
CASA Volunteer

(Read Linda's success story on page 4.)

Linda's Story

It has been Linda Williams's life passion to make a difference in the lives of children.

As a retired educator, she has used her knowledge and skills on behalf of children of all ages and backgrounds. Linda was sworn-in as a Court Appointed Special Advocate in Callaway County in the fall of 2016 and was quickly assigned to her first case.

The sibling set to whom she was appointed was unable to live safely at home and were moved into foster care because of their parents' substance abuse. In order to reunify with their children, the parents had many barriers to overcome.

Linda built a strong rapport with the children, parents, and family support team members. She spent hours searching for resources for the mother, as well as helping her to stay up-to-date with meetings and activities.

Linda supported and guided the mother in her valiant efforts to create a new support system, obtain a new residence, and engage in substance abuse treatment. Linda also used her educational expertise to ensure the children stayed in their school of origin, instead of moving to a new school district for the time they were in a foster home. Ultimately, the children were reunited with their mother.

Helping Hannah

For almost six months, Hannah had been in foster care with very little hope for her future. She was in a residential setting an hour away from the friends, family, and community she had known. With only two visits from her mother within that time period, and one visit with her father, Hannah felt isolated. As a result, she had no motivation to work harder in school or control her behaviors when peers triggered her.

Lisa Evans, an accountant, wife, and mother, wanted to volunteer as a Court Appointed Special Advocate because she wanted "children to know that there are people out there that care about them." Though she had many responsibilities with her family and her successful career, she knew the importance of giving back to her community. Lisa attended the 30 hours of volunteer training and was ready for her first case.

Hannah was from a Spanish-speaking family and when she was first told that she would be getting a CASA, she was very disappointed that it was a person and not a house. Hannah wasn't disappointed for very long.

Lisa worked to build trust with Hannah and visited with her consistently. At their first visit, Hannah told Lisa that the main thing she needed was "someone to encourage her." Lisa made sure to remind Hannah that she was smart, talented, hardworking, and had a great future ahead of her. She brought activities for them to do and the residential staff would take Hannah to meet Lisa at a nearby restaurant so that Hannah could get off campus for a little while.

Hannah often talked of her family and how much she missed them. Lisa began building trust with Hannah's family and calling them with Hannah's updates. She would remind them of meetings and encourage them to start attending. When Hannah made progress and made good decisions, Lisa made sure the family members were the first to know.

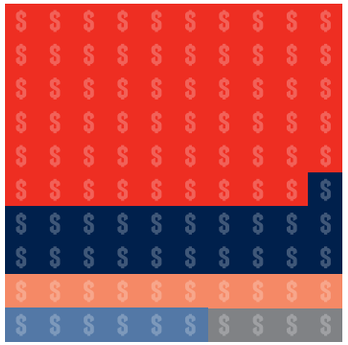
Over time, Hannah's aunt and father became more involved. With Lisa's advocacy, the family support team agreed to move Hannah to a residential center in her home community so that they could begin family therapy. Lisa continued to be a support to Hannah and her family, and encouraged the family to stick by Hannah even when she was pushing them away.

When Lisa started on this case, the general expectation from the team was that Hannah would eventually age out of the foster care system. However, after a little more than a year in foster care, with Lisa's consistent advocacy and encouragement, Hannah was able to return home safely to her family.

2019 FISCAL REPORT

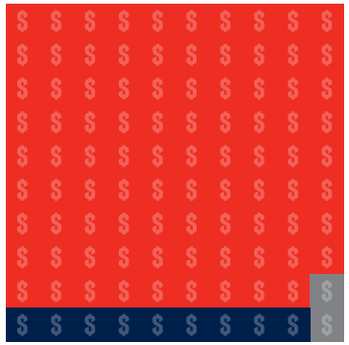
July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

Financials



$423,449 Total Revenue & Community Support

- **59% Government Grants** $250,768
- **21% Individual/Corporate Contributions** $89,154
- **10% Special Events** $41,857
- **6% United Ways** $24,670
- **4% Foundation Grants** $17,000

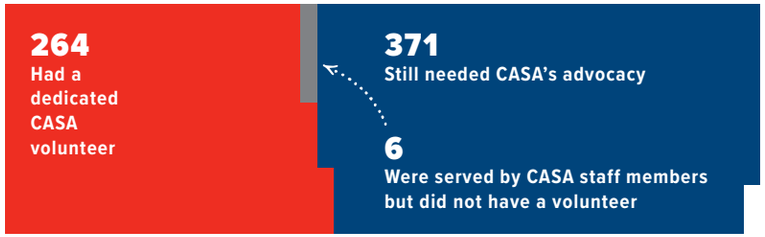


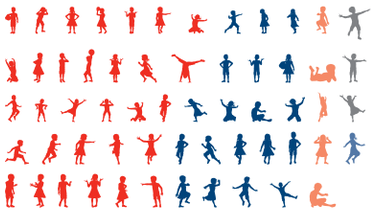
$371,709 Total Expenses

- **89% Program Services** $330,048
- **9% General/Administration** $33,028
- **2% Fundraising** $8,633

Stats

Of the 641 children in foster care in Boone and Callaway counties:





Of the 59 CASA Children's Cases closed:

- **49%** Reunited with parents
- **25%** Adopted by/live with relatives
- **14%** Adopted by/live with non-relatives
- **5%** Aged out of the system
- **7%** Other *(cases dismissed, transferred to other agency, etc.)*

By the Numbers

270
Children served

142
Active CASA volunteers

74%
Cases closed with family reunification or relative placement

93%
Cases closed with a permanent home

8,675
# of advocacy hours

44%
of children had a CASA
(up from 38% last year)

17%
increase in children served
(230 in 2017-2018 to 270 in 2018-2019)

23%
increase in active volunteers
(115 in 2017-2018 to 142 in 2018-2019)

13%
increase in advocacy hours
(7,664 in 2017-2018 to 8,675 in 2018-2019)

100%
of children with a CASA volunteer remained free from re-abuse while in foster care *(270/270)*

94%
of volunteers' recommendations were accepted/ordered by the judge *(424/449)*

HEROES BAND TOGETHER TO CHANGE CHILDREN'S STORIES

It takes a strong, caring community to keep Heart of Missouri CASA growing so children in foster care can have a voice. Through your generous support and the creativity and talent of eight bands, Heart of Missouri CASA's 1st Annual Voices of Columbia fundraiser in April was a resounding success.

A special thank you goes to our incredibly generous Hero Sponsor, C2 Church. "C2 Church is always praying and looking for opportunities to play a greater role not only in Columbia and Mid-Missouri, but in the lives of foster kids and families. This past year I remember writing down a goal for our annual giving initiative we call 'Kingdom Builders.' The heart of this campaign is to see and participate in God's work globally, locally, and in the next generation through giving financial support. It has been exciting to see members of our church not only give and sacrifice to support organizations like CASA, but watch several of them become CASA volunteers," says Pastor Jeremy Risner.

The talent of eight local bands and musicians made Voices of Columbia a reality. These groups raised funds and spread CASA's message to the community. Each musical act performed two songs and guests 'voted' for their favorite performance. The band who raised the most funds for CASA was awarded the title, "The Voice of Columbia." Thank you to our first winner, The Burney Sisters, who raised over $1,500!

Because of the community's tenacity and generosity through our 1st Annual Voices of Columbia, 20 more children who have experienced abuse and neglect now have an advocate of their own!

VOICES OF CALLAWAY FUNDRAISERS:

Audrey Nichols & Emily Schweiss	$452.87
Mary Schnoeblen	$515.21
Gabby Nielsen	$565.59
McKenzie Bacon	$996.43
Sabina Bastian	$1,144.89
Jillian Bryant	$1,255.74
Molly Phillips	$2,024.33

VOICES OF COLUMBIA FUNDRAISERS:

Natasha Myrick	$438.65
The Onions	$448.37
Emily Lock	$570.52
John Galbraith	$755.82
Boone Howlers	$1,037.56
The Naturelles	$1,249.99
The January Lanterns	$1,391.36
The Burney Sisters	$1,545.86

DONORS

CHAMPION LEVEL

$100,000+

Boone County Children's Services Fund

Missouri Department of Social Services

$10,000+

Anonymous Donors (2)

Callaway County United Way

Heart of Missouri United Way

Missouri CASA Association

Missouri Citizen Government Partnership Charitable Fund

$5,000+

C2 Church

Employees of Veterans United

Kappa Alpha Theta, Alpha MU (MU)

Nearby Neighbors Foundation

ADVOCATE LEVEL

$1,000 - $4,999

Affordable Equity Partners Inc.

Anonymous Donors (11)

Boone Electric Community Trust

Calvary Episcopal Church

Central Bank of Boone County

Christa Weisbrook

Jane E. Smith

Jorgen and Betsy Schlemeier

Julie Walden

Ken and Sharon Schneeberger

Lake Paradise Records

Larry and Anna Gross

McCortney Foundation

Missouri Employers Mutual

Missouri Foundation for Health

Philip and Janet Harrison

Rebecca and Tom Highland

Shelter Insurance Employees

The Crossing Church

The Missouri Bar, Young Lawyers' Section

Wal-Mart Stores Inc.

SUPPORTER LEVEL

$500-$999

Boone County Bar Association

Brian McCartney

Callaway Singers

Candace Iveson

Catherine E. Rymph

Charles and Lisa Parrish

Cindy Gergen

Dan and Shirley Pierce

Dixie Lenau

Ford, Parshall, & Baker LLC

Host Committee Inc.

Jerrie Bell

John A. and Marilyn K. Gordon Foundation

Joyce Wood Harter

Kingdom Christian Academy

Landmark Bank

MU Health Care

Olive + Grace

P.E.O. Chapter KE

Palen Music Center

Pam Leyhe

Robert and Emily Little

Rogers, Ehrhardt, Weber & Howard LLC

Seal-Rite

Sharon Horbyk

Show Me Cosmopolitan Club

Smith Lewis LLP

The Blue Note

The Lighthouse Church

ALLY LEVEL

$250-$499

Achieve Balance Chiropractic

Allied Sawing & Services Inc

Candida Rogers

Carol Miller

Central Bank of Callaway County

David Guerrant

Ginny Crabb

Henry Clay Niles III

Joan Sampson

Linda Williams

Lisabeth Ovaitt

Marian Hjelmfelt

Matt Phillips

Matthew McNamee

Melanie Pezold

Michael T. Basnett, DDS

Pamela Crawford

Rob Bartel

Sheela Amin

Steve Racelis

Susie Lock

Veterans United Home Loans

Young's Welding & Machine Shop LLC

Note: *This list is the donors' cumulative giving between July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Kelly Hill, Executive Director, at kelly@homcasa.org or (573) 442-4670.*

Champion Donor

THE MISSOURI CITIZEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP CHARITABLE FUND

When a politician wraps up their career, they must decide how to handle their remaining campaign funds. One scarcely used option is donating these funds to a nonprofit agency. Mr. Bob Griffin served as Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives in the 1980s and 1990s. Mr. Griffin's family has a strong history with Heart of Missouri CASA. His daughter, Julie Griffin Wesley, has been an advocate for over three years, and his granddaughter, Rachel, became an advocate in 2018. Instead of selecting another option, such as giving the funds to a current candidate, Mr. Griffin decided to give a noteworthy portion of his remaining funds to CASA, a cause for which he and his family care deeply.

As CASA has grown, the importance of diversifying and strengthening our revenue streams has become a strategic priority. Our leadership's goal is to secure funding to launch a development position that could focus solely on raising funds to help us further our mission. Presented with this strategic project, Mr. Griffin generously donated a portion of his remaining campaign funds as matching funds to this endeavor. His donation gave CASA the leverage needed to secure additional contributions to start this new position. Mr. Griffin's donation will impact Heart of Missouri CASA for years to come. We are incredibly thankful for his generosity.

CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

HEART OF MISSOURI CASA
105 East Ash St., Ste. 102
Columbia, MO 65203

MEMBER
NATIONAL CASA ASSOCIATION

Proud Partners:

United Way of Callaway County
United Way Heart of Missouri United Way
County of Boone Missouri

Save the Date

2nd Annual VOICES OF COLUMBIA

April 2, 2020
The Blue Note

Local bands will be singing to raise funds for Heart of Missouri CASA.

HEART OF MISSOURI CASA PRESENTS
VOICES OF COLUMBIA
@ THE BLUE NOTE

Mark your calendars now!

COMO GIVES 2019

Support Heart of Missouri CASA during CoMoGives!

You can give a voice to more children in foster care by giving to Heart of Missouri CASA's CoMoGives campaign.

December 1 – December 31

Giving is easy!
Visit **ComoGives.com**